John Ernest Wade





Rank: - Private

Number: - 203390

Regiment: - York and Lancaster 1/5th Battalion

Killed in Action: - 26th April 1918 aged 29

Memorial: - Tyne Cot Memorial, West Vlaanderen, Belgium. Panel 125-128

Family Details

John Ernest was born in Batley on 4th June 1889 the son of John and Martha (nee Colbeck) Wade. He was baptised on 20th April 1890 when the family was living at Bradford Road, Batley. In 1891 the family with his elder sister Florence born 1887 was living in Bridge Street, Batley and Suffolk born, John, was a cloth finisher. Edith Anne was born in 1893 in Batley.

John Ernest attended Park Road School and later became a beamer and then a warper working at Mess's G. & J. Stubley's, Bottom Mills, Batley.

In 1911 the family was living at Clarence Street, Batley. He became a well-known member of Dewsbury Harriers.

On the 6th June 1914 he married Alice Johnson at Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr. Sydney was born in 1915 but sadly died in July 1917. Winifred was born in 1916 and the family lived at 13, King Street, Batley Carr. Before the Cwgc made a memorial Alice had moved nearer to her in laws and was living at 2, Back Holland Street, Batley.

Service Details

John Ernest enlisted in the York and Lancaster Regiment at Dewsbury in December 1916. He was gassed in July 1917 and returned to his unit in December 1917. His last letter home was written on 24th April 1918 two days before he was killed.

At the beginning of April, the regiment was at Polderhoek and was relieved by the 1/5th West York's and went to Manawatu Camp near Zillebeke Lake.

On the 10th April the battalion was being bussed to Neuve Eglise but they were de-bussed before reaching their destination because news arrived that the Germans had broken through the defence at Neuve Chapelle and Ploegsteert.

On the 19th April the battalion was relieved by the 83rd French battalion and marched to bivouacs 2 miles north of West outré arriving at 1 am on the 20th. That afternoon they marched to Toronto Camp near Brandhoek where they trained and took over a reserved position for Wytschaete which was held by 146th Brigade although the actual hill top was held by the enemy. On the

morning of the 24th notice was given to be ready to move with 2 hours' notice previous to an enemy attack on Mount Kemmel.

At 1 p.m. on the 25th the battalion was ordered to move to ground S.E. of Ouderdom and remain in artillery formation in readiness for operations. They arrived at 2.30 p.m.

On the 26th at 1 a.m. they moved to an old line of trenches N.W. of Cheapside Road and occupied the line with 1/4th York and Lancaster Regiment on the left and Durham Light Infantry and 9th K.O.Y.L.I. on the right, this was near Ridge Wood and the Vierstraat Road. At 4.25 a.m. the moved with the others to reach trench line between Vierstraat- Kemmel Road but after 2 hours of heavy fighting they had to withdraw to the original line due to the strength of the enemy and the weakness of their artillery barrage.

On the 26th 2 officers and 8 other ranks were killed; 3 officers and 57 other ranks were wounded and 3 other ranks were missing.

John Ernest is remembered with Honour at the Ebenezer Methodist Church, Hanging Heaton, and Batley War Memorial.

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group