William Schofield Vero



Rank: - Private

Number: - 33300

Regiment: - Duke of Edinburgh's (Wiltshire) 7th Battalion (formerly 11678 Royal Fusiliers)

Killed in Action: - 7th October 1918 aged 21 or 4th October (see Obituary)

Remembered with Honour: - Vis-en- Artois Memorial, Pas-de-Calais, France. Panel 9

Family Details:

William Schofield Vero was born in Batley in 1898 to Pontefract born George Senior Vero and his wife Annie (nee Schofield) who was born in Bradford. The couple had married at Batley Parish Church in 1895. Senior Vero, George's father, was a Master Hat Manufacturer and had moved his family to live in Pontefract but later he moved nearly back to his birthplace of Dewsbury by opening a shop in Batley.

William was the eldest child and he was followed by two sisters Alice (1900) and Elinor (1903). They lived at 4, Market Place, Batley above the shop where his father was described as a Hatter and hosiery dealer. In 1901 the family had a live-in servant called Rosetta Denison.

He attended Batley Parish Day School and Batley Grammar School and after leaving school he helped his father in the family business of Gents Outfitters.

His father, George Senior Vero had suffered a double blow in June 1917 when his mother died after residing with her son Charles at Summerbridge since the death of her husband on 10th April at Harrogate. Mrs Vero was 77 when she died and had been an invalid for a considerable time but both her and her husband was well known in Batley.



Service Details:

William enrolled in Batley in August 1916 into the Royal Fusiliers, where he became Private 11678, however he transferred to the Duke of Edinburgh's Wiltshire Regiment where he was given the number 33300. He was sent in December 1916 to Salonika in Greece where he served over 18 months and also where he was wounded.

The Wiltshire's were formed in Devizes in September 1914 as part of the New Armies and came under command of 79th Brigade in 26th Division. After training they landed in France in September 1915 moving to Salonika, Greece in November 1915. In June 1918 the Battalion left the Division and returned to France arriving at Serqueux on 1st July 1918 from the 16th July 1918 they were attached to 150th Brigade in 50th (Northumberland) Division. William was wounded in Salonika but later went to France. He came home on leave returning to France in early September 1918.

The 150th Brigade had been in three of the great battles of 1918 against the German offences. The men were tired and exhausted and a decision had been to rebuild the Division, the original units left and others arrived to take their place. It was not until October 1918 that it was considered for the Division to take the field.

The Battles of the Hindenburg Line began on 12th September 1918 with the Battle of Havrincourt which lasted for a month with the Third Army taking part. The 50th Northumberland Division was part of the Fourth Army under Rawlinson and took part in the Battle of Beaurevoir Line (3rd -5th October 1918) and the Battle of Cambrai (8th -9th October).

The war diary of the 7th Wiltshire Regiment records that on October 3rd the battalion marched to the
Hindenburg Line and by 10 o'clock that day they had relieved the 1st Battalion Yorkshire Light Infantry in their positions at Prospect Hill. On the next day the 7th Battalion attacked the German positions o Prospect Hill and captured their trenches and several to the north of their positions. A total of 152 German Prisoners were taken in the course of the attack and one field gun was seized. Twenty-five machine guns were taken and seven carrier pigeons were also" taken prisoner. "

For the next two days the war diary records that the positions on Prospect Hill were held despite heavy German attacks, which were repulsed. William Schofield Vero was a signaller with the Wiltshire Regiment and would have been very busy here sending his messages. On October 6th the diary states that an attack was mounted on the German positions at 11.30 am It reads:

"Battalion attacked line North of Guisencourt Farm, together with 2nd Royal Munster Fusiliers and 2nd Northumberland Fusiliers. Battalion Held up by barbed wire and machine gun fire"

The battalion were later ordered to advance and occupy the Bearevoir line after it as reported to be unoccupied The Battalion advanced at 11.45 hours and came under heavy machine gun fire from high ground to east in the direction of Villiers Farm.

By 8pm the Battalion were relieved by the 149th Brigade and went into bivouacked positions in Bony

It is recorded that William died on 7th October but he has no known grave. Between 4th and 6th August five officers and 217 other ranks were reported as killed, missing or wounded. His name appears in the appendix "following battle casualties occurred between 4.10.1918 and 7.10.1918 "33300 Sig Vero S appears under Killed in Action "A" Company.

A report in the Batley News dated 19th October 1918 stated that a brother signaller has sent his pay book home saying "the owner had been killed in Action. " He had only been back at the Western Front three weeks following a leave.

The following year the following year the following was in the Batley news indicating that William had actually been killed on the 4th and details would have been received by his parents from the person who found his pay book.


VERO.—In loving memory of William Schofield Vero, 7th Wiltshire Regt., only son of George S. Vero, and Annie Vero, killed in action October 4th, 1918, aged 20 years.

Batley News 4 October 1919

VERO.—In loving memory of Signaller William S. Vero, 7th Wiltshires, aged 20, killed in action between 4th and 7th Oct., only son of George S. and Annie Vero, 4, Market Place, Batley.

2 November1918 Batley News

William is commemorated on: Vis-en–Artois Military Cemetery, Batley War Memorial, Batley Grammar School and Batley Parish Church

He was awarded the British War Medal 1914-1918 and the Victory Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group