William Ward



Photo courtesy Jane Roberts

Obituary: Batley Reporter, page 3, 16 Apr 1920 (Inquest)

Rank: Private

Service Number: 55263

Regiment: - Northumberland Fusiliers (Formerly 48028 Lincolnshire Regt.) 3rd Bn (Depot)

Date of Death: Thursday, 08 Apr 1920 Age: 43 years

Cemetery: Hanging Heaton, St Paul's. Grave No. 1482

William was born in Carlinghow, Batley on 29 April 1876, the eldest son of George and Nancy (nee Day) Ward. Sarah Ann was born 1878 but died in January 1881, Harry was born in 1880, John 1884-1895, Thomas 1887, and Mary 1891.

William married Harriet Hannah Smith on 23 July 1904 at St. Paul's Church, Hanging Heaton. The couple lived at 232, Commonside, Hanging Heaton. William worked as a willeyer in a woollen mill but had served time in the Volunteers for 3 years and 6 months. He attested for the Middlesex Regiment 26th (Service) Battalion (3rd Public Works Pioneers), on 13 November 1915, but was discharged on 26 March 1916.

He re-enlisted again and was called up on the 29 Dec 1916 at first in the Durham Light Infantry, before a transfer to the Labour Company, Lincolnshire Regiment No. 48028 on 31st March 1917 and disembarked in France on 5 April 1917 only to return to England on the 25th April 1917. He was admitted to hospital in England with a carbuncle on his back but he had also got trench fever. William was transferred in July 1917 to the 2/6th Northumberland Fusiliers no.55263.

He was discharged from the army as medically unfit for war service on 16 September 1917 because of osteoarthritis and his war service overseas had exacerbated this. He was awarded the Silver War Badge to show he was unfit to fight.

In September 1919 William suffered from bronchitis and had consulted a doctor. His wife told an inquest, in April 1920, that he had been working for about a week, as a hopper minder, at the Clerk Green Mills of Messrs Joseph Auty and Company, when on the morning of February 24th1920 he had an accident at the mill. When she saw him later at Batley Hospital, he had a cut over his right eye and one leg was swollen. He told her he "*slipped and put his hand out, and knew nothing more*." Also at the inquest, Dr. J.H. Woods J.P. said he was called to the mill by a workman between five and six o'clock in the morning and found him bleeding from a wound, over the right eyebrow and suffering from the effects of shock. He ordered his removal to hospital. William remained in hospital until the following Friday, when he was conveyed home in a cab. On the following Monday he had to take to his bed, where he remained until his death on Thursday April when he died.

Dr Woods next saw him on April 1st at the request of an insurance company. William was critically ill in bed, so he did not make an examination. He did examine William on April 7th, in the presence of his wife. He was very ill, and gave the impression he would die very soon. He had a scar over his right eyebrow, and complained of pain in the left wrist and right leg. Dr. Woods added he had made a post mortem examination, in the presence of Dr. Maxwell Telling and Dr. Beattie. The body was emaciated. There was a scar eight inches long on the inner side of the left knee, due to an old operation for the removal of cartilage, he understood, while William was in the army. There was no damage to the bone beneath the seat of the scar beneath the eyebrow. There was evidence of pulmonary tuberculosis of old standing in both lungs.

William had been found on the floor, but no-one saw him fall, they just heard a thud, but some could not say for certain where the thud had come from,

William, or upstairs. The machinery was correctly fenced. Dr Woods said in his opinion, death was caused by pulmonary tuberculosis, and Dr Beattie agreed it was pulmonary tuberculosis, but he had no doubt William would have lived longer but for the accident, which may have occurred because of a simple fall or faint.

William was awarded The British War Medal, 1914-18. Victory Medal and Silver War *Badge.*

He is Remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial



Researched by members of Batley History Group