John William Poskitt





Rank: - Private

Number: - 235152

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 9th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 04/10/1917 Age: 29 years

Cemetery: - Bedford House Cemetery, Belgium Enclosure No.4 XIII. AA. 6.

"REST IN PEACE"

Batley News, 20 Oct 1917, 27 Oct 1917 (photo)

Family Details

John William was born in Hanging Heaton on the 11th October 1888 the son of Richard and Mary Elizabeth Poskitt nee Ingelson who had married on 11th June 1887 at Batley Parish Church.

He was baptised at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton on the 8th February 1891 which was the same day as his sibling Fred 25/ 12 /1890 and cousins Lewis Ernest 26/8/1889 and Elsie 28/12/1890 were also baptised. Their fathers were coalminers and both families gave their abode as Chidswell.

In 1891 the family was living at Leeds Road, Chidswell. Robert was born in 1893 followed by Mary Ellen 1895, Sarah Ann 1898 and Harry 1900. In 1901 they were living at Back Bromley Street, Hanging Heaton. George Arthur was born in 1903 in Hanging Heaton before the family moved to 41, Taylor Street and the births of Ida May in May 1905 and Albert in January 1907.

John William worked at Shaw Cross Colliery as a coal miner.

On the 21st December 1912 he married Annie Copson who was a servant at the Queen's Hotel, Wellington Street, Batley at St. Andrew's Church, Purlwell. Jack was born in 1913 followed by Sarah Ann in 1915.

Service Details

John William had served 10 years in the Territorial Army and was mobilized at the outbreak of war. The 9th (Service) Battalion came under the orders of 64th Brigade in 21st Division. They landed in France in September 1915.

In 1915 they fought at
The Battle of Loos

1916
The Battle of Albert
The Battle of Bazentin Ridge
The Battle of Flers-Courcelette
The Battle of Morval* in which the Division captured Geudecourt
The Battle of Le Transloy
which were phases of the Battles of the Somme 1916

In 1917
The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line

The First Battle of the Scarpe, the Third Battle of the Scarpe .the flanking operations around Bullecourt *Which were phases of the Arras offensive 1917*

The Battle of Polygon Wood, the Battle of Broodseinde, the Second Battle of Passchendaele *which were phases of the Third Battles of Ypres.*

On the 4th October the battalion formed up for the attack on the German front line with the objective being the road which running just west of Reutel, with the second objective being the second objective being the village of Reutel. Battalion HQ was at Mebu. Rations and rum were late in arriving owing to hostile shelling of the back area. Zero hour was at 6 am and the whole line promptly went forward. Prisoners began to come through with half an hour. At 7am the enemy laid down an intense barrage from the road bounding the eastern end of Polygon Wood. It was impossible for the battalion to move until the fire slackened about 6 p.m. The adjutant went to see what was happening at about 8 pm and at 9 30pm a SOS signal went up from the front line. The enemy once again sent a barrage against Polygon Wood and back areas. At about 10.30 pm an enemy shell exploded at the entrance to Battalion HQ mortally wounding the C. O. in the stomach and right thigh, killing the signalling Cpl and wounding the Signalling Officer and Intelligence Officer.

John William was killed during this battle.

His brother Fred Poskitt was killed in action on 26th June 1917.

He was awarded the 1915 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

John William is remembered with Honour on Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group