Herbert (Harry) Cyril Stead





Rank: - Private

Number: - 20191

Regiment: - West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own) 12th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 9th April 1917 aged 22 years

Cemetery: - Tilloy British Cemetery, Pas-de- Calais, France 1V.H. 28

"HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY"

Batley News, 5 May 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Herbert Cecil (Harry) was born in Batley Carr in c1894 the son of Dewsbury born Daniel and Annie Eliza Stead nee Hargreaves, who came from Stanley and was baptised at Holy Trinity Church on the 13th October 1894 when his father gave his occupation as a spinner living in Batley Carr. The couple had married at Batley Parish Church on 17th February 1894 when they both made their mark.

In 1901 the family with the additions of Ellen 1895 and Edith 1897 was living at 10, Beckett Road, Dewsbury. His mother Annie Eliza died in September 1910.

In 1911 the family was living in a three roomed home at 34, Beckett Road and Herbert was working as a cloth cutter.

Herbert (Harry) was actively connected with Batley Carr Primitive Methodist Church and was associated with the Christian Endeavour and Band of Hope movements there.

Before enlisting in 1915 he worked at Spa Mill, Batley Carr in the milling department.

Service Details

Herbert enlisted at Easter 1915 and had been at the Front about one year later. The 12th Battalion, when in France on 16th November 1915 transferred to the 9th Brigade in 3rd Division.

In 1916 they saw action at the Actions of the Bluff and St Eloi Craters (local operations 1916)
The Battle of Albert
The Battle of Bazentin in which the Division helped capture Longueval
The Battle of Delville Wood
The Battle of the Ancre
which were all phases of the Battles of the Somme 1916

On the 9th April 1917 the Division was in the trenches in front of Tilloy andthe 76th Brigade attacked and took the first line of the German defences at 5.30 am. The 9th Infantry Brigade attacked and captured the second line of defence at 7.30 am and many prisoners were taken. At 11.30 am Battalion H.Q. was established at Hastings Trench and later moved to Tilloy. The enemy's barrage

was very weak and the casualties were caused by hostile artillery fire whilst waiting in the trenches to advance. The casualties were 2 Officers killed, 6 wounded, other ranks 19 killed and 119 wounded. This was the first day of the First Battle of the Scarpe.
His father who had moved to live at Canary Island, Batley Carr received an official notice that Herbert had been wounded on 9th April but it was followed by a corporal friend who said he had seen Herbert and he was wounded in the arm and hoped he would get back to England.

Three days later his father received a letter from a Chaplain: -

"Private H.C. Stead of this Battalion was killed in action on April 9th. He was buried on the spot where he fell and the grave will be marked. I write to assure you of the deep sympathy of all who knew him for he was esteemed as a good comrade and keen soldier, always ready to do his utmost under any conditions. I am sure that later on you will find consolation and pride in the thought that he gallantly gave his life in the performance of his duty for his King and Country. "

The family also received a card from his Commanding Officer.

Herbert was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Warwick Road and under the name of Harry Stead on Batley Carr Primitive Methodist Church and he appears twice on Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group