Frank Rothery







Rank: - Private

Number: - 202108 (formerly 4489)

Regiment: - King's Own Royal Lancaster 1st /4th Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 25th November 1917 aged 24

Cemetery: - Villers-Faucon Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France 1.A.23

Batley News, 22 Dec 1917 (photo in Heritage Batley News 15 Jan 2014)

Family Details:

Frank was born in Liversedge in around October 1893 the eldest child of John and Martha Annie Rothery (nee Wharton) who came from Heckmondwike.

In 1901 the family with the addition of Mary, born 1897, were living in Upper Lane End, Gomersal, and John was employed as a woollen spinner.

His brother Thomas Henry Wharton was born in 1906 and the family had moved to a three roomed house at George Street, Gomersal by 1911. His father was a yarn spinner operative and Frank was employed as a piecener.

Before the war he worked at Messrs. Wood and Grimshaw, Gomersal and attended the Moravian Church.

On 18th December 1915 Frank married nineteen-year-old Annie Teale at St. John's, Carlinghow. Leah was born on the 18th June 1916.

Service Details

Frank signed his attestation papers when he lived at Gomersal but moved to live at 65, Highfield House, White Lee, and Batley. His occupation was given as a spinner. His service records have survived although they are burnt. He was in Southampton when on the 25th November 1916 he went AWOL until 12.30pm on the 27th despite being warned. For this he was deducted 6 days pay. He was "at home" from 19th June 1916 until he disembarked for France on 6th January 1917 landing at Boulogne.

After arriving at Etaples on 9th January 1917 he was posted to K.O.R.L.R. 1/4th Battalion. During the next few months, he saw action at Arras, the raid on the Ibex Trench, the Battle of Pilkem Ridge, the Battle of Ypres and the battle for the Menin Ridge. He was also involved in the Cambrai operations including the attack near Guillemont Farm on 20th November where he sustained injuries from a shell burst. He died from his injuries on 25th November.

Annie received a letter from R. R. Sayers a non-conformist chaplain attached to his battalion, who wrote" *He was a favourite with his company, both men and officers. He is missed especially by his intimate pals. A good soldier, he died bravely doing his duty in the cause of righteousness and truth against error and wrong. It will be a comfort to you to know his body was recovered and given a Christian burial by a Church of England chaplain. His grave is in the military cemetery at Villers–Faucon and he is buried in nice dry soil. "*

Another letter from Harry Carson said "Frank *was with me for the first time he went into the trenches at Ypres. After that we were pals for, he was straight and sensible and could always be relied upon".*

A third letter from Private F. McGowan of the 1/7th Liverpool Regiment told Annie "*Your poor husband was killed in action by being buried by a shell and after we took over off his Brigade and was digging out the trenches we came across his body and after I had searched him and got his belongings he was taken to a small village at Villers- Faucon where he was buried with military honours. The only thing of value on him I am sending you and also his cap badge which I am sure you will cherish".*

His grandparents Mr. & Mrs. David Wharton had now lost three sons, a son-in-law and a grandson in the war.

Frank was awarded the British War and Victory Medals.

He is Remembered with Honour on Batley War Memorial, Cleckheaton War Memorial, St. John's Church, Carlinghow and Villers-Faucon Communal Cemetery, France.





Annie with their daughter Leah

Researched by members of Batley History Group