Joseph Stockdale





Rank: - Private

Number: - 240952

Regiment: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) 2/5th Battalion

Missing, presumed killed in Action: - 3rd May 1917 aged 20 years

Memorial: - Arras Memorial, Pas-de- Calais, France. Bay 6

Batley News, 26 May 1917 (photo), 13 Jul 1918

Family Details

Joseph was born in 1896 in Batley the youngest son of Henry James and Elizabeth Ann Stockdale nee Taylor. He was baptised at Robertown on the 22nd June 1896.The couple had married at St. Saviour's, Brownhill on 22nd March 1882. Elizabeth Ann had been born in Queensland, Australia but was a British subject.

Henry was a police constable and had joined the West Riding Constabulary on 27th June 1879 and moved around with his occupation. He was attached to the Dewsbury Division until he left the force on the 1st January 1906.

Percy Taylor Stockdale was born in June 1882 but sadly died when he was 7 days old and was buried at St. Paul's, Hanging Heaton on the 12th June 1882. Arthur was born in 1883 when the couple was living in Soothill but was baptised at St. Peter's Birstall. Annie was born in 1885 followed by Nelly who sadly died aged only a few weeks in 1887 and Olive was born in 1889 in Robert town.

In 1891 the couple was living at Robertown Road, Liversedge with their children Annie and Olive.

Annie died in February 1899 when the family was living at 16, Stanley Place, Batley. Lucy was born in 1899. When the 1901 census was taken the family was still at the same address. Arthur married Florence Annie Shires at St. Thomas's Church on the 14th May 1910.

Before 1911 the family had moved to live at 47, Primrose Hill, Batley. Henry described himself as a police pensioner but working in a woollen mill as a night watchman. Fifteen-year-old Joseph was working as an errand boy for a grocery store. Joseph attended Park Road Council School, was a member of the young men's class at St. Thomas's Church and before he enlisted worked as a piecener at Messrs. J.T. & J. Taylor, Blakeridge Mills, Batley.

Elizabeth Ann died in November 1923 before the c.w.g.c. took particulars of the soldiers.

Service Details

Joseph enlisted in January 1915 at Mirfield but did not go to France until January 1917.

The 2/5th Battalion was formed at Halifax in September 1914 as a home service ("second line") unit. They moved to Derbyshire on 1 March 1915 and came under

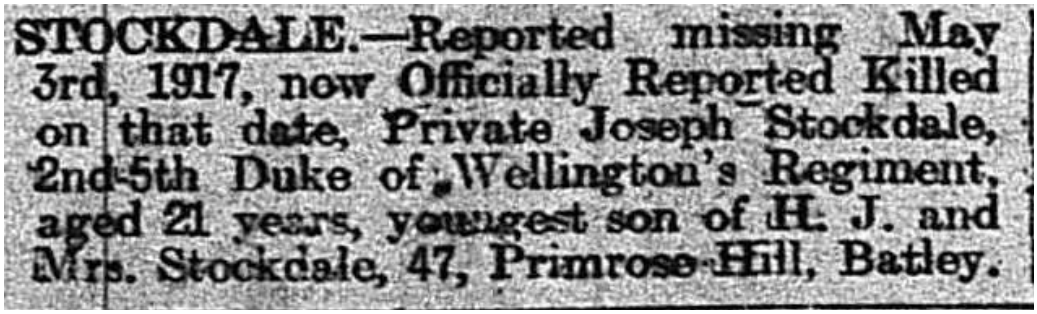
orders of 186th Brigade in 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division. They moved to Thorsby Park (Ollerton) in May 1915 then in October 1915 to Retford, November 1915 to Newcastle, January 1916 to Salisbury Plain, June 1916 Halesworth, October 1916 to Bedford before landing in France in January 1917.

They took part in the Operations on the Ancre (15 February – 13 March),
the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line (14 – 19 March),
the first attack on Bullecourt (part of the Arras offensive) (11 April),
the German attack on Lagnicourt (part of the Arras offensive) (15 April),
the Battle of Bullecourt (part of the flanking operations round Arras) (3 – 17 May).

Joe was with the Duke of Wellington's who had got into a tight corner on the 3rd May but was seen returning, but it was thought he had lost his way and had been taken a prisoner.

His chum Rowland Ellis of Mirfield sent the news home that he was missing.

Official news arrived in July and was in the Batley News dated 13th July 1918.


STOCKDALE.—Reported missing May 3rd, 1917, now Officially Reported Killed on that date, Private Joseph Stockdale, 2nd-5th Duke of Wellington's Regiment, aged 21 years, youngest son of H. J. and Mrs. Stockdale, 47, Primrose Hill, Batley.

Joseph was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

He is remembered with Honour at St. Thomas's Church, Up Lane Sunday School and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group