

## Herbert Senior



**Rank:** - Trooper

**Number:** - 7912564

**Regiment:** - Royal Tank Regiment, R.A.C. 45th (The Leeds Rifles).

**Died:** - Killed in Action, 28 October 1942 Age: 29 years.

**Cemetery:** - El Alamein War Cemetery, Egypt XXII. H. 6.

Herbert was born on 11 January 1913, in Batley, the son of Astin and Charlotte Hannah Senior nee Preston, who had married on 19 October 1907 at Christ Church, Staincliffe. The lived at 6, Croft Terrace, Healey Lane, Batley.

Herbert married Kathleen Marjorie Scott in 1940, registered Spen Valley, and the couple lived at Holland Street, Batley. Herbert worked as a driver for Messrs. George Sykes and Sons, Ltd, caterers, Birstall. His wife, Kathleen, worked in the catering department at Batley Grammar School.

Herbert joined the Forces in 1940 and went abroad in 1942.

In May 1942, 45 RTR embarked at Liverpool for the Middle East, sailing round the Cape and reaching Egypt in July. There the crews began training on Grant tanks, but by September they were equipped with a mix of Sherman tanks (codenamed 'Swallows') and Crusaders (but apparently not to full establishment). 8th Armoured Division was not yet complete, so 24th Armoured Brigade was attached to 10<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division for the forthcoming Second Battle of El Alamein.

## BATLEY MAN "BELIEVED KILLED."

Mrs. H. Senior, of Holland Street, Batley, has received official news that her husband, Trooper Herbert Senior, R.T.R., is "missing, believed killed," in the Middle East. Trooper Senior joined up over two years ago.

Trooper Senior, son of Mr. and Mrs. Seth Senior, 6 Croft Terrace, Healey, was a driver for Messrs. George Sykes and Sons, Ltd., caterers, Birstall. He went abroad in July.

His wife (nee Miss Scott) is working in the catering department at Batley Grammar School. There are no children.

Batley News, 28 Nov 1942

5 RTR went into action alongside 41 and 47 RTR on the second day of the battle (D+1, 24 October), as 10th Armoured pushed towards Miteira. Its tanks engaged enemy anti-tank guns and entrenched infantry before withdrawing at dusk. The next day (D+2) 45 RTR moved into battle positions, supporting 41 and 47 RTR with gunfire. The enemy anti-tank guns were well dug in and had to be engaged by observing their flashes. One German infantry post was overrun by a troop of tanks firing their machine-guns into the trenches. The regiment withdrew again at dusk, leaving one defence squadron on the ridge. On D+3 there was confused fighting ahead of the regiment. During D+4, 45 RTR remained on the ridge all day, covering 41 and 47 RTR as they advanced through the gaps in the minefields. On the night of 27/28 October, the CO was ordered to advance at first light on D+5 to support an infantry brigade, but as the regiment only had about 20 tanks, 41 RTR was ordered to make up the numbers. The Crusader squadron had only gone a few hundred yards when they came upon some infantry digging in, and stopped. But Dumbreck had been told that the infantry he was supporting had definitely reached their objective, so one of the Sherman squadrons pushed on towards the ridge SE of the feature known as 'Snipe', supported by the other, which engaged German tanks coming from Snipe. It emerged that the infantry had not achieved their objective, and 45 RTR withdrew under shellfire. During this unsatisfactory action, the regiment lost 10

tanks and suffered 11 men killed or died of wounds, 10 missing believed dead, and 34 wounded, mainly from mines and shellfire. At the end of the day, 45 RTR handed its remaining tanks over to other regiments and was withdrawn into reserve.

Herbert is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of  
Batley History Group