Arthur Pickering





Rank: - Lance Corporal

Number: - S/11332

Regiment: - Seaforth Highlanders 7th Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 19th July 1916 aged 21

Cemetery: - St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France A.30.19

"IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF A DEAR SON AND BROTHER REST IN PEACE"

Batley News, 22 Jul 1915, 29 Jul 1916 (photo)

Family Details

Arthur was born in Batley in 1895 to Batley born Fred and Annie Elizabeth (nee Newsome) from Morley.

Fred and Annie had married in 1888 and settled in Batley. Sarah Elizabeth was born in 1889 but sadly only lived 2 days, followed by George William in 1890. A year later the couple was living in Caledonia Road, Batley with baby George. Fred and his wife were the Steward and Stewardess at the Conservative Club. William Newsome, a teazle setter, who was Annie's father, was also living with them.

Arthur was born in 1895 followed by Nellie in May 1898 but she only lived for 3 months. In 1901 the family were living at 10, Henrietta Street, Batley and they were still there 10 years later when Fred was a belt mender and Arthur had a job as a pawnbroker's assistant for Mr. J. Fieldsend in Wellington Street, Batley.

Arthur as a boy was a chorister at Batley Parish Church and was later in the Church Institute.

Fred died 29th May 1916, 7 weeks before his son.

In Batley Cemetery the family grave also states: -

Arthur their beloved son, who died of wounds at Rouen, France July 1916 aged 21 years.

Service Details:

Arthur enrolled in October 1915 and disembarked February 1916.

The 7th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders had been formed in Fort George in August 1914 and came under the command of 26th Brigade in 9th (Scottish) Division. Arthur would have joined them around February 1916 and fought in Battle of Albert 1st July – 13th July 1916 and Battle of Bazentin 14th – 17th July in which the Division captured Longueval.

In his last letter home, he wrote: - "We *are having life and not half. Watch the papers. We are still pushing them back. "*

Arthur was wounded on Sunday July 16th and taken to 11 Stationary Hospital, Rouen. On Wednesday his mother received a telegram saying he was seriously wounded. His right leg had been shattered and there was a compound fracture of his left leg. Two letters came from nurses assuring the relatives that he was receiving every attention, but emphasising the fact that he was in a very critical condition. On Thursday morning, the following telegram was received from the Record Office at Perth.

"Deeply regret to inform you 1132 Lance-Corporal Arthur Pickering, Seaforths died at 11 Stationary Hospital, Rouen at 12.05 a.m. on 19th July after a double amputation of the left knee and right leg."

At around the time of Arthur's death Pte.J. Crossland of Bankfoot Batley wrote home to his parents: -

"Just a line to let you know that I received the "News" and I thank you very much for it. I read Sergt.Gavaghan's letter, and we are doing quite as much as the big fellows. We came out of the trenches yesterday, and they were the best four days I have ever spent there. You have often seen it in the papers about the British talking to the Germans. Well, it's true. We have been within 20 yards of the Germans, and we were talking to them all night on Monday. Fritz wanted us to go over to their trenches for some cigarettes, but when we told him we had plenty and wanted him to come over to our trenches for some , he said he had no time ! Fritz sang "God Save the King" and "Tipperary" for us, and he can talk in English as well as anybody. He said he used to be a waiter in London. I asked him when the war would be over and he said "Next year" About 11 o'clock the same night our artillery bombarded their trenches for about an hour, and the Germans replied. All the trenches seemed to be alive with fire."

Arthur was awarded - the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is commemorated on Batley War Memorial, Batley Parish Church, Up Lane Sunday School and the St. Sever, Cemetery, Rouen where there are 39 others commemorated on the same day.

During World War 1 Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. St. Sever Cemetery contains 3,080 burials from the Commonwealth during W.W.1.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group