John Thomas McMahon





Rank: - Private

Number: - 16/1509

Regiment: - West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) 16th Battalion

Killed in Action (presumed): - 1st July 1916

Memorial: - Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France Pier and Face 2 A 2 C and 2 D.

Batley Reporter, 23 Feb 1917 (photo) Dewsbury Reporter, 24 Feb 1917 (photo)

Family Details

John Thomas was born in Heckmondwike/Batley in c.1880 the son of Patrick and Mary McMahon nee McMahon who had married in 1873 and who both came from Co. Clare, Ireland. In 1881 the family was living in Forrester's Fold, Common Road, Batley. Mary was born in c1875 followed by Winifred 1878 and John Thomas. Sadly, his mother Mary died in November 1885. Patrick married Bridget O'Neil in 1888 but she sadly died in March 1892.

In 1891 the family was living at 43, Common Road, Batley, Thomas an oil refiner born 1851 in Co. Clare. John William was still living at this address in 1901 with his father who stated he was married but with him was Ann Mosley born Co. Mayo and her children who were lodgers and 64-year-old Patrick Minniter who was born in Co. Clare.

Between 1900 and 1904 he was detained at Wakefield for what we now would seem very menial offences, cyclist passing a vehicle without ringing a bell (7 days or 8/-), drunk and obscene language but from these records we know he was five feet, five inches tall with brown hair, was a miner and was a Roman Catholic living in Batley Borough.

In 1904 John Thomas married Margaret Kilroy and Mary was born in 1905 followed by Catherine (Katie) 1907 and Ellen (Nelly) 1908. In 1911 the family was living at 39, Old Jail, (Jail Road), White Lee and John was working as a miner whilst Margaret was a rag sorter. Living with them was his father, Patrick and also seventy-four-year-old Patrick Kilroy who was born in Co. Sligo. The census shows they had lost a child in infancy. His father died in November 1912 when he lived at 39, Jail Road, White Lee. Winifred was born in 1912, Teresa 1914-January 1916 and John Thomas in December 1916.

Before he offered his services, in July 1915, John was employed by the Carlinghow Colliery Company and attended St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Heckmondwike.

Service Details

James enlisted at Bradford in July 1915 and was sent out to France in April 1916. The 16th (Service) Battalion (1st Bradford) was formed in Bradford in September 1914 by the Lord Mayor and City. From June 1915 they came under orders of

93rd Brigade, 31st Division. In December 1915 they moved to Egypt and went on to France in March 1916 and John Thomas, according to newspaper reports, would have joined them there.

His last letter home was written on 28th June.

The first major battle was the Battle of Albert which started on the 1st July 1916 and was at the time described as the worst day in the history of British warfare for loss of life.

John Thomas went missing on this day. Margaret made enquiries regarding her husband to the War Office and also the Prisoners of War Authorities in Germany but in February 1917 she had received no news.

Margaret later went to live at Queen Street, Heckmondwike.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Common Road Working Men's Club and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group