John William Sykes





Rank: - Rifleman

Number: - 13124

Regiment: - New Zealand Rifle Brigade 1st Battalion

Died of Wounds at 2nd Australian Hospital, France: - 18th/19October 1918

Cemetery: - Terlincuthin British Cemetery, Wimille, Pas-de-Calais, France V1.A.13

Family Details

John William was born in Batley in 1886 and baptised at Broomhill Chapel, Taylor Street on 21st November 1886 the son of David Bradley and Charlotte Ann Sykes nee Boothroyd who had married in the Dewsbury District in 1886.

In 1891 the family with the additions of Allen 1888 and Arthur 1890 was living off Dark Lane, Batley and Batley born David was employed as a woollen warp dresser.

Before 1901 the family had moved to 5, North Parade, Mount Pleasant and 14 year old John William was working as a piecer at a woollen mill. Walter was born in October 1895 and Elizabeth Hannah in the latter part of 1901.

His father was employed for many years at the Clerk Green Mills of Messrs. J. Auty and Co. and was associated with the bowling section of the Batley C.A. & F. Club. John William attended Purlwell School and was remembered in Batley as an employee at the C.W.S. Mill, Batley Carr.

On the 24th July 1908 the family left London on board the "Ionic" for Wellington, New Zealand. David, John William, Allen and Arthur gave their occupations as farmers. They settled in Gisborne in Hawk's Bay, North Island and on his military records it states he was a railway employee.

Service Details

It is not known when John William enlisted but he visited Batley about a month before his death and stayed with his aunt and uncle Mr. & Mrs. J. T. Wilman before returning to France.

Letters from the matron of the 2nd Australian Hospital, France, where he had been taken after being wounded in the ankle, described him as being a handsome Britisher of good physique, and said he went under treatment for the injury. His condition became so serious that the foot had to be removed above the ankle. He never rallied after the operation and was buried in a nearby cemetery with the other brave lads.

His brother Rifleman Allen Sykes with the same company had also visited his relatives in Batley when under treatment at Brockenhurst for an injured knee but was later discharged and returned to New Zealand.

Walter Sykes was in training in New Zealand.

His parents lived at 704, Albert Road, Hastings, Hawk's Bay, New Zealand in the 1920's.

He is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial and Hastings War Memorial, New Zealand.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group