Patrick Roche





Rank: - Private

Number: - 47685

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1st Battalion

Killed in Action: - 18/10/1918 Age: 19 years

Cemetery: - Highland Cemetery, Le Cateau, Nord, France III. A. 18.

Batley News, 14 Dec 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Patrick was born in Claremorris, County Mayo, c.1898 the son of Patrick and Annie Roche nee McEllin. Patrick, Annie and their family Ellen Mary 1900, Patrick and Michael 1907 were living at Berkely Road, Inns Quay, Dublin on the 31st March 1901 when the Irish census was taken.

Annie was born in Ireland in 1901 before the family moved to Surfleet, Lincolnshire before the birth of Richard 1903 and Arthur Francis 1905, moving again to the Dewsbury area and the birth of John 1906 and Bernard 1909.

In 1911 the family was living in a three roomed home at 39, Bromley Street, Hanging Heaton, Batley and the census shows that another child had died in infancy. At this time 14-year-old Patrick was working as a joiner's apprentice.

Patrick attended St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church and Schools at Batley Carr later going to work as a porter at Batley Station for the Great Northern Railway where his father was also employed. The family lived at 39, Bromley Street, Hanging Heaton.

Service Details

Patrick enlisted at Batley in August 1917 and went to France 25th December 1917 moving to Salonika in January 1918.

He moved back to France in July 1918 and on the 16th July the 1st Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry joined 151st Brigade in 50th (Northumbrian) Division. It was not until October that the Division was once again considered to take the field.

The Battle of the St Quentin Canal 29th September-2nd October
The Battle of the Beaurevoir Line 3-5 October
The Battle of Cambrai 1918 8- 9 October

which were phases of the Battles of the Hindenburg Line

The pursuit to the Selle 9-12 October
The Battle of the Selle 17-25 October
which were phases of the Final Advance in Picardy

Patrick went missing on the second day of this battle.

After a six-day halt for preparations and artillery bombardments Fourth Army troops attacked at 5.20 a.m. on Thursday 17 October. Infantry and tanks, preceded by a creeping barrage, moved forward on 10 miles (16 km) front south of Le Cateau. The centre and left of the Fourth Army forced crossings of the river, despite unexpectedly strong German resistance and much uncut barbed wire. Fighting was particularly fierce along the line of the Le Cateau–Wassigny railway. The right of the attack, across the upland watershed of the Selle, made most progress and by nightfall the German defences had been broken and Le Cateau captured. Fighting continued from 18–19 October, by which time Fourth Army, much assisted by the French First Army on its right, advanced over 5 miles (8.0 km), harrying the Germans back towards the Sambre–Oise Canal.

Patrick went missing on the 19th October.

His father made enquiries and his officer wrote: -

"I very much regret to inform you that your son Private Patrick Roche was killed in action on October 18th. He was buried in a cemetery near Le Cateau."

His elder brother Michael was serving in Italy at this time.

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

Patrick is remembered with Honour at Hanging Heaton War Memorial (St Paul's), Ireland's Memorial Records 1914-1918 and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group