Robert Spencer





Rank: - Private

Number: - 47553

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 1st Battalion

Died of Wounds: - 6th October 1918 aged 29

Cemetery: - Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France LXV11. H.15.

Family Details:

Robert was born in Batley in 1889 the son of Batley born George and Eliza Ellen (nee Emmes) Spencer who came from Suffolk.

In 1891 he was living at 28, Carlinghow Lane with his parents, older brother Hudson Adamson (1885) and his younger sister Lilly (1890).

Theresa Ellen was born in 1893, followed by George in March 1895 who died 6 months later. Before 1901 the family had moved to 188, Carlinghow Lane, which was a one bed roomed house and George was working as a card fettler in a woollen mill and Eliza was working as a weaver. Robert appears to be on the 1901 census twice, once living at Oxford Road, Gomersal as a boarder living with Charles Lighter, who was deaf and dumb and as an afterthought with his parents and siblings in Carlinghow Lane. In 1911 the family were still living in the same house, George and Robert were both textile workers and they had the addition of an adopted son Clifford Sykes, aged 9 born at Thornhill Lees. The 1911 census states that Robert was one of eight children born to the couple but four had died.

Robert married Ada Schofield at St. Mary's, Gomersal, on 10th May 1913 and his sister Lily was a witness. The couple went to live at Ross Street, Gomersal and Robert was working at Messrs. Brooke, Wilford & Co. as a fettler and attended White Lee Primitive Methodist Church.

His brother Hudson who had led quite an interesting life was also in the Forces.

Service Records:

Robert enlisted in 1917.

In September 1918 the battalion was stationed in Martin Eglise moving to Sus St. Leger near Bouqemaison on the 16th. They moved again on the 26th to Raineville at 2 pm to be stationed in the village.

At 5.30 pm on the 2nd October the battalion moved to support 149th Infantry Brigade in the Hindenburg Line. Two other ranks were killed and two other ranks were injured by a shell on the Lempire-Bony Road. On the 3rd they moved to a "jumping off" point to take Prospect Hill which they achieved at 10a.m. but they received a heavy barrage and two officers and 42 other ranks were killed and six

officers and 143 other ranks were wounded. On the 4th they moved near Guillemot Farm and five other ranks were wounded. Robert would have been one of these soldiers who were wounded in early October and moved to a clearing station where he died a few days later of his wounds.

He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

Robert is remembered with Honour at Carlinghow St John's Church, Batley War Memorial and Etaples Military Cemetery.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group