# Albert Walker







**Rank: -** Private

**Number: -** 209964

**Regiment: -** Kings' Own Yorkshire Light Infantry 9th Battalion

**Died of Wounds: -** 27th November 1918 aged 27 sustained October 1918.

**Cemetery: -** Etaples Military Cemetery L.1.C.17

**Batley News, 7 Dec 1918 (photo)**

**Family Details**

Albert was born in Batley Carr in 1891 the eldest surviving son of John and Hannah Walker (nee Wilcox). Harry was born in 1889 but sadly died aged 8 months in January 1890. Albert was followed by Charlotte (1893), John Willie (1895), Horace (1898-1925), Elizabeth (1900), Nellie (1902-1943) Annie (1904), Arthur (1908-1933).

At the time of the 1891 census he was aged 3 months and was living with his parents at 26, Albert Street, Batley.

In 1901 the family was living at 20, Albert Street, Batley. His father, John died in 1911.

Albert attended the Church School at Batley Carr and played football for Dewsbury United.

He worked at J. Fenton's, Headfield Mills, Savile Town as a dyer before enlisting.

On 17th March 1917 he married, by licence, Laura Sykes at St.Peter's Church, Earlsheaton who lived at 39, New Street, Earlsheaton.

**Service Details**

Albert enlisted at Dewsbury and disembarked in France on 15th August 1915.

The 9th Battalion was in the 21st Division and 1915 they fought at the Battle of Loos.

In 1916 they fought at the Battles of Albert, Bazentin Ridge, Flers-Courcelette, Morval in which the Division captured Geudecourt and Transloy.
In 1917 they saw more action at the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line the First and Third Battles of the Scarpe, and flanking operations around Bullecourt all near Arras.

They moved near Ypres and fought at the Battles of Polygon Wood, Broodseinde and the second Battle of Passchendaele before taking part in the Cambrai operations.

In 1918 they fought at the Battles of St.Quentin, First Battle of Bapaume, Messines, Second of Kemmel, Aisne, Albert, Second of Bapaume, moving to the

Battles of the Hindenburg Line which were the Battles of Epehy, St.Quentin Canal and Cambrai (8th-10th October). The Battle of Selle was a phase of the Final Advance in Picardy (17th -25th October).

After a six-day halt for preparations and artillery bombardments Fourth Army troops attacked at 5.20 a.m. on Thursday 17 October. Infantry and tanks, preceded by a creeping barrage, moved forward on a 10-mile (16 km) front south of Le Cateau. The centre and left of the Fourth Army forced crossings of the river, despite unexpectedly strong German resistance and much uncut barbed wire. Fighting was particularly fierce along the line of the Le Cateau–Wassigny railway. The right of the attack, across the upland watershed of the Selle, made most progress and by nightfall the German defences had been broken and Le Cateau captured. Fighting continued from 18–19 October, by which time Fourth Army, much assisted by the French First Army on its right, advanced over 5 miles (8.0 km), harrying the Germans back towards the Sambre–Oise Canal.

The British Third and First Armies, north of the Fourth Army, maintained the offensive pressure the following day. In a surprise joint night attack in the early morning of 20 October, Third Army formations secured the high ground east of the Selle. Following a two-day pause, to bring up heavy artillery, the attack was renewed on 23 October with a major combined assault by Fourth, Third and First Armies; the fighting, which continued into the next day, resulted in further advances. At this stage, the German Army was retreating at a forced but controlled pace. On 24 October, the German Army counterattacked at the Canal de la Derivation but were repulsed and pushed back by the Belgian Army.

This was the last major battle in the Great War for the 21st Division when Albert was wounded and died a month later in France of his wounds.

Albert was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He is remembered with Honour at Dewsbury and Batley War Memorials, Earlsheaton Park War Memorial; St Peter's Church, Earlsheaton; Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group