Frederick Wilton Womersley





Rank: - Gunner

Number: - 3186

Regiment: - Royal Field Artillery "C" Bty. 246th Bde.

Killed in Action / Died of Wounds. Killed by same shell as William Allerton and seven others: - 3rd September 1916 aged 21 years

Cemetery: - Mesnil Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France 11.B.6

"SON OF T. H. AND E. WOMERSLEY KILPIN HILL LANE, STAINCLIFFE NR. DEWSBURY"

Batley News, 16 Sep 1916 (photo)

Family Details

Frederick Wilton was born in Heckmondwike inc. Jan 1895 the son of Thomas Henry and Elizabeth Womersley (nee Walker). The couple had married in the April Qtr 1893 in Dewsbury District.

In 1901 the family which included his parents and brother Harold Walker born 27th April 1897 was living at 8, Occupation Lane, Staincliffe. His Liversedge born father was working as a leather currier.

Before 1911 the family had moved to live in a 4 roomed home at 15, Kilpin Hill Lane, Staincliffe. Whilst his 13-year-old brother was employed as an apprentice printer 16-year-old Frederick was still at school according to the census.

Frederick attended Healey Council School and entered Heckmondwike Secondary School in 1908 with a Governor's Scholarship from Healey and remained there until 1914. During his last year he was a student teacher attached to the High Street Council School, Heckmondwike and from there went to Leeds Teacher Training College. He had been there about one year when he enlisted.

He was associated with Up Lane Independent Chapel where he was a teacher in the primary department. He was a valued member, before going to College of the Young Men's Guild and the one or two papers he gave were much appreciated and testified to a sound training.

Service Details

Frederick enlisted in 1915 but it is not known exactly when he went to France.

In 1916 they fought on the Somme at: -

The Battle of Albert 1st-13th July
The Battle of Bazentin Ridge 14th-17th July
The Battle of Pozieres Ridge 23rd July-3rd September

The news of his death was sent by his cousin Driver Raymond Mack who wrote his own mother: -

"I suppose that by the time you read this letter you will have heard that poor Freddy was killed. Though I heard on Sunday night, I could scarcely realise it, so last night I went to their wagon lines which are not very far from ours, to make enquiries about him. They told me he was killed, along with seven others, and that at the same time thirteen were wounded. It appears that whilst he as having his rest, he was attached to the Divisional Ammunition Column and was only retransferred to his battery on Saturday night. On Sunday, as they had to take ammunition up to the guns he asked to go in place of another man. I suppose he wanted to see how they were going on (as he had been away for about six weeks). Just as they had commenced unloading, a shell struck one of the wagons that caused the shell that was in it to explode, thereby killing six of them instantly, other two have since died including their sergeant major who was a Batley man and formerly with the Heckmondwike Battery. They are buried in a cemetery not very far from where they were killed--. No doubt it will be a great shock to his mother and father as Fred was a lad who could be ill spared in more senses than one. The Chapel and Sunday School have lost a good member. It looks a pity that a career as his should be cut short. The world and the army would be better if only such lads could be spared."

His Sergeant Major would have been William Allerton of Soothill, Batley.

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

He is remembered with Honour at Christ Church, Staincliffe, Upper Chapel, Heckmondwike and Batley War Memorial.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group