John Joseph Kelly





Rank: - Private

Number: - 4690424

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 2nd Bn.

Died: - Died of Wounds 15 February 1942 aged 22 years.

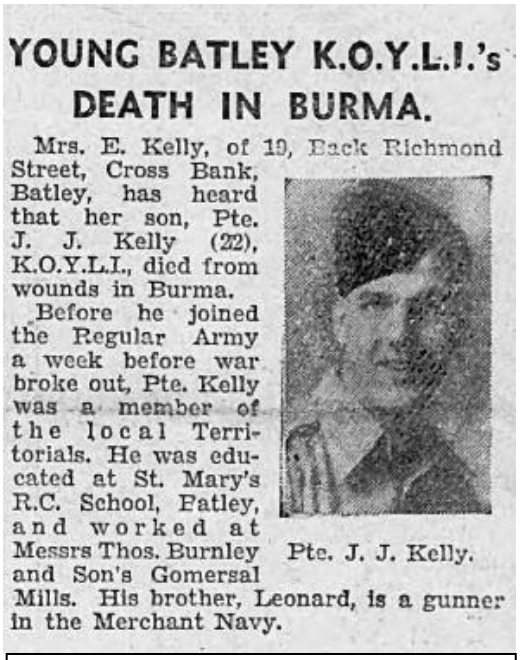
Cemetery: - Rangoon Memorial, Mayanmar Face 16.

John Joseph was born in Batley in 1921 the son of Joseph and Ella Kelly nee Palmer who had married in 1919. Leonard was born in 1920 followed by John Joseph, James 1923, Joseph 1924, Frederick 1926 and Leo 1933. In 1939 the family lived at 33, Peel Street, Batley. Later address was 19, Back Richmond Street, Cross Bank, Batley.

John was educated at St. Mary's Roman Catholic School and worked at Messrs Thomas Burnley and Son's, Gomersal Mills. John was a member of the local

Territorial's and he joined the Regular Army a week before war broke out. His brother, Leonard, was a gunner in the Merchant Navy.

The 2nd Battalion, a Regular Army unit, fought as a rearguard in the retreat through Burma in 1942.



YOUNG BATLEY K.O.Y.L.I.'s DEATH IN BURMA.

Mrs. E. Kelly, of 19, Back Richmond Street, Cross Bank, Batley, has heard that her son, Pte. J. J. Kelly (22), K.O.Y.L.I., died from wounds in Burma.

Before he joined the Regular Army a week before war broke out, Pte. Kelly was a member of the local Territorials. He was educated at St. Mary's R.C. School, Batley, and worked at Messrs Thos. Burnley and Son's Gomersal Mills. His brother, Leonard, is a gunner in the Merchant Navy.

Pte. J. J. Kelly.

Batley News, 27 Feb 1943 (photo)

Rangoon was first bombed on 23 December 1941, simultaneously with the bombing of Pearl Harbour. The docks were badly damaged and the authorities had great difficulty in getting the port to function. The Japanese captured Hong Kong on Christmas Day and moved into the Malaysian Peninsula, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies. The Japanese Southern Army attacked Burma on 15 January 1942 and by 30 January it had reached Moulmein. Vital air bases swiftly fell to the Japanese. Malaya was overrun and Singapore fell on 15 February 1942. Rangoon fell on 8 March 1942.

John was wounded in the fighting and died of these wounds on 15 February 1942.

John is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial and was awarded the 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group