Harry Sykes



Rank: - 3rd Air Mechanic

Number: - 83807

Regiment: - Royal Air Force 27th Squadron

Died of Bronchial-Pneumonia at Staincliffe Base Hospital: - 08/12/1918 Aged 28 years

Cemetery: - Batley, Yorkshire H 305

Batley News, 14 Dec 1918

Family Details

Harry was born in Batley in 1890 the son of James and Sarah Sykes nee Blackburn who had married on the 11th March 1885 at Holy Trinity Church, Huddersfield. In 1891 when the census was taken, he was six months old and living at 41, Norfolk Street, Batley with his parents and siblings Florence 1886 and Annie 1887 and his maternal grandmother Rebecca Blackburn. His father was a woollen cloth designer working at New Ing Mills, Batley but sadly he died in May 1891.

The family went to live at 1, Talbot Street, Batley and his mother worked as a stumper in a woollen mill. His grandmother Rebecca Blackburn died in April 1902.

Before 1911 Harry as working as an electrical wireman for Mr. Herbert Hainsworth of Batley. In July 1913 he and his mother and sister, Annie, who was a tailoress, emigrated to Quebec, Canada on board the "Virginia" arriving there on the 12th. They settled in Toronto.

He arrived back in England on the 9th September 1914 on board the "Adania" with the aim of going to stay with relatives at Westgate, Dewsbury. At first, he worked for Mr. Hainsworth in Batley but before he had enlisted, he moved to Darlington.

Service Details

It is not certain when he enlisted but he went to France about April 1917 and saw seventeen months continual service there before he came to Batley on leave and stayed with Mr. Sam Wilson and family of Carlinghow Hill, Batley. He complained that he had not been feeling very well and his condition grew worse and was taken to Staincliffe Base Hospital where he died from bronchial pneumonia. He was buried at Batley Cemetery on the 13th December and his coffin was draped with the Union Jack and borne to the graveside by R.A.M.C. men from the hospital.

Amongst those present were Mr.& Mrs. Percy Idle (brother-in-law and sister), Misses L.A. and Annie Sykes (Huddersfield) aunts, Mr.& Mrs. E. Blackburn (cousins), Mr.& Mrs. Sam Wilson and Tom and Allen Wilson and Airman Newsome Taylor who was his friend in the R.A.F.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial.

