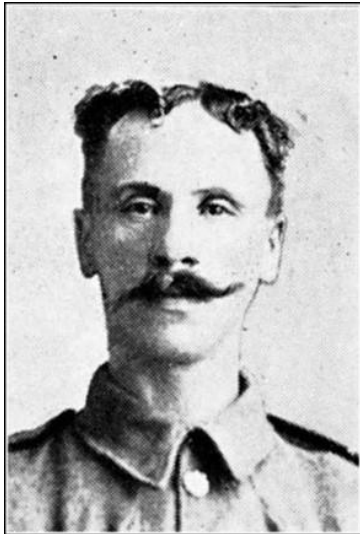


John Mitton - Private - 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Regiment - 30383



John Mitton, born in 1877, was the eldest son of Warren and Ellen Mitton (nee Atkinson). Warrin was a joiner and farmer, born in Askrigg, but settled in Hawes with his Sedbergh born wife. The couple had three children, John, Nancy and Thomas. John initially worked with his father on the farm but then became a postman. He married Mary Teresa Frost in 1905 and worked for a while in her home village of Finghall and the surrounding area. When he left to move to the Askrigg, the residents of Finghall clubbed together to buy him a marble clock and a pipe together with a purse containing cash as a leaving present, which must show the regard in which he was held.

The family – John and Mary and their two daughters Ellen (1906) and Mary (1908) – moved to Askrigg, where John continued to work as a postman. He played for many years for the Hawes football team and acted as their secretary for 2 years. He was also a fine billiards player. As a youth, he was a member of the St Margaret's Church choir in Hawes and later sang in the choir here in St Oswald's. He was an outgoing man and had many friends.

John enlisted in Leyburn and joined the 2nd Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment, embarking for France at the end of July 1916. On 7th April 1917 the Battalion moved from Bellacourt to Blairville, south of Arras, ready for the start of the Arras Offensive scheduled for the 9th. They followed the first wave to mop up the open ground until held up by the German wire. One party established itself in shell holes, joining them up by digging trenches during the day and here they remained under shell and rifle fire until relieved at 1am on 10th April.



John was one of 24 killed – a further 89 were wounded and another two missing presumed dead. He was buried in Grave D15 of the Neuville-Vitasse Road Cemetery, 6 miles SE of Arras. John's brother Tom had joined up around the same time as his brother and was in France at the same time with the Royal Field Artillery. Fortunately, he survived the war and returned to his wife and home in Liverpool. Their sister, Nancy Metcalfe Mitton remained unmarried and died in Hawes in 1946 aged 65, leaving her estate to John's eldest daughter, Ellen.

John's wife Mary did not re-marry and, after her daughters left home, lived for a while with her unmarried sister, Lucy, in Lancashire, where she died in 1941.

Daughters Ellen and Mary both married in Leyburn in 1931, with Mary marrying a dairy farmer, Joseph Tidyman, and Ellen, a draper, Joseph McCabe. All three are buried in the Roman Catholic churchyard at Ulshaw Bridge near Middleham.

In Memory Of

Private

J MITTON

Service Number: 30383

2nd Bn., Yorkshire Regiment who died on 09 April 1917 Age 40

Son of Warren and Helen Mitton; husband of Mary Teresa Mitton, of Hill Top, Leyburn, Yorks.

ALTHOUGH THE YEARS ROLL BY THY MEMORY WITH US WILL NEVER DIE

Remembered with Honour

NEUVILLE-VITASSE ROAD CEMETERY

D. 15.



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