Harry Summers





Rank: - Private

Number: - 37856

Regiment: - Highland Light Infantry 2nd Battalion

Killed in Action: - 3rd June 1917 aged 26 years

Cemetery: - Orchard Dump Cemetery, Arleux-en-Gohelle, Pas-de- Calais, France V.A.22

Batley News, 16 Jun 1917 (photo)

Family Details

Harry was born in Soothill in 1892 the son of John William and Hannah Martha Summers nee Turver.

In 1901 the Summer family which comprised of John William, Hannah Martha and their children Ernest 1884, Albert Edward 1885, Harry, Arthur 1895, and Esther Ann 1898 were living at the bottom of Soothill Lane near the Victoria Inn. John William who came from Driffield was employed as a teamer.

In 1911 the family was living in a three roomed house at 3, Phoenix Mill Yard, Station Road, Batley. Herbert had been born in 1904. The census shows us that Harry was working as mill hand and one child had died in infancy.

Harry attended Mill Lane Council School and Soothill Congregational Church. Before enlisting he worked in the finishing department of Messrs. G. & J. Stubley.

Service Details

Newspaper reports suggest that Harry enlisted in February 1916 and went to France in April 1917.

The 2nd Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry was part of 18th Brigade in 6th Division.

On the 1st June the battalion was in the trenches at Arleux where they spent a very quiet day but the trenches had to be cleared of mud because they were very wet because of the rain on the 31st May. The 2nd was also a quiet day but inter-company relief was interrupted because of enemy shelling and bright moonlight.

On the 3rd there was heavy shelling on the front of the Division on the left and several light barrages on the front and support lines during the early hours of the morning. The battalion was relieved by the 13th Essex with it being completed by 12.45 am on the 4th.

Harry would have been one of the men killed during this shelling.

His parents of Phoenix Mill Yard, Batley received the following letter: -

"It is my unpleasant duty to inform you that your son was killed on June 3rd about 4 p.m. We are sorry to lose him for he was one of the best and quietest soldiers in my platoon. His chums wish me to send their deepest sympathy and to say that if they do get in touch with any Boche, full toll will be exacted. He was buried in a soldiers' cemetery, and all the honour due to a brave and gallant soldier as we laid him to rest. A cross, suitably inscribed, marks his resting place. I must offer my sincere heartfelt sympathy in this your hour of trial."

At the time of his death his two brothers were in the Forces, Gunner Arthur R.G.A was in France and Albert of the Canadians was in hospital in Hastings from illness. Albert had been wounded twice.

Harry was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Soothill Congregational Church, Hanging Heaton War Memorial (St. Paul's) and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group