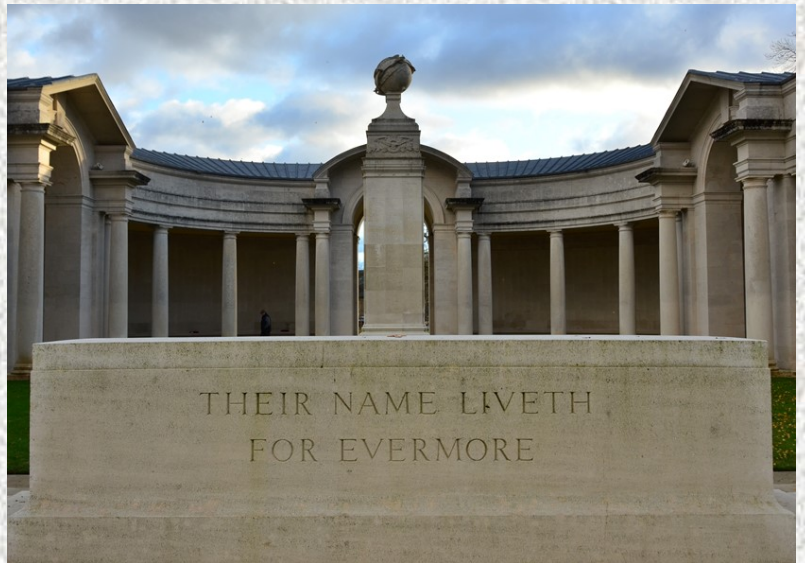


JAMES EDWARD PATCHETT



3rd May 1917

1882-1917 Aged 34



Private 300074 2/6th Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment (Territorial Force).

James Patchett was born in Bradford in 1882, the eldest of five sons born to Isaac Patchett and Caroline North. Isaac was at first a 'Fent Merchant' with his father and elder brother, dealing in roll ends of cloth. He then became a building society clerk, then an accountant, and finally a bank director. Throughout this time the family lived in the Undercliffe district of Bradford. Isaac used his position to purchase several properties in the area which he must have rented out. He died in 1917. James was at Bradford Grammar School for a single year, 1896-1897, when he was fourteen. This was probably his final year at school before he went to work as a bank clerk. His younger brother Harold followed the same career, and it is possible they were employed by their father.

James Patchett was thirty-two when the war began in 1914, and was still a single man living with his parents in Undercliffe. Four of the five brothers served in the war. Only the youngest, Alfred, who was a lad of eighteen, seems to have volunteered, in October 1914. His elder brothers waited until they were compelled to enlist. James's service dated from 4th April 1916, which suggests he was conscripted; Sidney joined up in November 1917 and served as a Second Lieutenant in the Tank Corps; Harold served in the West Riding Regiment and the Machine-Gun Corps.

James was posted to the 2/6th Battalion of the West Riding Regiment, a second line home defence unit originally formed of men from Skipton, Keighley and Guiseley. With the other second line Territorial Force battalions from the West Riding, this formed part of the 62nd Division which was sent to the Western Front at the start of January 1917. This division's first major engagement was at the Second Battle of Bullecourt on 3rd May. This attack was launched in support of Third Army's attack known as the Third Battle of the Scarpe which was taking place further to the north. On the night of 2nd May A and C companies of the 2/6th West Riding moved up to participate in the attack planned for 3.45am the next morning. Their battalion War Diary commented simply 'The Battalion suffered severe losses during the attack on this date.' Casualties were recorded as 267 officers and men. Although only sixteen were confirmed as dead, 91 men were missing, among them James Patchett. Many of these would later be confirmed as dead, as was the case with James, although his body was never recovered or identified. His name was recorded on the Arras Memorial, and also at St Clements' Church Bradford. His three serving brothers all survived the war.



Acknowledgements:

The photo was taken by the Author. The family history was researched using Ancestry.com, although the Patchett household cannot be found in the 1911 Census. The service record of the brothers is from the Bradford Roll of Honour (<<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bradfordww1/10816750263/in/album-72157637592179513/>>). The 2/6th West Riding War Diary is also on Ancestry.com. For the Second Battle of Bullecourt, see <http://www.1914-1918.net/gaz_bullecourt.html> (accessed 25-4-2017).

This biography was researched and composed by Nick Hooper (Nhooper1956@googlemail.com) in April 2017.