

Sgt. Alfred TERRY (1882 - 1915)  
(King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry)



Alfred Terry was born in 1882 in Batley to Samuel Terry and Hannah Wood. His parents had married in 1879 and had seven other children, Benjamin (1880), William Haley (1884), Emma Ann (1888), Annie (1891), Mary Alice (1895), Nellie (1897) and Samuel (1899). Benjamin and Mary Alice died as infants.

In 1901 the family were living at Oxford Street, Mount Pleasant, Batley where Samuel was a greengrocer. Alfred married Ethel Dransfield on the 10th June, 1905 at Hick Lane Wesleyan Chapel and by 1911 Samuel, Hannah and the younger children were living at Hick Lane and Samuel was now a Carting Agent.

The 1911 Census shows Alfred and Ethel, together with their five year old daughter, Nellie, living in 3 rooms at 60 Bradford Road West, Carlinghow, Batley. Alfred's occupation is given as a House Painter. Three more children were born to the family, Marjorie (1911), Norman (1913) and Hilda (1915).

Before the war Alfred had served his painting and decorating apprenticeship with John Tomlinson of Upper Commercial Street, Batley and in recent times he had worked for Edgar Milnes. Alfred had joined the Batley Volunteers and Territorials in 1901 and had been promoted to Sergeant before WW1 broke out. He was entitled to a long service medal by 1914 but the war had interfered with the receipt of the medal.

Alfred had a life long association with Hick Lane Wesleyan Chapel and was a member of the choir. He was for a short time also a member of Carlinghow Working Men's Club. He was also a member of the Ancient Order of Oddfellows and was secretary of the State Insurance Section of the Lodge (Volunteer No. 104). Oddfellows had emerged from the medieval trade guilds whereby ordinary people worked together to help each other out in times of need. In its early days of operation there was no welfare state, NHS, personal insurance or trade unions. By joining friendly societies, like the Oddfellows, members could protect themselves and their families against illness, injury or death.

When his camp at Whitby was broken up Alfred accompanied the Territorials to Doncaster, Gainsborough and York. His comrades went to the Front without him and he returned home to Batley. After a short stay at home he was sent to Beckett's Park Hospital, Leeds as he was suffering from Bright's Disease (a chronic inflammation of the blood vessels in the kidneys) resulting in protein in the urine. He was never to return home and died in hospital on Sunday the 8th of August 1915.

On the day of his funeral a short service was held at his home. His coffin of polished oak (provided by Messrs. Will Akeroyd and Sons, Ward's Hill, Batley) was draped with the Union Jack and his cap and belt were placed upon it. Afterwards, family and friends together with military personnel attended his funeral at Batley Cemetery. Edith was surrounded by many family members including her two little girls, Nellie and Marjorie. Alfred was held in high regard by many and there were numerous floral tributes. Six sergeants of the 2nd/4th K.O.Y.L.I. acted as Bearers.

The service was conducted by Reverend E. Lloyd (Wesleyan Superintendent Minister) in the cemetery chapel and the choir sang "Jesu, Lover of my Soul" and "Lead, Kindly Light". Colonel Hind had given permission for a firing party of the 3rd/4th K.O.Y.L.I. under the command of Sergeant Ainsworth. They fired three volleys over the grave and two buglers from the 3rd/4th K.O.Y.L.I. sounded The Last Post.

Alfred's widow Ethel continued to live in the Carlinghow area and bring up her children. She never re-married and died in 1937 aged 55 years. Alfred Terry appears on St John's Church, Carlinghow, War Memorial.

Researcher

Susan White, Batley History Group, April 2015