Alfred Lobley M.M.





Rank: - Private

Number: - 15919

Regiment: - West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) 11th Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 10th November 1916 aged 20 years

Cemetery: -Dewsbury Cemetery E 536

Batley News, 30 Sep 1916, 18 Nov 1916 (photo) Dewsbury District News, 18 Nov 1918 (photo). MM Gazetted 21 Sep 1916

Family Details

Alfred was born on 1st July 1896, in Batley Carr, the son of Edward and Mary Emma (nee Crossland) and was baptised at St. John the Baptist Church, Daw Green on 22nd September 1897 when the family was living at Whitley Street and Edwin was working as an oil extractor.

Before the 1901 census the family had moved to 71, Calder Bank Place, Dewsbury with the addition of Harry in June 1897. Alfred had an older half sister Mary Alice Crossland born in 1889 who married Robert Cocker on 4th October 1913 at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr. He died in 1915 and she married Ethelbert Senior in 1916.

Alfred was educated at Eastborough Council and Batley Carr Church Schools and was also a member of Batley Carr Wesleyan Church.

Edward died in 1902 and in 1911 the family was living in a two roomed home at Lidget Lane, Batley Carr when Alfred was employed as an errand boy, his mum a rag sorter and his sister worked as a rock packer at a confectioner.

Alfred worked for Messrs. Ballance and Son, florists, Market Place, Dewsbury but before enlisting he worked at Messrs. J. & J. Saxton, Savile Mill, Batley.

His mother married William H. Porter in the last qtr of 1915 and family later went to live at 2, Back Dale Street, Batley Carr.

Service Details

Alfred enlisted at Leeds on the 11th November 1914 and after training disembarked in France on 26th August 1915. The battalion came under the orders of 69th Brigade, 23rd Division. On the 5th September the Division moved to the Merris-Vieux-Berquin area and took responsibility for front line trenches nine days later. The 23rd Division was holding the front at Bois Grenier during the time of the Battle of Loos and remained in this area for some time.

Between January and February 1916, the Division was relieved in the trenches and moved to an area around Bruay.

On 3 March 1916 orders were received to relieve the French 17th Division in the Carency sector. The front to be held was between the Boyau de l'Ersatz and the

Souchez River, including the posts on the Notre Dame de Lorette hill behind. Artillery was positioned in the area Carency – Ablain St Nazaire – Bois de Bouvigny, an exposed position. They were relieved by 2nd Division between 12 and 19 April and withdrew to Bruay area. Moved back into the Souchez-Angres front 10-13 May.

They were involved in the German attack on Vimy Ridge in May 1916. In July they fought at the Battle of Albert and played a major part in the capture of Contalmaison. This was followed by the Battles of Pozieres and Flers-Courcelette (15th -23rd September).

His mother received a letter*" West Yorkshire Regiment, Private Alfred Lobley. This man was one of a bombing party and continuously threw bombs for over three hours during which time the enemy made several bombing attacks, all of which were repulsed, with heavy loss to them. This man with his great gallantry and devotion to duty largely helped in bringing about the marked superiority of our party over the enemy. I cannot speak too highly of his bravery and utter disregard to personal risk, also his efficiency as a bomber."*

His M.M. was gazetted on 21st September 1916.

He was returned to England and sent to Mersey Military Hospital, Liverpool where he died from his wounds on 10th November 1916.

The funeral was held on Tuesday 13th November at Dewsbury Cemetery and was attended by a strong contingent of Dewsbury Volunteers under the command of Company Commander R. Ward and provided a firing party under the command of Sergeant H. Wright. Soldiers also attended from Staincliffe Military Hospital and a squad from the Town Hall in the charge of Sergeant Major E. Hemingway, Secretary of Dewsbury Infirmary acted as pall bearers. The coffin was draped with a Union Jack. Three volleys were fired over the grave and the "Last Post" was sounded by Bugler Greenwood. The service was conducted by Rev. J.B. Foster of Batley Carr.

The mourners in attendance were Mr. & Mrs. Porter (stepfather and mother), Private Harry Lobley (brother), Mr.& Mrs. Lobley (uncle and aunt), Mr. & Mrs. Crossland (uncle and aunt), Mrs. Senior, Earlsheaton (aunt), Mr.& Mrs. Senior, Earlsheaton (brother in law and sister), Mr. T. Senior, Earlsheaton. Mr J.T. Lobley

(Batley Carr), Mrs. Constable of Dewsbury (cousins), Mr. Garfitt , Mrs. Swift of Earlsheaton, Mr. Gladstone Burnley, Mr. Tom Senior and Messrs. V. and Ben Nettleton of Batley Carr.

Wreaths were placed on the coffin by his mother and step father, brother, sister and brother in law, Ida, Uncle Frank and Aunt Emily, Uncle Harvey and Aunt Emma, Uncle Alfred and Aunt Fanny, cousins John and Florrie, “his late friends Gladstone and Tom”, friends and neighbours in Rothery’s Yard, Mr.B.Burnley and Messrs. Ballance (former employees of the deceased).

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

He is remembered with Honour at Batley and Dewsbury War Memorials.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group