Thompson Pollard





Rank: - Private

Number: - 201988

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1/4th Battalion

Missing, presumed killed in Action: - 1st July 1916

Memorial: - Thiepval Memorial, France.

Batley News, 5 Aug 1916, 16 Jun 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Thompson was born in 1890 the son of John William who came from Carlinghow and Ann Pamela (nee Thompson) in Hanging Heaton. The couple had married in 1879. In 1891 he lived in Commonside with his siblings Sarah E. (1882), Mary Jane (1886), William Henry (1887). The couple also had two children who died in infancy. They later moved to Caulms Wood Top.

Thompson attended Mill Lane Council School and Ebenezer Chapel, Hanging Heaton.

In 1908 he married Maud Annie Farrar and Ann Pamela was born in 1909. In 1911 they were living at 6, Kirk gate, Hanging Heaton. Mary A was born in 1912.

Before he enlisted, he was employed as a night worker in the milling department of G. & J. Stubley's, Bottoms Mills, and Batley. The family resided at 9, Nursery Wood Road, Hanging Heaton.

Service Details

Thompson enlisted in 1914 in the 1/4th K.O.Y.L.I. Territorial s. The 1/4th mobilised in Doncaster moving to Gainsborough in November 1914. In February 1915 they moved to York going directly from there to Boulogne where they landed on the 12th April 1915. On the 15th May they became part of 148th Brigade, 49th (West Riding) Division.

Thompson would have taken part in the Battle of Auber's Ridge (9th May 1915) and the defence against the first Phosgene Attack on 19th December.

In 1916 the Division took part in the Battle of Albert (1-13th July 1916) which was part of the Battle of the Somme. The artillery bombardment had started on 24th June and the attack started at 7.30 am on the 1st July.

Brigadier General Sir James Edmonds author of the Official History described the scene on the 1st July.

"At 7.30am buglers in the front trench sounded the "advance", and the assaulting lines rose and moved forward at a steady pace with the precision of a

parade movement, The scene with the mist clearing off and the morning sun glistening on the long rows of bayonets was brilliant and striking enough."

His wife made enquiries to the Colonel of the battalion when she had not heard from him for some-time. The last letter from him was dated 29th June 1916.

His wife made strenuous endeavours to obtain news of him and she received a letter from the Red Cross: -

"We have received your letter asking us to make enquiries about your husband. As we already know from the War Office that he was missing between July 1st and 8th we did our utmost to make enquiries. We have received one report about him, which we send on, although it does not tell very much. It comes from Private Norman Earnshaw, of the same regiment, company and platoon as your husband who says "Thompson Pollard was a draft man, German machine guns in a windmill between Hamel and Meanil were troubling our men and volunteers were called for to attack the windmill and silence the machine guns. Pollard was the only man in his platoon to volunteer. This was on the night of July 2nd-3rd. He went out with others to attack and never returned."

This statement was borne out by Private Ernest Ramsden a Hanging Heaton lad from the same platoon.

Eleven months later a letter from the War Office on June 8th 1917 said "Presumed killed in action" between 3rd and 7th July 1916 in the Battle of the Somme.

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group