

FRED PALEY



9th July 1917

1889-1917 Aged 27

Private 41440 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment.

Fred Paley was born in Bradford on 11th July 1889, the only son of John Thomas Paley and Emily Bastow. Although John and five of his siblings were born in Worcestershire, their parents were from Baildon and the family later returned to live and work in Manningham. John worked as an accountant's clerk and book-keeper. In 1886 he married Emily, a shoe-maker's daughter, and they had three children, one of whom died in infancy.

We do not know which local schools Fred attended, but he was a talented boy and gained a place at Bradford Grammar School in September 1903 when he was fourteen, an age at which many boys of his age and background were going to work. Fred came first in his form in Art in both years he was at B.G.S. He also took the Special Prize for Art for First Year Boys and was runner up for the Art Prize in his second year. Furthermore, in his second year he was promoted from Second Modern to Fourth Modern Upper, skipping a form, and yet he came in the top three for all subjects except Maths, in which he was fifth. Yet he left the School in 1905 part way through his third year and went to work as a salesman for his father, who was now a partner in a wholesale millinery warehouse. Evidence that the family had gone up in the world is seen in their address, a large house on Ashfield Avenue in Shipley Fields, and they now had a servant. The family attended the Frizinghall United Reformed Church, and Fred was a member of the Baildon Golf Club.

Fred had just passed his twenty-fifth birthday when war broke out. He was a single man, and although he did not volunteer in the opening months of the war, he did try to join up in 1915 under the Derby scheme but was rejected. In October 1916 he was accepted by the Motor Transport section of the Army Service Corps, but he was later transferred to the infantry (an indication of the desperate need for men at the front in the aftermath of the Somme). After his basic training in 28th Training Reserve stationed in Essex he was posted to 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment in France about three weeks before he



met his death. In late June the 2/Lincolnshire arrived in Flanders. They were billeted in a hutted camp near Poperinge and for a week the battalion sent working parties to labour for the Royal Engineers in the forward area, preparing for the forthcoming Third Battle of Ypres. During this time losses were three killed and twelve wounded.

An officer elaborated on the circumstances of Fred's death in a letter to John Paley, reported by the Shipley Times and Express. He was killed by a shell when in the front line trench, and his body was carried some miles back for burial in a 'beautiful village cemetery', at Vlamertinge. The officer wrote 'Your son had not been with the battalion a long time, but during that time his splendid worth had become known to officers and men. He was a remarkably clean, smart, courteous soldier, and had he been spared he would have received promotion. His company commander had already spoken of recommending him for a commission.'



Acknowledgements:

Fred Paley's photo is from the Memorial Book with thanks to the O.B.A. and B.G.S. The family history was researched using Ancestry.com. The school record is from the B.G.S Annual Reports for 1904 and 1905. The Bradfordian states he was at B.G.S. 1903-1905, but there is no record of him in the 1906 Report (midsummer 1905).

The Shipley Express and Gazette supplied the information regarding his membership of Baildon Golf Club (<http://search.findmypast.co.uk/bna/viewarticle?id=bl%2f0001711%2f19190214%2f056>) and the circumstances of his death (<http://search.findmypast.co.uk/bna/viewarticle?id=bl%2f0001711%2f19170810%2f058>). The death of John and Emily's 'dearly beloved and only son' was reported 20th July (<http://search.findmypast.co.uk/bna/viewarticle?id=bl%2f0001711%2f19170720%2f061>).

The 2/Lincolnshires War Diary is on Ancestry.com (https://www.ancestry.co.uk/interactive/60779/43112_1730_0-00000?pid=614890&backurl=http://search.ancestry.co.uk/cgi-bin/sse.dll?_phsrc%3DNbL135%26_phstart%3DsuccessSource%26usePUBJs%3Dtrue%26indiv%3D1%26db%3DUKWarDiariesWWI%26gss%3Dangs-d%26new%3D1%26rank%3D1%26msT%3D1%26gskw%3D1730%26MSAV%3D1%26MSV%3D0%26uidh%3D6n6%26pcat%3D39%26fh%3D0%26h%3D614890%26recoff%3D%26ml_rpos%3D1&treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=NbL135&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true#?imgeld=43112_1730_0-00191).

Soldiers Who Died in the Great War states that he was formerly 231748 Army Service Corps. His Medal Index Card records he was in 28th T.R. Battalion and 2/Lincolns.

He is on the Frizinghall United Reformed Church War Memorial and the Shipley memorial plaques at the entrance to Nab Wood Cemetery (information from the late Duncan Lodge's catalogue of Bradford War Memorials). His burial is in Vlamertinge New Military Cemetery, grave I.F.13. He was killed two days before his 28th birthday.

Researched and compiled by Nick Hooper (Nhooper1956@googlemail.com) June 2017.