Percy Oddy







Rank: - Private

Number: - 201467

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 2/4th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 13/04/1917 Age: 28 years

Cemetery: - Croisilles Railway Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France 1.B.18

Batley News, 28 Apr 1917, 5 May 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Percy was born in Manchester in 1888 the son of Benjamin and Florence Oddy nee Kershaw who had married in 1880, registered Dewsbury. He was baptised on the 31st July 1889 in the parish of St. Clement, Longsight, Manchester when the family lived at 4, Jackson Street, Hyde Road, WG. His father was a clerk.

Albert Harold was born in Gomersal in January 1881 followed by Walter Edward 1882-1886 in Manchester and his twin Robert Arthur, Ada Louisa 1884, Percy and Ada 1893 in Dewsbury.

In 1891 Florence who came from Gomersal was living with her family at the home of Thomas Kershaw at South Street, Savile Town saying she is a widow. Before 1901 Florence and her family had moved to live at 7, Bond Street, off Bradford Road Central, Batley. In 1911 and still living at the same address Percy was employed as a tailor's cutter for a men's clothing manufacturer. He did in fact work at Messrs. George Jessop and Son Ltd, clothiers in Station Road, Batley. His mother went to live at West Park Grove, Healey, Batley.

In the summer of 1915 Percy married Mabel Gaunt born 1893 in Dewsbury. Elvia was born in 1916. They lived at 78, Carlton Road, Dewsbury.

Service Details

Percy enlisted at Batley in November 1914 but he was not sent to France until December 1916/ January 1917.

On 1st March 1915 the Battalion moved to Bulwell and attached to 187th Brigade in 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division. They moved in April 1915 to Strensall and on in May to Beverley, going on in November to Gateshead, January 1916 to Larkhill and June 1916 to Flixton Park near Bungay moving again in October 1916 to Wellingborough.

The Divisional Ammunition Column sailed from Avonmouth for Rouen on 30 December 1916; the rest crossed from Southampton to Le Havre from 5 January 1917 and by 18 January concentration was completed in Third Army area between the rivers Canche and Authie. The Division took part in the following engagements:

1917

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

Lance-Sergt. F. Taylor of Dark Lane, Batley wrote to a former fellow workman at Jessop's: -

"I suppose you will have heard the sad news before now. However, I thought I would write to tell you about it. I refer to Percy Oddy's death. We all feel so sorry about him, he was so nice and quiet. I did not actually see him killed but I was only about 60 yards away. He was killed by shell fire and death was instantaneous, so he knew no pain. He was laid to rest by a party of our fellows in a small cemetery close behind the lines. There is a cross over the grave. All his private belongings have been taken and they will have been sent to his wife."

At the time of his death his brother, Robert, who had fought on the Somme and received a shrapnel wound in the back was home on leave from the Durham Light Infantry. His brother Albert Harold was on a draft waiting to go to France.

Percy was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group