Norman Renshaw





Rank: - Private

Number: - 25220

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

Killed in Action: - 1st July 1916 aged 17

Memorial: - Thiepval Memorial Pier and Face 11C and 12A

Batley News, 29 Jul 1916. Dewsbury Reporter, 29 Jul 1916 (photo)

Family Details

Norman was born on 26th July 1898 at 9, Thornes Lane, Wakefield the son of Edmund and Louisa Renshaw (nee Kilburn). The couple had married at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr. Douglas was born in December 1899-1901 followed by Hector 1903 and Phyllis in 1907.There were another two siblings who died in infancy according to the 1911 census. The family had returned to live in Batley Carr after 1907 and was living at Thomas Street in 1911. Edmund was a sewing machine mechanic and Louisa also worked as a mender in a woollen mill.

Norman attended Batley Carr Church School and Sunday school. He was a member of Batley Carr Parish Church and up to enlisting was a member of the Church Lads' Brigade connected with Dewsbury Parish Church.

Before he enlisted Norman was a warper at Mark Oldroyd's, Spinkwell Mills, Dewsbury.

The family lived at 6, Naylor Street, Batley Carr later moving to live at 3, Pickles Fields, Batley Carr.

Service Details

The 9th Battalion of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry came under the command of 64th Brigade in 21st Division. They landed in France in September 1915.Norman enlisted in 1915 and went to the Front in about February 1916.

The first major battle he would have encountered was the opening day of the Battle of Albert which was part of the Battles of the Somme 1916. On the 1st July 1916 the Battle of the Somme was opened. The Allied line ran from north to south until just crossing the Albert to Bapaume Road at La Boiselle. Here at the small village of Fricourt the line turned east running under the village and on towards Mametz.It would be the responsibility of the 7th Division on the right to capture Mametz. On the left the 34th Division would assault La Boiselle. The plan was similar and coordinated with that of Mametz. A direct assault would not be launched on the village of Fricourt which was known to have been fortified. An initial attack would sweep the village, cutting the defenders off. This would mount at a Zero hour which was 7.30 hours.

Once Fricourt and Mametz had been surrounded a second combined assault would then be mounted at about 14.30 hours to penetrate the two villages.

From the Albert- Bapaume Road running south the Brigades in 21st Division was 64th, 63rd and 50th Brigade attached from 17th (Northern) Division. 62nd Brigade was in reserve.

The 9th Battalion was in position by 11pm on the 30th June waiting to for zero hour which was 7.30 am on the 1st July 1916. It was in the first stage of the battle, especially in No Man's Land where the battalion suffered the most, out of the 24 Officers only five managed to pass the German front trench .The Brigade reorganised in the Sunken Road before awaiting instructions and moving to Crucifix Trench leaving the only surviving commanding officer Lt. Col. Fitzgerald of the D.L.I. in charge. Fighting continued all day and not until about 9.30 pm did the battalion under Regimental Sergeant Major Crossland who was in charge of the remnants of the battalion leave Crucifix Trench and return to the Sunken Road at Fricourt to report to Lt. Spicer.

On the 1st July the Battalion had 13 Officers killed in action 2 later died of wounds and 7 were wounded. Casualties in other ranks totalled 475 of which 415 were killed in action.

Intimation that he had been killed was received by his parents in late July 1916.

Herbert Booth, Joseph Hall, Thomas Hirst and George Leather who were all in the same regiment and came from Batley were killed on the same day along with another 33 from Batley and Birstall in different regiments but many from other battalions of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry.

Tom and Willie Stead who are also on this memorial were his uncles.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church and Batley War Memorial Addenda and Dewsbury War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group