# Clifford Speight





**Rank:-**

**Number: -** 7624

**Regiment: -** Royal Fusiliers 23rd Battalion (1st Sportsman's)

**Died of Influenza: -** 19th November 1918 aged 23 years

**Cemetery: -** St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France S.111.O.11

Batley Reporter, 22 Nov 1918. Batley News, 30 Nov 1918 (photo)

**Family Details.**

Clifford was born in Batley on May 29th 1895 the eldest son of James Smethurst and Clara Speight (nee Oldroyd). The couple had married at the Wesleyan Chapel, Earlsheaton on 27th February 1894. James gave his occupation as a manufacturer's salesman.

In 1901 Earlsheaton born James and his family were living at 6, Field Hill, Batley and he gave his occupation as a woollen manufacturer, employer. Clara came from Hanging Heaton but all their children were born in Batley. Sydney was born in 1897 followed by twins Dennis and Harold on 28th November 1901 but Dennis sadly died in February 1902 aged 11 weeks, and John Oldroyd in November 1903.

Clifford attended Park Road School and Batley Grammar School but only was there for a short time starting in the summer term of 1909. After leaving school he went to work with his father as a clerk at Messrs. Simon Cooper, Bradford Road, Batley.

In 1911 the family was still in Field Hill and Clifford was working as a clerk but before Clifford died, they had moved to 87, Wood View Terrace, Bradford Road, Carlinghow.

He attended Cross Bank Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday school and was a member of Batley Liberal Club.

His younger brother, Sydney had been wounded twice during the war.

**Service Details**

Clifford enlisted in May 1915 and disembarked Boulogne in France on 14th November 1915. The 23rd Battalion from June 1915 came under the command of 99th Brigade, 33rd Division. On the 25th November 1915 they transferred with the Brigade to 2nd Division.

The first major battle Clifford would have encountered would have been the Battle of Delville Wood followed by the Battle of Ancre 1916 then taking part in operations on the Ancre.

In 1917 he would have taken part in the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, First and Second Battles of the Scarpe and Battles of Arleux and Cambrai.

In 1918 his battalion took part in the Battles of St. Quentin, Bapaume, First Battle of Arras 1918, Battles of Albert, Second of Bapaume, Havrincourt, Canal du Nord, Cambrai and Selle.

He had fought for three years in France but he died at Rouen Hospital on 19th November 1918 of influenza just 9 days after the Armistice.

Clifford was awarded the 1915 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Cross Bank Wesleyan Chapel, Batley Grammar School, Batley War Memorial and St. Sever Cemetery Extension.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group