Edward Hartley





Rank: - Driver

Number: - L/18962

Regiment: - Royal Field Artillery "Z" 32nd Trench Mortar Bty.

Died of Wounds: - 06/06/1917 Age: 23 years

Cemetery: - Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord 111. B.251

"LOVING MEMORIES ALWAYS LINGER"

Batley News, 9 Jun 1917, 16 Jun 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Edward was born in Batley in c.1895 the son of Arthur and Sarah Hartley nee North who had married on the 7th January 1893 at St. Peter's Church, Birstall. In 1901 he was living with his parents, brother, William, born 1897 and his maternal aunt Louisa North at 81 Brookroyd Lane, Batley. A decade later the family was still living at the four roomed home but with the addition of his paternal grandmother Rebecca Hartley. Heckmondwike born Arthur was a woollen spinner whilst Edward worked as a gear drawer. The 1911 census shows the couple had lost another child in infancy.

Service Details

Edward enlisted at Pontefract in April 1915 and went to France on the 29th December 1915.

The 32nd Division was largely comprised of locally raised units often known as "Pals". It was a predominantly Northern Division, although locally raised units from Birmingham and Bristol were also in the structure.

In most cases training was near home but later the units were moved in May 1915 to concentrate in Shropshire but Prees Heath was found to be too wet for training and the brigades instead moved to Yorkshire (Wensley and Richmond, with use of the firing ranges at Strenshall). It was not until August 1915 that the Division moved for final training and firing practice at Codford on Salisbury Plain. In November 1915 the Division received a warning order to prepare to sail for France.

Edward would have taken part in; -

In 1916 the 32nd Division fought at
The Battle of Albert* (including the first day of the Battle of The Somme.)
The Battle of Bazentin*
The Battle of the Ancre*
** the battles marked * are phases of the Battles of the Somme 1916*

In 1917 the 32nd Division fought at

Operations on the Ancre (January –March 1917)
The pursuit of the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line (March-April 1917)

The War Diaries of the 32nd Division for June 1917 are unenlightening and it is difficult to pinpoint the circumstances in which Edward suffered the wounds which were to cause his death. Those in the Trench Mortar Batteries took their lives in their hands playing with high explosives. Sometimes things didn't go to

plan and it's quite possible that his injuries were incurred in an accidental misjudgement. It was an occupational hazard.

Some of the regiments which comprised the 32nd Division were, in June 1917, positioned at places to the west of the front line on the French border with Belgium. Ypres was barely 30 km distant. Messines, south of Ypres, was just 15 km from Bailleul France where Edward was buried. An important Battle at Messines was planned for early/mid-June 1917. It required huge resources of heavy and light artillery support. The 32nd Division were in reserve for the battle but it is possible that this was the context for Edward's death on 6th June 1917.

The Battle of Messines began with the detonation of 19 mines beneath the German front position, which devastated these German defences and left 19 large craters. This was followed by a creeping barrage 700 yd (640 m) deep, protecting the British troops as they secured the ridge with support from tanks, cavalry patrols and aircraft. The effectiveness of the British mines, barrages and bombardments was improved by advances in artillery survey, flash spotting and centralised control of artillery from the Second Army headquarters. British attacks from 8 to 14 June advanced the front line beyond the former German Sehnenstellung (Oosttaverne) line.

Edward was wounded but it is not known the exact date but he died from these wounds on the 6th June 1917.

Edward was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at St Saviour's Church Brownhill; Birstall Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (St John's), York Minster and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group


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TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE OF
THE 32ND DIVISIONAL R.A. TRENCH
MORTAR BATTERIES WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES IN FRANCE
AND BELGIUM 1914—1918
CAPTAINS
G. DUNDAS M.C. R.F.A.
J. G. HARRISON R.F.A.
W. J. MARCHMENT
J. M. McLACHLAN
LIEUTENANTS
A. GUTHRIE R.F.A.
E. TAINGBAM M.C.
2ND LIEUTENANTS
J. E. BEANLAND
W. H. HOWARD
O. L. JOHNS M.C.
G. R. McCLURE
R. D. NEIL
H. O. SAVAGE R.F.A.
SERGEANTS
W. ALVIS R.F.A.
W. T. ROSS R.G.A.
CORPORALS R.F.A.
P. G. ILMOUR
F. H. PEARSON
BOMBARDIERS R.F.A.
J. CHATHAM
J. S. COOPER
F. EVANS
L. GROGAN
A. HODGSON
W. HOWELLS
F. POOLE
J. E. STEVENS
GUNNERS R.F.A.
W. BARSTOW
G. A. BIGG
B. COOK
W. CULLY
T. FRYETT
E. J. GASKIN
G. GREEN
A. HAMMOND
W. HARRINGTON
E. HARTLEY
F. HARWOOD
J. HOUGHTON
W. HOWELLS
P. G. HUTCHINSON
A. M. JONES
F. COOK
W. LONEY
J. A. MACHIN
J. MOORE
W. OSBORN
A. PAINES
R. POSTLE
G. PRESTON M.M.
W. PRICE
F. PRITCHARD
C. W. RENNISON
J. ROBERTSON
R. SHIMMELL
J. THOMPSON
W. THORNTON
R. TODD
R. TOTTEN
L. J. WICKHAM
E. J. WOODGER
GUNNER R.G.A.
G. HARRISON
PRIVATES
W. HOWE
P. McGRORY 16TH H.L.I.
ERECTED BY THEIR COMRADES
T
M
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