Leonard Sampson





Rank: - Private

Number: - 235124

Regiment / Battalion: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) 1/4th Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 11th October 1918 aged 22

Cemetery: - Queant Communal British Extension, Pas-de-Calais D 49

Queant was close behind the Hindenburg Line, at the South end of a minor defence system known as the Drocourt-Queant Line.

Batley News, 2 Nov 1918 (photo)

Family Details

Leonard was born in Batley on 30th April 1896 the son of Batley born Edward and his wife Hannah Elizabeth (nee Markland) who came from Wakefield. He was baptised at Batley Parish Church on the 14th June 1896 when his father's occupation was given as a tea dealer.

In 1901 the family with the addition of John Markland Sampson (1901) were living at 187, Taylor Street, Batley and Edward was described as a butter merchant.

By 1911 the family were still living in Taylor Street but Edward had changed his job to be a woollen willier. Their first-born child, Annie had died in 1892 aged six weeks. John Markland was born in 1901. Sadly, Edward died in June 1912.

Leonard attended Purlwell Council Schools and St. Andrew's Church. He was a member of Batley Working Men's Club and was employed as a piecener at Mark Oldroyd and Sons', Dewsbury.

His brother John Markland married Ettie Brett at Christ Church, Staincliffe on 8th May 1918.

His mother Hannah Elizabeth married Albert Jennings in 1921.

Service Details

Leonard joined the Duke of Wellington's in 1915. The 1/4th were part of 147th Brigade, 49th Division.

On the 6th October 1918 the battalion was moved by bus to the Buissy area coming along the main Arras- Cambrai road moving again on the 9th by march route to the Haynecourt area where they were accommodated along the Sunken Road.

On the 10th they moved with 1st Line Transport to the east of Escaudoevres area by the Railway Embankment arriving just before dark. Later the Commanding Officer was informed about details of an attack the following day. The battalion was now north of Rieux. Seven other ranks were wounded on the 10th

An advance party set off to reconnoitre the crossing of the Erclin river and the battalion moved off in fighting order just after midnight. Before 4 am they had met with heavy bursts of shell fire which caused some casualties. Zero hour was at 9 am and the battalion moved with the 1/7 Duke of Wellington's on the right and the 146 Infantry Brigade on the left. At first things went well but by 10.30 they were meeting strong resistance and the enemy suddenly counter attacked quite heavily with tanks and infantry. The battalion suffered heavily and the whole line started to slowly withdraw almost to the assembly positions they had started from.

Between 11.00 and 13.00 hours the Commanding Officer personally re-organised the battalion and the men returned to the attack. Considerable casualties were received during this second attack but the high ground was once again taken.

Five officers had been killed in action and 35 other ranks killed with 266 wounded and 12 missing. It is not known on which day Leonard was wounded but his mother was informed that he has died of wounds on the 11th October.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial, St. Andrew's Church, Purlwell and Batley Working Men's Club.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group