John William Mayman



Rank: - Private

Number: - 62285

Regiment: - York and Lancaster Regiment 18th Battalion (formerly 76699 Durham Light Infantry)

Killed in Action: - 5th November 1918 aged 19 years

Cemetery: - Pottes Communal Cemetery, Hainaut, Belgium

"HE DIED DOING HIS DUTY"

Family Details

John William was born on 22nd May 1899 in Batley the eldest child of George and Sarah Ellen Mayman (nee Walker). He was baptised at Batley Parish Church on 5th July 1899 when the family lived at 25, Beaumont Street, Batley and his father gave his occupation as a woollen spinner.

Clifford was born on 7th June 1901 but sadly died in October 1903.

His sister Nellie was born in July 1903 followed by Ethel in February 1906 and Alice in January 1910. In 1911 the family was still living in the three roomed home at 25, Beaumont Street and George was still a woollen spinner.

Service Details

His service records have survived and from them we learn that he was a shop assistant for a clothier and enlisted at Dewsbury on 5th July 1917. He was 5 feet 2 inches tall and weighed 100lbs. He had slight defects but not enough to prevent him enlisting having a 3-inch knock knee and a pigeon chest.

He was posted to the Durham Light Infantry on 7th July 1917 and went for training before being transferred to the Yorkshire and Lancaster Regiment on 16th June 1918. He embarked from Folkestone on the 3rd July for Boulogne, France. The 18th Battalion came under the command of 41st Brigade, of 14th (Light) Division.

The battalion took part in the Battle of Ypres 1918 and the final advance in Flanders. They went into line on the 31st October on the River Escault between Espieres and Helchin taking over from the 16th Manchester Regiment. On the 2nd November it was reported that enemy artillery was very active and civilians had been seen in the enemy lines. On the 3rd there was inter- company relief and it was reported that there was heavy enemy shelling.

On the 4th the battalion extended the left flank and a patrol was sent out to report and examine the conditions of the track. On the 5th there was once again inter- company relief but later the extreme left post on the south of the River L'Escaut destroyed a bridge head at 23.30 hours and was subjected to a short T. M. After a short fight the battalion withdrew and the enemy took up possession

of both flanks but evacuated at 6 30 am on the 6th. Two men were killed by the T M shell. One was John William and the other 19-year-old 62310 Private C. Rothwell of Horsforth. His mother later wrote to John William's parents.

Eventually in March 1920 his father received his possessions which were: - coin, photo, writing paper, religious book, Field almanac and a broken Ingersoll watch and leather guard.

There are only two Commonwealth War Graves in Pottes Communal Cemetery.

John William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Purlwell Wesleyan Chapel and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group