George Swift





Rank: - Private

Number:-62783

Regiment:-King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (formerly Training 5/93972 Reserve Battalion) 9th Battalion

Killed In Action: - 8th August 1918 aged 18

Cemetery:-Mainly Wood Cemetery, Mainly Mallet, Somme, France 11.P.9.

"WORTHY OF REMEMBRANCE"

Batley News, 31 Aug 1918 (photo)

Family Details

George was born in Batley in the latter part of 1899 the son of Samuel and Alice Ann Swift (nee Hey Darley). The couple already had two daughters Damaris (1896) and Hannah (1898). In 1901 the family was living at 38, Talbot Row off Bradford Road and Holmfirth born Samuel was working as a rag grinder. Sadly Samuel died in September 1902. The family moved to Clarence Street where Alice Ann died in January 1906. The three children were orphaned and Damaris went to live with Harry and Sarah Wood who were relatives at 2, Back Cross Park Street, Hannah was adopted by John Stenson but sadly died in December 1910. George was adopted by Miss Mary Ellen Fox who was living next door at 40, Talbot Row in 1901; they continued to live in Talbot Row where Mary Ellen had lived most of her life.

George attended Park Road School and had a lifelong connection with Zion Chapel and Sunday school. He was also a member of the Zion Boys' Brigade and a junior member of the Batley Liberal Club.

Prior to enlisting George worked for Messrs. William Ward & Sons, rag merchants, of Well Lane, Batley.

Service Details

George enlisted in November 1917 and went to France in June 1918.

The 9th Battalion came under the orders of 64th Brigade in 21st Division.

Eighteen year old George was only in France a few weeks and would not have encountered any major battles when he was killed. It was reported to Mary Ellen by a Chaplain that George and others were cleaning a machine gun on the 8th August 1918 when a German shell fell near them, killing three of the soldiers. Private 39823 Clifford Basford and Private 64913 P. S. Sanford, both from Sheffield, would have been the other two.

George was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal and is remembered with Honour at Mainly Wood Cemetery, Zion Methodist Church, Batley and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group