Ben Morton





Rank: - Private

Number: - 21859

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 6th Battalion

Missing, presumed Killed in Action: - 28/08/1917 Age: 29 years

Memorial: - Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium Panel 108 to 111.

Batley News, 22 Jun 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Ben was born in Batley in c.1888 the son of George France Morton and Emma Morton (nee Armitage, m. 25 Dec 1884, Batley, All Saints). Amy was born in 1885 and in 1891 the family was living at 41, Brearley Street, Batley. Holmfirth born George was a woollen weaver. Amy died in 1894 and the family had moved to live at nearby 13, Belvedere Road before 1901 with the additions of Ann 1892 and Fred 1895. Ben was an old boy of Purlwell Council School and attended Gospel Hall, Mount Pleasant.

The family moved to Savile Wharf, Wharf Street, Savile Town before 1911 and George France was employed as a pattern hand loom weaver, Ben as a dyers labourer and his two siblings as power loom weavers.

On the 27th January 1912 Ben married Mary Elizabeth McGuire at Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees.

Before enlisting Ben worked at Messrs. G. H. Hirst and Co. Savile Town.

Emma, his mother died in December 1918.

Service Details

Ben enlisted at Dewsbury in March 1915 and went to France in the September of the same year.

In 1915 they took part in: -
The Action of Hooge, in which the Division had the misfortune to be the first to be attacked by flamethrower.
The Second Attack on Bellewaarde

In 1916: -
The Battle of Delville Wood (15 July-3 Sept)
The Battle of Flers-Courcelette (15-22 Sept)
which were phases of the Battles of the Somme 1916

In 1917: -
The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line
The First Battle of the Scarpe (9-14 April)
The Third Battle of the Scarpe (3-4 May)
which were phases of the Arras Offensive

The Battle of Langemark (16-18 August)
which was a phase of the Third Battles of Ypres

Ben was wounded twice prior to January 1917 when he was last home on leave. After a period of around 12 months the War Office presumed, he was missing killed in action.

His brother, Fred, was at that time in France with the K.O.Y.L.I. He died of wounds on the 3rd November 1918.

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

He is remembered with Honour on Batley and Dewsbury War Memorials.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group