Albert Speight





Rank: - Private

Number: - 16/1430

Regiment: - Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire) 1st Bradford Pals 16th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 1st July 1916 aged 31

Memorial: - Thiepval, France. Pier and Face 2A, 2C, 2D

Batley News, 29 Jul 1916 (photo)

Family Details

Albert was born in Soothill, Batley in 1883 the son of Walter and Clara Speight (nee Hirst). The couple had married at All Saints, Dewsbury on 3rd August 1881.Walter had previously married Mary Hardacre at St. Thomas's, Batley on 25th December 1874 and they had a daughter Esther A. born in 1877. Mary died in 1880.

Walter and Clara had Albert (1883), Willie (1885), Arthur (1891-1892), Luther (1893) and Eunice (1895), they lived at 18, High Street, Hanging Heaton and Walter was a loom tuner. The 1911 census shows they had another child who had died in infancy. Walter of High Street died 13th November 1907.

Albert was well known in Hanging Heaton and had been connected with Hanging Heaton United Methodist Church from boyhood. At the time of his death he was an officer of the Sunday school and also a teacher.

In 1910 he married Sarah Kaye and the couple were living at 10, Stanley Place, Park Road, Batley when the 1911 census was taken. They later moved to 54, High Street, Hanging Heaton. Albert was employed as a power loom tuner and before enlisting worked at Messrs. G.H. Hirst's, Alexandra Mills, Batley.

Service Details

The 16th (Service) Battalion (1st Bradford Pals) came under the orders of 93rd Brigade, 31st Division.

Albert enlisted in Bradford on May 28th 1915 and went to Egypt December 2nd 1915. The Division took over the No.3 Sector of the Suez Canal defences and Divisional H.Q. moved to Kantara on 23rd January 1916. The stay in Egypt was short and between 1-6th March the Division sailed to Marseilles for service on the Western Front. Albert landed in France on the 5th March and moved to take part in the Battle of Albert including the attack on Serre which took place on the 1st July 1916.

On the 16th July Rev.T. Entwistle received a letter from Private Lewis Oates ,of Kirkgate, hanging Heaton, who was in the same regiment :-

" We took part in the great advance and it is with pain I have to inform you that my friend Albert was killed whilst doing his duty for King and Country.I would

have written sooner but we have not been out of the trenches long. I have made enquiries about him and I thought it would be best to ask if you would break the news to his wife and mother. I can assure you it is a great trouble to me and really did not know how to write and break the news to them. I conclude with my deepest sympathy to those who are near and dear to him."

News had arrived the week before that his brother Willie had been killed in action on the 6th July 1916 and his brother, Luther , was serving with the Royal Army Medical Corps at the Front. The two brothers were killed about 20 miles from each other.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Ebenezer Methodist Church,Hanging Heaton, Hanging Heaton War Memorial (St.Paul's) and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group