Alfred Rodgers







Rank: - Private

Number: - 16895

Regiment: - Hampshire Regiment 1st Battalion (from May 1915, formerly 11311 18th Hussars)

Missing, presumed killed in Action: - 16th April 1917 aged 22 years

Memorial: - Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais, France Bay 6

Family Details

Alfred was born in Batley in c 1894 the son of Arthur and Mary Ann Rodgers (nee Brook). The couple had married at St. Peter's Church, Birstall on 14th March 1891 when Arthur gave his occupation as a band spinner aged 21 years living at Birstall.

James Arthur was born in Cleckheaton in 1892 before the family moved to Batley and the births of Alfred and Violet born in 1897. Arthur died in October 1897 and was buried at St. Peter's, Birstall.

Mary Ann married Sam Donbavand at Dewsbury Parish Church on 1st December 1900 with Mary Ann giving her address as 17, King Street, Batley Carr. Sam died in the latter part of 1904 and Sam junior was born in January 1905.

In early 1909 Mary Ann married Walter Askew and Lawson was born later that year but died when only a few weeks old.

In 1911 the family was living at 27, Common Side, Hanging Heaton and Alfred gave his occupation as a mill hand (tier-on).

Before enlisting he did work as a tier on at Joseph Newsome and Sons, Batley Carr. He attended Batley Carr Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday School and played for the Wesleyan Football Club. In the evenings he acted as assistant in the dispensary of Dr. Deane, Batley Carr.

Service Details

Alfred joined the regular army before the outbreak of war but left the service. He re-joined the Colours a fortnight later joining the 18th Hussars. In about June 1915 he transferred to the Hampshire Regiment and was injured in the Dardanelles in November 1915 but went to France in February 1916 having been home on leave in January at the same time as his brother James Arthur.

At the beginning of April there was a heavy fall of snow but when possible, they practised consolidation and exercises. On the 6th April Major General the Honourable W. Lambton G.O.C. 4th Division inspected the battalion on parade and wished them good fortune on their forthcoming operations.

On the 9th the day dawned with slight rain falling and the weather conditions did not appear promising. Reveille in camp at Maroeuil was at 4.45 am and they had breakfast before marching to their assembly points. There was no news of how

the attack was going but they were encouraged to see many prisoners being brought in. At 3.30 pm the battalion took the objective taking 80 prisoners, two machine guns and three 8-inch howitzers. The captured position was a good one commanding most of the country to the east and north east giving good view of the enemy positions and movements. The fighting continued with a small number of casualties each day.

On the 15th, which was a dull day with drizzly rain,the ”B” Company made another attempt to bomb up Hudson and Hazard trenches, in the afternoon. The heavies tried bombarding the enemy trenches for three and a half hours but they were holding Hilly Trench strongly with machine guns and bombers. The artillery had blown in the trenches to such an extent that the men had to go over the top and were fired at by the enemy’s machine guns.

The 16th was a day of heavy shelling by the enemy on the battalion s positions. They were relieved by the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers and they went back to Divisional Reserve but “D” Company could not get out as daylight came and had to remain in Hyderabad Redoubt until night fall. Casualties for the day was other ranks: - 4 killed, 9 wounded, 2 missing.

The last letter home arrived on 5th April when he said he was “quite well” and a field card was received 3 days later saying the same thing. He was reported “missing” by a comrade after an engagement on 16th April 1917.

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

Albert is remembered with Honour at Batley Carr Wesleyan Church, Warwick Road School Diary, Hanging Heaton Memorial (St. Paul’s), St. Paul’s Church and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group