John William Stenson





Rank: - Private

Number: - 64652

Regiment: - Northumberland Fusiliers (Formerly 43997 Yorkshire Regiment) 25th (Tyneside Irish) Bn.

Died in captivity of double pneumonia: - 31/10/1918 Age: 19 years

Cemetery: - Erquelinnes Communal Cemetery, Hainaut, Belgium 139

Batley News, 25 May 1918, 8 Jun 1918 (photo), 4 Jan 1919

Family Details

John William was born in Batley in Batley in c.1899 the son of John William and Charlotte Stenson nee Hey who had married on the 3rd February 1894 at Batley Parish Church.

In 1901 John William (snr.) who worked in and iron foundry was living with his wife and children Annie Damaris 1895 and John William at 24, Talbot Row, Bradford Road, Batley. Herbert was born in 1908 when His father had become a general dealer and the family was living at 1, Spa Hill, Batley. Before 1911 they had moved to 8, Yd 2, Wilson's Buildings, Bradford Road, Batley and John William was working on his own account as a bag maker and a light carter.

John William attended Park Road Council School and Zion United Methodist Sunday School and after leaving school helped his father in the business until he joined the Forces.

Service Details

John William enlisted in the Yorkshire Regiment but changed to the Northumberland Fusiliers. After training he went to France and had only been there for two weeks when he did not answer the roll call. **The Division fought at** the Battle of Estaires (9-11th April) and in May 1918 his family were informed that he was missing between the 11/14thApril.

They later heard from him saying he had been captured but the lastletter they had received supposedly from Friedrichsfeld near Wesel dated October 6th when he reported that he was quite well. They started to worry when no further news came.

In the following January after prisoners were released they received a letter from the mother of a Grimsby soldier who had been repatriated. Her son wanted to know if Jack had reached home because when he had last seen him at the end of October, he was very ill with double pneumonia and was taken to hospital. Mrs Dolby went on to say that regarding her own son," *When he got home, he was a wreck, and said another week would have finished them as they were pined to death. I hope your son got well and has got home. We should be pleased to know because my son often talks about him. He made a great friend of him."* Mr. and Mrs. Stenson immediately wrote to the lady.

Mrs Dolby wrote back with the following sad story

"*Your son was ill for three days and nights and on the fourth nigh he was unconscious. They were in a stable with horses to keep them warm. Then they took him to hospital in the town. They took some more boys the next day. My son asked the men who took the other boys if they knew Jack Stenson and they said he had gone, so he took it that they meant he had died, for he thinks he was dying when they took him away, as he knew nobody. But my son thought he would not say he was dead as he did not see him die. He says he wishes he had taken the card and photo out of his pocket before they took him away, and then he would have sent them to you, but he has got one photo of your son on if you would like to see it. We will send it to you to look at. I should have sent it but my son has lent it to another mother to look at. They call the town where they took your son Leval, Belgium. It was at the end of October.*"

Mr. and Mrs. Stenson were anxious to hear any further news regarding their son and they appealed in the local newspaper asking if any repatriated soldiers could give them any further information.

John William was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group