Percy Richardson





Rank: - L/Cpl

Number: - 29480

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

Killed in action: - 26th April 1918 aged 22 years

Cemetery: - La Clytte Military Cemetery, West Vlaanderen, Belgium 1V.D.22

"HE DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE"

Batley News, 16 Jun 1918 (photo), 13 Jul 1918 (photo), 21 Dec 1918 (photo). Batley Reporter, 20 Dec 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Percy was born at Batley Carr on the 13th July 1896 the son of Arthur and Alice Richardson (nee Ledgard) and was baptised at Holy Trinity, Batley Carr on 20th January 1897. The family was living at Victoria Buildings, Victoria Street and Arthur was described as a woollen spinner.

Arthur and Alice had married in 1890 and Thomas was born in 1892 followed by Herbert (1893) and Percy. Alice Evelyn was born in 1905 when the family had moved to 109, Warwick Road, Batley and she was baptised at Holy Trinity on the 25th February 1906.

In 1911 Percy was described as a 14-year-old schoolboy whilst his brother Herbert was working as a weft man and Arthur was a foreman spinner.

He attended Batley Carr Church Day and Sunday schools.

Before enlisting he worked at Messrs. Hall and Tankard's, Brookroyd Mills. Batley.

Service Details

Percy enlisted in 1916 and served for 15 months in France. He came home on leave and returned to the Front in March 1918.

In March 1918 the Battalion was stationed at Guyencourt and it was fairly quiet at first but later in the month there was heavy fighting. On the 1st April the battalion moved to Amiens where it entrained for Hopoutre . On the 23rd April the battalion was at Jasper Camp (one mile east of Millekruis) being rested before an attack at Wytschaete on the morning of the 26th. On the 25th the battalion was in the trenches when the enemy attacked at about 5 .30 am preceded by heavy gas bombardment. At 6.30 am the battalion was moved to higher ground but many of the Officers and men were suffering from the gas. The battalion got into position and brought the enemy to a standstill. The Germans then went around the battalion s right towards La Clytte.

The Company Officer decided to counter attack and some Commander decided to take advantage of the stand made by the battalion and sent 240 Durham Light Infantry and 10 Lewis Gun Teams from the tank Corps were sent up to help them.

At 1 am on the 26th when the battalion was in the trenches at Cheapside, one mile north east of Beaver Camp, the Brigade Major personally took orders for an attack which was to be made at 4.25 am in conjunction with 39th French Division and the 25th English Division .The object of the attack was to retake the Vierstraat Line.

The 9th KOYLI's represented the Brigade Front and the boundaries were to the right a line through Siege Farm to the north edge of Rossingnol Wood and to the left Desinet Farm. They were promised a creeping barrage moving at the rate of 100 yards in 4 minutes. The Black Watch and the West Yorkshires did not manage to advance with them and they were subjected to heavy machine gun fire when the Germans realised that it was only one battalion which was advancing. At 6.30 am it was decided to withdraw to a line approximately 400 yards in front of the original front line. At 7am the C O decided further withdrawal was necessary but at 12 noon the German artillery opened a heavy bombardment all along the front line which lasted until 3 pm.

At the time he was posted as missing his brother Tom (Motor Transport) had served nearly 3 years in France and his brother, Signaller Herbert Richardson (KOYLI) was in England after being gassed in September 1917. The family had moved to live at 11, Farrar's Buildings, Brookroyd Lane, Batley.

His parents repeatedly put appeals in the local press asking if soldiers coming home on leave had any news of their son.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr, St. Saviour's Brownhill and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group