Harold Molineux





Rank: - Private

Number**: -** 35981

Regiment/Battalion: - Northumberland Fusiliers 23rd Battalion (Tyneside Scottish) (formerly 40348 KOYLI and 26051 West Yorkshire Regiment)

Killed in Action: - 9th April 1917 aged 24/25

Remembered with Honour: - Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais, France Bay 2 and 3

Family Details:

Harold was born in Batley in 1892 the son of Lofthouse born, Joseph and Emma Molineaux (nee Goodall). The couple were married in 1881.

Ernest William was born in June 1882 but sadly died in January 1883, George Edmund was born in April 1884 but died four months later. Thomas was born in Batley in 1885 followed by Joseph (1886), John (1890), Harold (1892), Emma (1894), Laura who was born at Longwood (1896), Ruth Ann 1899 in Batley and Maud in 1900 who died aged 9 months.

In 1901 the family was living at 108, High Street, Birstall and Joseph was a foreman dyer at a woollen mill whilst Joseph and John were hurriers at a coal pit. At the burial of Maud in August 1901 the address is given as Church Street, Birstall. Sometime soon after this the couple separated because in 1905 Joseph was in prison for 14 days for not paying his wife's maintenance. He was again in Wakefield Prison for 5 days in 1908.

In 1911 the family were living at 125, North Bank Road, Cross Bank in a four roomed house. Joseph who died in 1915 was lodging in Ossett when the census was taken and Harold signed the census form. He was working as a piecener at a woollen mill. He had lost 4 of his siblings.

He worked at Messrs. Taylor, Yieldings & Co. Ltd. and was connected with St. John's Church and was a former member of the Church Boys' Brigade. He was well known in intermediate football circles because he had played for Batley Clarence as a half back.

Service Details

Harold was called up in April 1916 and went to France in February 1917.

On the 1st April 1917 the Battalion was in the trenches at Roclincourt before moving to Arras on the 3rd and into X Huts at Ecoivres on the 4th. On the 7th they proceeded Louez and in the evening of the 8th they moved from Louez to trenches in the Roclincourt area. At 5.30 am the artillery fire opened but Harold's battalion was not due to attack until 8 am. By this time the artillery fire had become scattered and they lost several men from their own shelling. At the

end of the day nineteen other ranks were killed, eleven other ranks were missing and two died of their wounds plus one officer.

Harold had only been at the front for six weeks and was killed during only his second time in the trenches. News about him did not reach home and when enquiries were made a reply came from one of his pals Private Percy Mellor of Eightlands, Dewsbury: -

"I am told you haven't heard from Harold for a long time. I hope it is not so bad as you think, and that you will hear from him soon. I have not heard from any of the lads since I got into hospital. He was alright when I got my wound and was still advancing with the others. I hope you hear good news because he was a good pal to me, ever since we met one another. We were always together in France and were more like brothers."

On the 18th May his mother who was now living at 18, Garden Street, Carlinghow received official news from the Record Office at York that Harold had been killed in action on 9th April 1917.

Harold was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is Remembered with Honour at St. John's Church, Carlinghow, Batley War memorial and Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group