James McDonald



Rank: - Private

Regiment: - Royal Defence Corps

Died at home after war from acute Pleurisy & Aortic Disease: - 21/03/1921
Age: 48 years

Cemetery: - Batley Cemetery, Yorkshire, B 480

Batley News, 26 Mar 1921

Family Details

James was born in Batley on 3rd April 1872 the son of Randolph and Elizabeth McDonald (nee Milner, m. 22 Dec 1866, Bradford, St. Peter). He was baptised at St. Peter's Church, Bradford on the 25th December 1873. His father gave the address as Dudley Hill and he was a miner.

James was born in Batley in 1871 the son of Liverpool born Randolph and Elizabeth McDonald, who came from Dudley Hill. They had married at St. Peter's Church, Bradford on the 22nd December 1866. In 1871 they were living at New Street, Batley with their children Mary Ann 1868, Joseph 1869 and James. Alfred 1873 and Arthur 1875 were born in Woodlesford followed by Henry 1878 and Clara 1881 in Liversedge where in 1881 they were living at Lumb Lane, Liversedge. Randolph was a coal miner so would have travelled to find work.

Edith 1884, Mary Jane 1885 and Elizabeth 1887 were born in Liversedge before the family moved to the Lee Green area of Mirfield.

His mother died in April 1897 and his father in 1913. In 1898 he was detained for being drunk and disorderly, from these records we know he was 5ft. 6inches tall, brown hair, was a labourer with a scar on his left cheek and could read and write.

In 1899 he married Annie Murtock who came from County Mayo, Ireland

In 1911 they were living at 3, Yard 2, East Street, Batley and he was a coal miner hewer. Ann Murtock his mother- in-law was living with them.

Service Details

James had served in the Army for around 30 years and had served in the Boer War. During the Great War he was on home service.

On Saturday 21st March his wife left him at about 8 pm sat on the sofa reading a paper, when she returned at about 8.25, he was lying on the sofa breathing but unconscious. He died about five minutes later. An inquest was held at Batley Hospital on the following Wednesday when Annie stated he had not complained much on Saturday and he was going to go out. Dr. Keighley said death was due to acute pleurisy and aortic disease and a verdict of death by natural causes was returned.

The funeral took place at Batley Cemetery with military honours. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and a firing party from the K.O.Y.L.I. attended. Volleys were fired over the grave and the “Last Post” sounded. Rev. Father Lea was the officiating minister.

James is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group