John William Phelps





Rank: - Private

Number: - 90077

Regiment: - Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) 123rd Coy.

Killed in Action: - 31/07/1917 Age: 26 years

Memorial: - Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium Panel 56

Batley News, 8 Sep 1917 (photo)

Family Details

John William was born in Batley on 21st March 1891 the son of Sam Lister Phelps and Sarah Phelps nee Fozard who had married on the 22nd June 1889 at Batley Parish Church. He was baptised on the 29th April 1891 at St. Saviour's Church, Brownhill. His sister, Edith, was born in 1889 and when the 1891 census was taken the family was living at 17, Law Street, Batley. Sam was a print works labourer. Albert Victor was born in 1893 and Harry in 1897. They were still living in Law Street in 1901 but had moved to nearby 14, Bradford Road, Brookroyd, Batley before 1911. John William was working as a cloth finisher. John William worked for Messrs G. & J. Stubley at Bottoms Mill, Batley as a cloth miller. He was connected with St. Saviour's Church, Brownhill.

John William married Elsie Lonsdale on the 25th October 1913 at St. Peter's Church, Morley. Emily was born in 1914 and Albert 1915.They lived at 7, Brookroyd Lane, Batley.

Service Details

John William enlisted in January 1917 and was sent to France in around April 1917.

In 1917 they fought at: -
The Battle of Messines (7-14 June)
The Battle of Pilkem Ridge (31st July-2 August)
which was part of the Third Battles of Ypres 1917

His wife received information from an officer that her husband Private John William Phelps had been killed in action on July 31st. The letter states he was killed immediately being struck at the back of the neck with the nose cap of a shell and was buried where he fell. The officer added that he was a good soldier and a good machine gunner and his loss was felt by the whole section.

John William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal and is remembered with Honour at Brownhill St Saviour's Church and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group