George Henry Thompson





Rank: - Private

Number: - 4593

Regiment: - Coldstream Guards 1st Battalion

Killed in Action: - 06/09/1914 Age: 27 years

Cemetery: - Montreuil-aux-Lions British Cemetery, Aisne, France Sp.Mem.

"EVER REMEMBERED"

Batley News, 26 Sept 1914 (photo)

Family Details

George Henry was born in Sabden, near Bentham, North Yorkshire in c.1885 the only son of William and Honor Thompson nee Bingham, m. 1885, registered Settle.

He was their eldest child and was followed by Alice 1888 and Elizabeth 1889 who were all living at 4, Lenkel Row, Sabden, Pendleton in 1891. William was a general labourer. Margaret was born in 1892 followed by Ruth Anne in 1894 Emma 1897 who sadly died before her first birthday and Ellen Honor 1910.

In 1911 his parents and sisters were living at 8, Wesley Street, Sabden but George Henry had joined the police force and was stationed in Batley staying at the home of widowed Ellen Chappell of 5, Healey Lane, Batley. He was a Police Constable with the West Riding Constabulary. Previously to joining the police he had served three years in the Coldstream Guards and was described as being a sturdily built man and well groomed. His superior officers at Batley spoke highly of his work. He was exceedingly popular, a capable officer, affable and well conducted, he had a host of friends.

In 1913 he married Eleanor Busfield (reg. Skipton) but continued to work at Hanging Heaton, Batley.

Service Details

War was declared shortly after midnight on the 4th August 1914 and a few hours earlier George had been enjoying a show at the Dewsbury Empire. A slide was thrown onto the screen announcing mobilisation and the desire of the authorities that all Reservists should report themselves to their respect depots. After a brief visit home, he caught the 10 o'clock train, with the Batley Ambulance Volunteers to Chatham. There was a fantastic send off for the Ambulance men but George and Police Constable Allcock was seen off by Inspector Ripley and they travelled in the guard's van.

George rejoined his unit at Chelsea and then went to Aldershot where he was on patrol duty until August 21st when he left for France. Writing just before he left: -

"I am in the pink but I have lost a lot of flesh since I joined the regiment. It has brought me down to my proper fighting weight. We will give the Germans what for when we get at them. I don't mind fighting but it is those whom I have left at home that I think most about."

On arrival in France he was not allowed to give his whereabouts but he did send a postcard to Inspector Ripley on September 4th saying hot days, cold nights and protracted marches.

His wife had returned to her family home at Linton near Grassington when George left Batley and when she heard the news that he had been killed informed the police authorities and after a brief visit to their Bromley Street, Batley home returned to Linton on the same day. It was not known if he had fallen on the 8th, 9th or 10th at this time because on these days the Coldstreams had suffered serious losses when the Germans were being driven back from the Marne.

George was awarded the 1914 Star + Clasp, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Hanging Heaton War Memorial (St Paul's); West Riding Police, Sabden War Memorial and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group