Albert James Roberts





Rank: - Private

Number: - 8587

Regiment: - Border Regiment 2nd Battalion (Northumberland Fusiliers)

Died: - 10th March 1915

Cemetery: - Auber's Ridge Military Cemetery, Nord, France. V1.F.9.

"TO MEMORY EVER DEAR"

Batley News, 17 Apr 1915 (photo)

Family Details

Albert James Roberts was born in Hull in 1889. His parents Albert James Roberts (Senior) and Hannah Mary Spurr were married at Batley Parish on the 14th May 1883. At the time of their marriage Albert was a boot and shoe maker and Hannah a mill hand. Albert's father James was also a boot maker. The couple had two daughters Rachel (1885) and Hannah Elizabeth (1887) both born in Batley. Shortly after 1887 the couple moved to Hull where Albert James was born and also Ada (1891) and Clarence (1898). The 1891 census shows the family living at 13 Rowland Terrace in the Sculcoates area of Hull. Hannah's uncle Robert Smith, a widower, is also living with the family and working as a shoe maker. By 1900 they had returned to Batley where Minnie (1900) and Joseph (1903) were born. The 1901 census shows the family living at 45 Queen Street, Batley but by the 1911 census they had moved to a 5 roomed house at 47 Dale Street, Batley Carr. Albert James (Senior) was now working in the Co-operative boot and shoe department.

Albert James Roberts (Junior) joined the Northumberland Fusiliers circa 1906 and was on the 1911 census stationed in India.

In 1913 Albert James Roberts married Clara Whittaker at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr. Albert had left the army and was now working as a willeyer at J.T. & J. Taylor, Blakeridge Mills. The couple moved to King Street, Batley Carr to start their married life. Their first son Eric was born later that year. In 1914 Clara lost her brother George Whittaker a soldier in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. He was killed on 28th October, 1914 at the Battle of Mons.

Service Details

Albert was called up as a Reservist in August 1914 but did not go to the Front until January 1915. Two months later he lost his life on the 10th March 1915. Clara received the news two days before giving birth to their second son. She named him Albert after his father.

It is surmised, from the date, that Albert lost his life in the terrible Battle of Neuve Chapelle. Auber’s village was taken by the 9th Brigade on the 17th October, 1914, with Herlies and part of the Ridge, and on the 19th the 2nd Royal Irish took Le Pilly. These gains, however, were lost within a few days, and the

Ridge, in spite of repeated attacks, was not captured by British forces for three more years.

Albert had been well regarded in his local community and Clara had many family members to support her. Clara was married again in 1921 to Leonard Robinson and they had a daughter Joan in 1924.

Albert James is remembered with Honour at Auber's Ridge British Cemetery, Auber's, Nord, France. His name appears on the Holy Trinity, Batley Carr, Cross Bank Wesleyan Chapel and Batley War Memorial Roll of Honour.

He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Researched by Susan White of Batley History Group.

