

Corporal JOE WILLIE SHAW

(25th September 1891 – 8th October 1916)



Joe Willie Shaw was born on 25th September 1891 the eldest son of Arthur Oswald and Emily Shaw. His birth record (Q4 1891 Halifax 9a 365) and his baptism record used the same names so he was Joe Willie Shaw not Joseph William. He was baptised on 24th March 1892 at St Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe; his father, Arthur Oswald Shaw, was an "Engineer" of Lightcliffe.

Alfred Oswald Shaw had married Emily Murgatroyd on 16th March 1889 at St Matthew's Church. The record of the West Yorkshire, English Marriages and Banns notes that he was an "Engineer" like his father, Thomas Stead Shaw, and that he was a resident of Rastrick. Emily was from Lightcliffe, the daughter of Joseph Murgatroyd, a "Sizer".

Their first born, Elsie May Shaw, was baptised at St Matthew's Church on 25th August 1889 when again her father was an "Engineer" of Lightcliffe. The 1891 census described the father's profession as "Mechanic at Carpet Works" and he was living with his wife & young daughter at "Ripley St. 26". By the 1901 census Arthur is a "Millwright" and the family has grown with the births of Joe Willie (1891), Raymond (1894), Mabel Ellen (1896), Mary Elizabeth (1899) and Thomas Edward (1901) but they are still in Ripley Street. Joe Willie was then a 9 year old scholar at Lightcliffe National School.

Joe Willie would lose his 6 year old sister Mabel Ellen in 1902 and then two years later in 1904 his 11 year old brother Raymond. Both children were buried at St Matthew's Churchyard in plot Q74 on 14th October 1902 and 28th December 1904 respectively. But on a happier note Edith Annie arrived on 19th July 1903 and was baptised with her brother Thomas Edward on 27th September 1903 again at St Matthew's Church. Their address was again 25 Ripley Street and their father was again a "Millwright".

By the 1911 census the five surviving children and their parents had moved - but not very far - to a five roomed house at "No 5 Hesketh Place, Lightcliffe". Arthur was a "Millwright", Elsie May a "Carpet -sewer" and Joe Willie had become a "Dyer" for a "Carpet Manufacturer", Messrs T.F.Firth & Sons.

Then World War One broke out and Joe Willie enlisted on 20th July 1915.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
SHAW.	R. E.	Cpl.	106188.
	"	"	"
J. W.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	R.E/101 6106	22647	Died 8/10/16.
BRITISH	do	do	
15 STAR	R.E/5B4.	2851.	
Theatre of War first served in	(1) 7 range.		
Date of entry therein	20/7/15.		

K. 1389.

Joe Willie Shaw’s military record states that he joined the Royal Engineers in 1915. The comments “Res Coy and Special Bde “ would seem to indicate that he was a member of the Special Brigade or Company which was a war time invention of the Royal Engineers to respond to chlorine attacks of Germans against French troops in the Ypres Salient. He saw action at the Battle of Loos (25 September 1915 to 18th October 1915). Then nearly a year later he was gassed at Fricourt, France on 24th June 1916. After initial treatment at a hospital in Rouen he was repatriated to the Woodlands Military Hospital in Southport, Lancashire where he died on 8th October 1916. He was buried on 12th October 1916 in the family grave, plot Q74, at St Matthew’s Churchyard.



Joe Willie Shaw was also remembered on the Bailiff Bridge War Memorial.



The following article appeared in the Brighthouse Echo from Friday, 13th October 1916 along with the portrait picture of Corporal Joe Willie Shaw above.

Local War News.

DIED IN HOSPITAL.

CORPL. J. W. SHAW, OF LIGHTCLIFFE

Among the brave local lads who have sacrificed their lives for their country we regret to have to add the name of Corpl. Joe Willie Shaw, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Oswald Shaw, of Hesketh Park, Lightcliffe, a young man highly esteemed by all who knew him, and one who had a most promising career in front of him.

Corpl. Shaw, who was 25 years of age, joined the forces in June, 1915, at Halifax, and proceeded to Chatham for training with the Royal Engineers. He only stayed at Chatham two weeks before being sent to France. He was home on leave for four days last May, and recounted some of his experiences in the engagements at Loos and other places. He was quite cheerful and in the best of health and on returning was in an engagement at Fricourt, where, on June 24, he received a dose of gas, and, after being taken into hospital at Rouen, he was transferred, on July 8, to the Woodlands

Hospital, Southport, where he has frequently been visited by his parents. He improved nicely for a time after getting to Southport, and was walking about for several weeks. A month ago he had a relapse and took to his bed again, passing away on Sunday last. His parents speak highly of the treatment of the patient, who had the best medical aid procurable, more than one specialist being in attendance upon him, whilst he had the most careful and skilful nursing.

Prior to enlisting, Corpl. Shaw was employed as a dyer at Messrs. T.F. Firth & Sons, Clifton Mills, Bailiffe Bridge, to which place he went to serve his apprenticeship on leaving the National School, Lightcliffe. He gave great promises from the outset, and continuing his studies at Halifax Technical School, he gained the City and Guild's certificates for yarn and cotton dyeing. He was highly respected by the firm and the employees generally. When a boy, he was in the choir at St Matthew's Church. He was secretary for the Lightcliffe Cricket Club, and out of respect the flag was floated half-mast when the news of his death came to hand.

Mr. J. H. Cross, secretary of the St. John Hospital, Southport, has written to Mr. and Mrs. Shaw the following letter of sympathy: - "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, -- I have been asked by the wounded soldiers at the Woodlands Hospital to convey to you their sincere sympathy in the sad loss that you have sustained through the death of your son, Corporal J.W. Shaw. The vote of condolence was passed by the soldiers at a meeting held last evening. Over eighty of the patients paid their last respects to the memory of your son by marching to the station and giving the final salute. Will you also please accept the sincere sympathy of the Hospital Council and myself in your sad bereavement."

On behalf of the Lightcliffe and District Cricket Club, Mr J.H. Oates, secretary, has forwarded the following letter: - "Mr. and Mrs. Shaw and family, -- On behalf of the committee and members of the above club may I convey to you their sympathy in your sad bereavement. The loss to you is infinitely more than to anybody else, but we feel we have lost a friend who had endeared himself to all he came in contact with: for his pleasant, kindly disposition, when connected with matters concerning the above club, has been missed ever since he joined the army, but this sorrowful ending is a great loss indeed. We cannot understand the meaning of it all; we only see so far as human vision goes. Sometime, all will be clear. It is a sacrifice for the benefit of humanity. Accept my personal sympathy, and I trust you will all bear up under the great sorrow, believing that even now Joe is with all that is good, and that we may all in God's time meet with our dear ones."

THE FUNERAL

The remains of the deceased soldier were conveyed from Woodlands Hospital to Southport station on Wednesday, the coffin

being placed on a gun carriage and covered with the union Jack. Wounded soldiers paid their last respects to the memory of Corpl. Shaw by accompanying the cortege to the station.

The funeral took place yesterday afternoon, the remains being interred in the graveyard adjoining Lightcliffe old Church. Prior to the cortege leaving Hesketh Place a short service was held at the house, conducted by the Rev. H. L. Taylor (vicar), whilst in the church and at the grave side the vicar was assisted by the Rev. D. Williams (curate). The route from the house to the church was lined by sympathising spectators whilst the blinds of the houses were drawn as mark of respect for the departed.

The coffin was carried shoulder high from the house to the church by members of the Lightcliffe Cricket Club. A firing party of a dozen, with two drummers and two buglers, in charge of Capt. Mackintosh, of Halifax, headed the procession.

The chief mourners included the following:-- Mr. and Mrs. A.O. Shaw (father and mother), Miss Elsie Shaw (sister), Mr T. Shaw (brother), Misses Mary and Edith Shaw (sisters), Mrs Townsend, of Ravensthorpe (aunt), Mrs Galloway, of Huddersfield (aunt), Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson, of Rastrick (uncle and aunt), Mrs B. Raynor, of Rastrick (aunt), Mrs F. Shaw, Rastrick (aunt), Miss N Rayner (cousin) and Miss M Raynor (friend).

There were also in attendance representatives from Messrs T.F. Forth & Sons, LTd., Clifton Mills, representatives from Lightcliffe Cricket Club, and a large number of personal friends.

At the conclusion of the service at the graveside the firing party fired three volleys, and "The last post" was sounded by the buglers, the muffled drums being used.

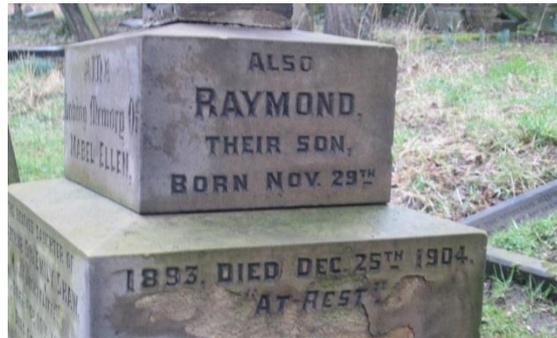
The article concludes with a very long list of floral tributes and the sentiments expressed by family, friends, neighbours, staff from Hartley Ward – presumably where he was a patient - Lightcliffe Cricket club, Sir Algernon and Lady Firth, the Dyeing Department, the Engineering Department and the “Ax-setting” Department all of Clifton Mills.

His probate record reads :-

SHAW Joe Willie of 101 Hesketh place Lightcliffe Yorkshire corporal R.E. died 8 October 1916 at Woodlands Military Hospital Southport Lancashire on active service. Administration London 23 October (1916) to Arthur Oswald Shaw foreman mechanic. Effects £100.

Joe Willie’s mother, Emily Shaw, died aged 66 years of age on 3rd April 1933. She was buried alongside her three children, Mabel Ellen, Raymond and Joe Willie in St Matthew’s Churchyard on 5th April. When father, Arthur Oswald Shaw, joined them on 6th March 1941 – having died aged 72 years of age on 3rd March – the family grave, plot Q74 was full.





The memorial inscriptions to the sons Raymond and Joe Willie Shaw are on either side of the plinth. Corporal Joe Willie Shaw did indeed "Answer the Call".



D.M.Barker

September 2015