Harry Hepworth





Rank: - Lance Corporal

Number: - 46450

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 2/4th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 27th March 1918 aged 23 years

Cemetery: - Gommecourt British Cemetery No 2, Hebuterne, Pas de Calais, France 1V.C.9

Batley News, 18 May 1918 (photo), 21 Sep 1918

Family Details

Harry was born in Batley on 4th July 1894 the youngest son of John Edward and Jane Hepworth nee Clough, who had married on the 2nd September 1882 at Batley, All Saints Church. He was baptised at St. Savour's Church, Brownhill on the 12th September 1894.

John Edward who hailed from Lindley was a plate layer on the railway and in 1901 his family which comprised of Oliver Cookson 1883, Harriett Ellen 1884, William 1886, Harrison 1889 and Harry was living at 1, Wright's Buildings, Brookroyd Lane, Batley.

In the census of 1911 Harry was described as being a rocker, working as a copper roller engraver. Before enlisting Harry worked at Bulrush Mills for Messrs. R. Talbot and Sons Ltd.

Service Details

His service records have not survived but we know from newspaper reports that he was in training when his brother William died of wounds in May 1917.

The 2/4th Battalion was a second line unit who landed at Le Havre on the 15th January 1917. They were attached to 187th Brigade in 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division.

In 1917 they took part in: -

The Operations on the Ancre (15 February – 13 March)
The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line (14 – 19 March)
The first attack on Bullecourt (part of the Arras offensive) (11 April)
The German attack on Lagnicourt (part of the Arras offensive) (15 April)
The Battle of Bullecourt (part of the flanking operations round Arras) (3 – 17 May)
The actions on the Hindenburg Line (20 – 28 May)
The Cambrai Operations (Tank attack 20 – 21 November and the capture of Bourlon Wood 27 – 28 November)

In 1918 they took part in
The Battle of Bapaume (25 March)
The First Battle of Arras 1918 (28 March)
which were phases of the First Battles of the Somme 1918.

Harry was reported missing on the 27th March but it was not until September 1918 just as his parents returned from a holiday in Morecambe that he was officially presumed killed on that date.

His brother William had died of wounds on 6th May 1917, a brother was a prisoner of war and the other was in hospital in England.

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

He is remembered with Honour at St. Saviour's Church, Brownhill; Birstall Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (St John's); Temperance Hall – Smithies Lane, Birstall; Independent Order of Rechabites, Hope of Birstall Lodge and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group