John Henry Kitson





Rank: - 2nd Lt.

Regiment: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) (Formerly 764099 London Regiment, 28th Bn. Prev 10098) 5th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 14/04/1918 Age: 33 years

Memorial: - Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium Panel 82 to 85 and 162A.

Batley Reporter 27th April 1918 (photo)

Family Details

John Henry was born in Batley, Apr 1884 the son of Timothy and Sarah Florence Nightingale Kitson (nee Jackson, m. 1883, registered Dewsbury).

Ann Elizabeth, was born on 5th March 1888 when her parents were living at Roebuck Street, Birstall and William Pitt was born on 1st September 1889. The children were in 1891 living at Kirkgate, Birstall with their parents and a boarder aged 70 years Mary Heppenstall and Timothy gave his occupation as a hairdresser.

John Henry attended Birstall Wesleyan Day and Sunday Schools.

Before 1901 the family had moved to live at 7, Smithies Moor Lane, Birstall and Timothy was a barber by trade but John Henry was in Scotland at the home of his uncle, Tom Henry Jackson, and was employed as a tailor's salesman.

In 1911 the family was at the same address and

John Henry was employed as a clothing manager and buyer for Brown, Muff and Co., Bradford. He was described as a man of a genial disposition and excellent character.

Service Details

John Henry enlisted in the Artists Rifles in December 1916 and embarked for France in December 1917 after obtaining a commission in October 1917.

In 1918 they fought at:-

The Battle of Estaires (9-11 April)
The Battle of Messines (10-11 April)
The Battle of Bailleul in which the Division defended Neuve Eglise (13-15 April)
The First Battle of Kemmel Ridge (17-19 April)
which were phases of the Battles of the Lys

It is most probable that John Henry lost his life in the Battle of Bailleul on the 18th April 1918. His parents of Glen Villas, Bradford Road, Birstall received a telegram on the Wednesday afternoon to say he had been killed in action on the 14th April 1918.

His brother, William Pitt Kitson, died of wounds on the 28th June 1918.

John Henry was awarded the British Medal and Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at St Saviour's Brownhill; Birstall Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (St John's); Birstall and Batley War Memorials.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group