Alfred Haggerston





Rank: - Private

Number: - 90980

Regiment: - Durham Light Infantry 22nd Battalion

Died of illness in Captivity: - 25th June 1918 aged 19 years

Cemetery: - Marfaux British Cemetery, Marne, France I.G.4

"ONLY ASLEEP"

Batley News, 6 Jul 1918, 24 Aug 1918, 14 Dec 1918. Batley Reporter, 30 Aug 1918

Family Details

Alfred was born in Leadgate, Co. Durham, in April 1899 the son of Jesse and Florence Wilmer Haggerston (nee Ward, m. 1894 registered Lanchester, Durham).

In 1901 he was living with his parents and elder brother Herbert Ward born 1895 at 486, Leadgate, Iveston, Durham. John William 1894 and Jesse born 1897 had died when they were a few months old.

Kenneth was born in 1901 followed by Jesse Simpson 1905 and Mary Williamar 1909 and were living in a three roomed home at 308, North Cross Street, Leadgate, Durham. Jesse was a coal miner hewer whilst 12-year-old Alfred was described as at school but also a news boy.

Shortly after 1911 and the family left Leadgate to live at 98, Halifax Road, Staincliffe, Batley and Alfred attended Staincliffe Church School, was a chorister at the church and a played with the Church Cricket Team. He was an assistant Scoutmaster at the 1st Staincliffe Boy Scout Troop and worked for the Staincliffe Mill Company as a piecener.

Service Details

Alfred received papers to enlist in 1917 and attested on the 28th April 1917 at Dewsbury into the 12th Battalion Training Reserves. His medical states he was 5ft 2 inches and weighted 98 lbs. He enlisted on 30th May when he was 18 years old and went tp Brockton on the 1st June being transferred to the 273rd Infantry Brigade at Chelmsford on 19th September 1917. At Stockton on the 31st March 1918 he proceeded to be transferred overseas, leaving Folkestone for Boulogne on the 31st March and reported at the Base Depot at Etaples on 2nd April.

He was transferred to the Durham Light Infantry and posted to the 11th Battalion but was reposted to the 22nd Battalion on the 4th May 1918.

The 22nd Durham Light Infantry was at this time a Pioneer Battalion attached to the 8th Division.

Less than three weeks later Alfred went missing on the first day of the Battle of the River Aisne.

An Officer sent news that he was missing from May 27th and said: -

"Q*uite a number of our men were taken prisoners on that day and we hope your son is quite safe."*

Marshall and Robert Best from Staincliffe also went missing on the same day and were prisoners of war.

His father received a postcard from him dated June 24th 1918 from a prisoner of war camp when he said: -

"I am quite safe but a prisoner of war. Do not worry. I am doing well."

After several months without news his parents were informed by the Red Cross that according to German official lists, he died on June 25th at Montigny of illness.

His brother Herbert as killed in Action on the 19th June 1916.

Alfred was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Christ Church, Staincliffe, Staincliffe C. of E. Junior School and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group