James Arthur Waldey





Rank: - Gunner

Number: - 152785

Regiment: - Royal Field Artillery 32nd Bde. H.Q.

Died following an operation: - 27/01/1917 Age: 38 years

Cemetery: - Couin New British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France A.3

"EVER DEAR"

Batley Reporter, 9 Feb 1917 (photo)

Family Details

James Arthur was born in Batley on the 14th April 1878 the son of William and Martha Waldey (nee Beaumont, m. 22 Nov 1857, Thornhill, St Michael and All Angels). He was baptised at Batley Parish Church on the 6th October 1878 when his father gave his occupation as a miner living at Purlwell, Batley.

In 1881 he was living with his parents and siblings Ada 1859-1886, Mary 1863, John Henry 1865, Hannah, Elizabeth 1867, Jane A Martha 187 and Clara at Suffolk Street, Batley.

In 1891 the family had moved to 32, Victoria Street, Batley with the addition of Annie 188 and William had changed his occupation to become a farm labourer and James Arthur was an apprentice as a painter. In 1901 the family was still at the same address but William was once more a coal miner. In 1911 77-year-old William and his wife and three granddaughters were living at 25, Wright's Buildings, Carlinghow Hill, Batley. The census shows the couple had a total of eleven children but five had died. William gave his occupation as a pensioner (retired farmer). Martha died in December 1915 and William in May 1919.

On the 9th June 1900 he married milliner, Agnes Louisa Battye at Batley Parish Church. George William was born later the same year but sadly died in June 1904. In 1901 they were living at 13, Bond Street, Batley.

In 1911 James and his wife and daughters Ivy May 1903 and Fanny 1908 were living at 16, Tillotson Street, Batley in a three roomed home.

James Arthur worked for Batley Co-operative Society before enlisting as a painter having been in their employ for 18 months previous to which he had worked for many years for Mr. George Spedding, painter and decorator.

He attended Park Road Baptist Church and was a member of the Batley Volunteer Lodge of Oddfellows.

The family later moved to 1, Thomas Street, off Blakeridge Lane, Batley.

Service Details

James Arthur enlisted in Batley in July 1916 and disembarked in France in December 1916 and only been at the front about six or seven weeks. A comrade H. Wildsmith wrote to his wife: -

"I am very sorry to tell you, Mr. Waldey was taken ill yesterday and they have taken him to some hospital for a rest. He was so done up with a cold that I told him I would send you word. I think he will be all right in a few days. He has got one cold on another and gone on until he was forced to give in. It is so cold up here and we don't get quite so many home comforts. We have been on fatigue work together and he kept complaining how queer he felt. I wanted him to see the doctor but he would keep going on until he was obliged to give in."

The following day Mrs. Waldey received a letter from a Sister at a Corps Operating Centre to which it was stated her husband had been admitted suffering from an internal complaint. "*He had to be operated on at once and at present he is doing as well as can be expected. It is too soon after the operation for me to be able to say a great deal about his condition, except that he is very ill indeed. Everything possible is being done for him and we must hope for the best."*

The same Sister wrote again: -

"He sank into semi-consciousness last evening and passed away about midnight of January 27th. He did not suffer much pain and was most grateful for anything done for him. His one desire was to see you and his two dear little girls. He will be buried in a military cemetery for British soldiers, and his grave will be marked by a cross."

James Arthur was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

He is remembered with Honour at Batley Co-operative Society, Park Road Baptist Church and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group