(Charles) Stanley Hirst





Number: - 7914061

Rank: - Trooper

Regiment: - 12th Royal Lancers Royal Armoured Corps

Died: - 14th November 1942 aged 29

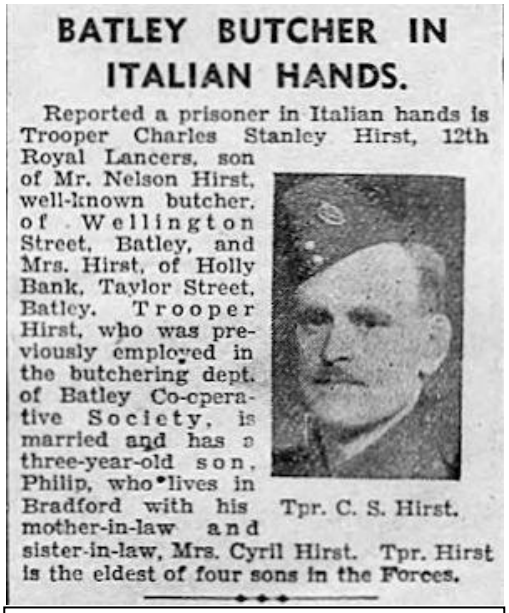
Memorial: - Alamein Memorial, Egypt Column 20.

Family Details

Charles Stanley Hirst was born on 29th January 1912 the son of Nelson and Amy Beatrice Hirst (nee Hepworth) who lived at 205, Taylor Street, Batley. They had married at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr on 17th May 1910 Nelson was a master butcher.

His siblings were Irene born 21/7/1910, Fred, Cyril French 1914, Dorothy Mary 7/12/ 1916-1928, Leslie 1919, Nelson Hepworth 27/8/ 1920, and Shirley born 1928.

Stanley married Vera Smith of Ossett in the summer of 1938. In 1939 they lived at 17, Snowden Street, Batley and his occupation was a butcher, rounds man. Philip was born in 1939. His father, Nelson, died in January 1945.

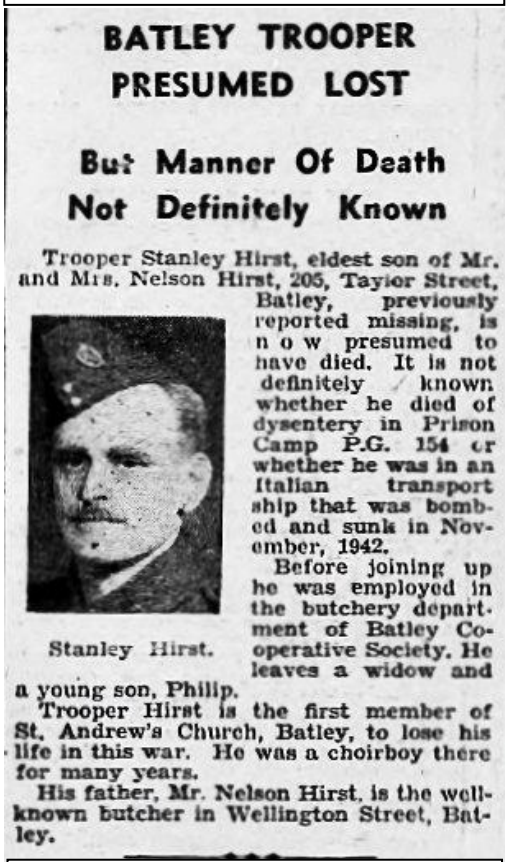


BATLEY BUTCHER IN ITALIAN HANDS.

Reported a prisoner in Italian hands is Trooper Charles Stanley Hirst, 12th Royal Lancers, son of Mr. Nelson Hirst, well-known butcher, of Wellington Street, Batley, and Mrs. Hirst, of Holly Bank, Taylor Street, Batley. Trooper Hirst, who was previously employed in the butchering dept. of Batley Co-operative Society, is married and has a three-year-old son, Philip, who lives in Bradford with his mother-in-law and sister-in-law, Mrs. Cyril Hirst. Tpr. Hirst is the eldest of four sons in the Forces.

Tpr. C. S. Hirst.

Batley News, 5 Dec 1942



BATLEY TROOPER PRESUMED LOST

But Manner Of Death Not Definitely Known

Trooper Stanley Hirst, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Hirst, 205, Taylor Street, Batley, previously reported missing, is now presumed to have died. It is not definitely known whether he died of dysentery in Prison Camp P.G. 154 or whether he was in an Italian transport ship that was bombed and sunk in November, 1942.

Before joining up he was employed in the butchery department of Batley Co-operative Society. He leaves a widow and a young son, Philip.

Trooper Hirst is the first member of St. Andrew's Church, Batley, to lose his life in this war. He was a choirboy there for many years.

His father, Mr. Nelson Hirst, is the well-known butcher in Wellington Street, Batley.

Stanley Hirst.

Batley News, 6 May 1944 (photo)

Service Details

The 12th Lancers served as an armoured car regiment equipped with the Morris CS9, during the 1940 campaign in France and Flanders, playing a key part in shielding the retreat to Dunkirk. After evacuation (without their vehicles) from Malo-les-Bains on dredgers, they were first equipped with Beaverettes, then, in June 1941, with Humbers.

The Lancers landed in Port Tewfik, Egypt, in November 1941.

Charles Stanley was reported missing in June 1942 and since, at that time, his brother L.A.C. Nelson Hirst who was also serving in the Middle East with the R.A.F. pursued enquiries as to his wellbeing. The Batley News reported in late November 1942 that Nelson had written home to say that Trooper Hirst was engaged in the retreat in June from El Daba. He was driving the squadron sergeant-major's scout car when it was hit by a shell from an enemy tank and immobilised. The officer and Trooper Hirst got out of the car all right, and Trooper Hirst was sent off to get another vehicle. He was not seen afterwards and no further news of him had been received.

Later, in the obituary of his brother Leslie Hirst, in 1945, it states that Charles Stanley died on a prisoner of war ship whilst being transported from North Africa to Italy, hence the date November 1942 rather than June 1942.

The S S Scillin was built in Scotland in 1903 but by the time of the Second World War the ship was in Italian ownership. In 1942 a Royal Navy submarine sank her in the Mediterranean Sea when she was transporting over 800 Allied prisoners of war (POWs) from North Africa to Italy, killing nearly all of them. The United Kingdom kept the cause of her sinking secret until 1996, more than 50 years after the event.

He is remembered with Honour at St. Andrew's Church and Batley War Memorial. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group