Herbert Sutcliffe





Rank: - Corporal

Number: -242522

Regiment: - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 9th Battalion (formerly 5135)

Killed in Action: - 7th November 1918

Cemetery: - Mauberge-Centre, Nord, France D 2

"GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS"

Batley News, 23 Nov 1918 (photo) Batley Reporter, 5 Apr 1918

Family Details

Herbert was born in Ossett in 1887 the second son of John William and Rhoda Sutcliffe nee Feather. The couple had married on 23rd December 1882 at Gawthorpe. Thomas Harold was born in Ossett in 1884 followed by Herbert before the family moved to Soothill before the birth of Clifford in 1890, who sadly died in October 1893 aged 3 years, Ida 1893 and Ella 1894.

In 1891 the family was living at Lady Ann Road, Soothill and John William was employed as a gas stoker and Herbert as a grocer's assistant but within the next 10 years they had moved to live at 36, Purlwell Hall Road, Batley and Herbert was working as a grocers assistant for the Batley Co-operative Society. The family was still at the same address when the 1911 census was taken and it shows John William was then working on his own account as a fried fish vendor and that two children had died in infancy. John William later became the well-known grounds man and football trainer at Mount Pleasant.

Before enlisting Herbert had become well known as a grocery assistant at the Mount Pleasant branch of the Batley Co-operative Society.

In January 1918 he married Gertrude Oldroyd in the Dewsbury area. They lived at her family home which was Hazlehurst 122, North Road, Ravensthorpe Dewsbury.

Service Records

His service records have not survived but from his medal records we know he did not serve abroad before 31st December 1915. In April 1918 the Batley Reporter reported that he had been wounded but he returned to his duties.

In 1916 the battalion was in action in the Battles of the Somme, including The Battle of Morval in which the Division captured Geudecourt. In 1917 they were in action during the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, the Arras offensive, the Third Battles of Ypres and The Cambrai Operations. In 1918 they fought on The Somme then moved north and were in action during the Battles of the Lys, the Battle of the Aisne, The Somme, the Battles of the Hindenburg Line and the Final Advance in Picardy.Corporal Herbert Sutcliffe was killed during heavy fighting leading a platoon into battle to take the villages around the area of Limont-Fontaine as part of the Battle of Sambre:

At nightfall on November 5th most of the 21st Div. had reached the west bank of the Sambre. During the night light bridges were thrown across the river and the infantry in the right of the division forced a crossing which enabled the remainder further north to do the same. Throughout November 6th the advance was continued relentlessly. Though the transport was hindered by the desperate condition of the roads through the forest, the infantry pushed ahead enthusiastically.

The 110th Infantry Brigade was leading this day, and on the morning of the 7th it went ahead to seize the first objective of the day. The 64th Brigade then extended for attack and passed through. In spite of excellent formation and good leading on the part of the company officers, the morning advance was held up by the intense fire of guns and machine guns. A fresh attack was organised in the afternoon on the villages about Limont-Fontaine.

The 9/KOYLI was in the front line**.** *Ably led, the battalion this time made splendid progress and carried all before it by sheer determination. The villages were stoutly held and fierce fighting took place in the streets both of Limont and Eclaibes; the men fought regardless of casualties and simply refused to be denied the victory they had set out to gain. Both these villages were captured and cleared of the enemy, many of whom were taken prisoner. The 17th Div. went through at midday on the 8th and the 21st retired from the front line for a rest.*

The 9/KOYLI withdrew to Bachant, and on to Berlaimont. On November 11th it was on the march to Limont again (the battalion's own village by right of capture) when the news of the Armistice reached the men on the march. There was no outward demonstration, but inwardly no doubt there was a supreme feeling of satisfaction.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial, Batley Co-operative Roll of Honour and Purlwell Wesleyan Chapel. Military details from Ossett.net (with permission).



Researched by members of
Batley History Group