

Wilfred Norbury

Back Lane Farm, Sproston, Nr. Holmes Chapel

Killed in Action 7th July 1916



His Story

Wilfred was born on 18th July 1896 to Henry and Harriet Norbury in Sproston and in 1901, aged 5 he was living at Back Lane Farm. In 1911 he was working for his father at the same location which was a market garden.

His War Record

Wilfred enlisted into the army at Middlewich and joined the 13th Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment with number 27438. He gained the rank of Lance corporal.

The Parish Magazine states that In September 1916 he was reported missing some weeks ago and had not been heard of since. In June 1917 it was reported that he had died in action.

In fact his military record shows he was killed in action on the 7 July 1916. There is no known grave but he is remembered on Panel and Face 3C and 4A of the Thiepval Memorial. The memorial is in France close to the Somme and the village of Thiepval.

On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.