

WALTER HAROLD GOODLIFFE



3rd May 1916

1890-1916 Aged 26



Private 430890, 10th Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force. Walter Harold Goodliffe was born on 12th October 1890 in Bradford, the third son and the seventh child of Albert Stokes Goodliffe and Elizabeth Perrin. In all they had nine children. Albert's father was a Rutlandshire cattle farmer. Albert and his brother Henry became grocers, together initially. Subsequently, Henry established himself in Nottingham whereas Albert moved to Salford, where he married Elizabeth, and then to Bradford. In 1912 he was trading as Albert Goodliffe Ltd, Wholesale Grocers, at 13 Aldermanbury, and lived with his second wife in a large house overlooking Lister Park in Manningham. His two oldest sons, John Arthur and George Godfrey were in business with him, and they continued the company when he died in 1923.

The younger boys Walter and Albert Frank both attended Bradford Grammar School, Walter from 1904 until 1910. Following a weak start he made very good progress in both Latin and Greek, however his best subjects in his final year in Form Sixth Classical were History and Political Science, and he was runner-up in the Forster History Prize competition. There was no place for him in the family business, so on 14th March 1910, aged 19, Walter departed Liverpool bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia. He travelled third class and was described on the passenger list as an 'electrician'. He made his way westward to Vancouver, where in 1914 he worked as an 'accountant'. He made two attempts to enlist, first at Vancouver and next at Victoria, British Columbia. According to his Medical Forms, he was 5' 4" in height, his eyes were blue or grey, and his complexion fair or fresh. His first attempt seems to have been unsuccessful, for in February 1915 he joined a Militia battalion, before he was accepted by the Army in Victoria, British Columbia, and was posted to the 48th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. They sailed for Europe on 1st July 1915, landing at Shorncliffe, Kent nine days later. In August, Goodliffe went absent without leave for five days – doubtless he took the opportunity to visit his family in Bradford. In mid-September he was transferred to the 10th Battalion, comprising men from Calgary and Winnipeg, in France.

Known as the 'Fighting Tenth', Goodliffe's new battalion was part of the Canadian First Division which suffered heavy casualties in blocking the hole in the Allied line caused when the Germans released chlorine gas in April 1915. Walter joined them on 23rd September during a quiet spell in their history. They made a demonstration to draw German attention at the start of the Battle of Loos two days after his arrival. In late November, he was hospitalized with influenza, followed by laryngitis and bronchitis, and he did not re-join his battalion until 23rd January 1916. During March, April and May, the 10th Battalion were in the trenches in the vicinity of Hill 60, south-east of Ypres, where they established mastery over the German defenders by means of trench raids at which the Canadians were expert. After a spell in Divisional Reserve, during which time the battalion furnished night working parties burying telephone cables, on 2nd May they went into the trenches again. The 3rd was bright and clear, according to the Battalion War Diary, there were few shells but German snipers were active. Two men in the battalion were killed, presumably by sniping, Privates Goodliffe and Meikle, and two were wounded. The dead were taken to Woods Cemetery for burial.

Walter's brothers George Godfrey and Albert Frank also served during the war. The latter fell in action in April 1917. His name is also on the School War Memorial.



Acknowledgements:

Walter Goodliffe's photo is from the Roll of Honour, courtesy of the Old Boys Association. The family history was assembled from records on Ancestry.com, and from Kelly's Directory of Bradford and Suburbs 1912. His school career can be traced in the BGS Yearbooks for 1905-6 through to 1909-10. I am grateful to Lesley Purcell for access to them.

Walter's Canadian Military records were consulted at <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=421782>. The 10th Battalion War Diary is available at http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayEcopies&lang=eng&rec_nbr=2005894&title=War%20diaries%20-%2010th%20Canadian%20Infantry%20Battalion%20=%20Journal%20de%20guerre%20-%2010e%20Bataillon%20d%27infanterie%20canadien.&ecopy=e001082339. The History of the Tenth Battalion is at http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/writing/10th.htm#_Toc130652609.

The death of Albert Frank Goodliffe will be commemorated on 12th April 1917.

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