Gilbert Naylor



Rank: - Private

Number: - 306652

Regiment: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) 2/7th Battalion

Missing, presumed Killed in Action: - 3rd May 1917 aged 31 years

Memorial: - Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France Bay 6

Batley News, 9 Jun 1917

Family Details

Gilbert was born in Batley in c.1886 the son of John Henry and Elizabeth Ann Naylor nee Hirst, who had married on 25th December 1876 at Dewsbury Parish Church.

In 1891 he was living with his family at 5, Yard 4, Halifax Road, Batley. His father was a woollen spinner and his sister Margaret Ellen, born 1878, was working as a woollen weaver whilst James William 1881 and Annie 1883 were at school. A decade later Gilbert was working as a rug warehouseman.

Ada was born in 1893 and in 1901 his cousin, Benjamin Hirst, who had been born in Philadelphia, was staying with them.

John Henry died on 29th January 1910 and Elizabeth Ann died on 10th October 1910.

Gilbert continued to live with his sisters although he did change his occupation to become a painter and decorator like his brother James William.

Gilbert worked for Mr. L. Porritt, painter and decorator, Dewsbury and attended Upper Independent Chapel and Sunday School. He lived in Terry's Yard, Top of Heckmondwike.

Service Details

It is not known when Gilbert enlisted but the 2/7th Duke of Wellington's were formed at Milnsbridge in September 1914 as a home service ("second line") unit. They moved to Derbyshire on1st March 1915 and came under orders of 186th Brigade in 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division. They moved to Thoresby Park (Ollerton) in May 1915, moving in October 1915 to Retford, November 1915 to Newcastle, January 1916 to Salisbury Plain, June 1916 Halesworth, October 1916 to Bedford. They landed in France in January 1917. They then saw action at: -

The Operations on the Ancre (15th February – 13th March)
The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line (14th – 19th March)
The first attack on Bullecourt (part of the Arras offensive) (11th April)
The German attack on Lagnicourt (part of the Arras offensive) (15th April).

The Battle of Bullecourt (part of the flanking operations round Arras) (3rd – 17th May).

Gilbert was missing on the first day of this battle.

Thomas William Bucknell of Heckmondwike and Harry Hiller whose parents lived at Batley Carr were missing, presumed killed at the same time.

His effects were left to Margaret Ellen Glover, Ada Naylor, Annie Hemingway and his brother James William.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Christ Church, Staincliffe, Upper Chapel, Heckmondwike and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group