John (Jack) Ambrose Lodge





Rank: - Private

Number: - 20782

Regiment: - Kings' Own Scottish Borderers (formerly 190533 Royal Engineers) 2nd Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 6th October 1917 aged 27

Cemetery: - Godewaersvelde British Cemetery, Nord, France. 1. F.46

"TO HIM THE IMMORTALITY TO US THE MEMORY"

Batley News, 20 Oct 1917, (photo)

Family Details

Jack was born in Dewsbury on 17th November 1889, the son of George Robert and his wife Margaret Annie (nee Robinson) Lodge. He was baptised at St. Philip's, Dewsbury on 15th January 1890 when his father gave his employment as a stoker living at 11, North Street, Batley Carr.

Fred was born in 1892 followed by George Hardy 1895, Frances Augusta in 1900 and Willie in 1903. Margaret died in 1903.

Jack as a boy attended Eastborough Council School and was a chorister at St. Philip's Church, Dewsbury.

On 21st January 1905 George Robert married Sarah Senior at Holy Trinity Batley Carr and the family went to live at 7, Cross Chapel Street, Batley. Sadly, George Robert died on 22nd April 1908 and in 1911 Sarah was living with her step children in a two roomed house at 1, Yard No.7 Back High Street, Batley Carr. John Ambrose was working as a carboniser of rags.

He married Gertrude Cawood 1912 and Alfred was born in 1913 followed by Alice in 1916. The family resided 9, High Street, Hanging Heaton.

He became involved with Ebenezer Chapel and was a member of the Chapel Football Club. He was also a member of Hanging Heaton Rechabites.

Jack worked at the milling department of J.T & J. Taylor's at the time he re-joined the Forces.

Service Details

Jack joined the Territorial force in April 1908 giving his employment as a mill hand working for Mark Day and Sons. He went for annual training each year until 1914and was mobilised at the outbreak of war.

He was discharged because of medical unfitness. He twice tried to re-enlist but was accepted on his third attempt in July 1915. He went to France the following September and was wounded the following year. On another occasion he had a very lucky escape when a bullet passed through his cap without injuring him.

From September 1916 his Division fought in: -

The Attacks on High Wood
the Battle of Guillemont
The Battle of Flers-Courcelette
The Battle of Morval, The Battle of Le Transloy
the battles are phases of the Battles of the Somme 1916

By 5 October 1916 the Division had left the Somme and was holding a quieter line near Festubert. There was a constant threat from enemy artillery and sniper fire, but in comparison with the Somme it was a relatively tranquil period that lasted until March 1917.

In 1917 they fought at: -
The Battle of Vimy
The Attack on La Coulotte
The Third Battle of the Scarpe including the Capture by the Division of Oppy Wood
These battles are phases of the Battles of Arras 1917

On 7 September 1917 the Division was relieved and moved out of the line for a period, being sent next to join the great offensive in Flanders. They fought at:-

The Battle of Polygon Wood which took place during the second phase of the Third Battle of Ypres was fought near Ypres in Belgium 26 September – 3 October 1917, in the area from the Menin Road to Polygon Wood and thence north, to the area beyond St. Julien.[Much of the woodland had been destroyed by the huge quantity of shellfire from both sides since 16 July and the area had changed hands several times

The Battle of Broodseinde was fought on 4 October 1917, at the east end of the Gheluvelt plateau, by the British Second and Fifth armies and the German 4th Army. The battle was the most successful Allied attack of the Battle of Passchendaele. Using "bite-and-hold" tactics, with objectives limited to what could be held against German counter-attacks, the British devastated the German defence, which prompted a crisis among the German commanders and caused a severe loss of morale in the German 4th Army. Preparations were made by the Germans for local withdrawals and planning began for a greater withdrawal, which would entail the loss for the Germans of the Belgian coast, one of the strategic aims of the British offensive.

After the period of unsettled but drier weather in September, heavy rain began again on 4 October and affected the remainder of the campaign, working more

to the advantage of the German defenders, who was being pushed back on to far less damaged ground. The British had to move their artillery forward into the area devastated by shellfire and soaked by the return of heavy rain, restricting the routes on which guns and ammunition could be moved, which presented German artillery with easier targets.

Jack was injured and taken to a clearing station.

A telegram from the Records Office was followed by a letter from the sister at the Clearing Station.

"*Your husband was brought in very badly wounded in the abdomen and though everything was done it was of no avail except to ease his last hours. He passed peacefully away at 4.20a.m. On October 6th. He said I was to give you his love and tell you about him, but he was too ill to talk. All he wanted was rest and warmth. I have been too busy to write before and there is so little to tell you but even to know he died amongst friends and in bed is something."*

He was a very smart shot and won a medal for marksmanship when with the Batley Territorial s and also passed his marksman's test since joining the Forces.

His brother Seaman Fred Lodge, a naval signaller was on board HMS "Morning Star" and George Hardy was with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry in France at the time of his death.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr, Ebenezer Chapel, Hanging Heaton and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group