

Richard Turner



Dieteren Military Cemetery with
grave of Richard Turner.
Thanks to: Jos Hermans

Rank: - Private

Number: - 14677183

Regiment: - Durham Light Infantry 9th Battalion

Died: - Killed in Action 30 January 1945

Cemetery: - Sittard War Cemetery, Limburg (Netherlands), A.5.

Batley News, 24 Feb 1945

Richard (Dick) was born in Batley on 18 June 1924 the only son of Richard and Gladys Turner nee Sykes who had married in early 1924. He attended Staincliffe Methodist Church and before going to Batley Grammar School he attended Staincliffe Church of England School. He was an extremely popular boy and was a member of the School Squadron A.T.C. In 1943 the Cadets of Batley Grammar School A.T.C. presented a variety show called "At Ease". The cadets who took were G. Arran, J. Fenton, R. Goddard, B. Whinfield, Denton, R. Haigh, R. Turner (stage manager), S. Redfearn, F. Lockwood, G. Peel, D. Wright (conjurer) R.

Taylor, A. Jubb and V. Sykes (Army Cadets); Sergt. A.B. Barraclough and Corporals. D. Speight and B. Greenwood.

Dick should have gone to university but joined the Army when he left Batley Grammar School in 1943. The family lived at "Wildair", Deighton Lane, Batley. His father was head of the firm of Messrs. R. Turner and Son, Rag Merchants, Bunkers Lane, Batley.

Richard was part of the 9th Battalion Durham Light Infantry, and was assigned to 'D' Company. This unit liberated Dieteren, Netherlands on January 16 1945. The War Diary of the 9th Bn. DLI states that on the 24 January 1945, Richard was admitted to hospital but was discharged on 27 January 1945 and returned to his unit. On the 30 January the 9 DLI relieved a company of 1/5th Queens in the area of Paarlo. The War Diary describes that the unit, of which Richard was part, was north of Paarlo. This was a difficult area as the Germans were very close and the road up to the company's positions was under direct observation from the enemy-held bank. Posterholt was shelled and, on one occasion, rocket shells fell in the area itself. A patrol stumbled into a minefield on the 31st January and at 2000-hours Fighting + Recce patrol of 'D' Coy. 9DLI hits a minefield at 8111845 when going to investigate bridges at 809846 and 802847 and suffered 6 casualties. The weather was very cold. A thaw set in at the end of the month and this turned every road in the area to deep mud.

Richard was buried in Dieteren at the temporary military cemetery. On October 16th 1946 he was re-buried at the War Cemetery in Ophoven-Sittard.

After his burial in Dieteren Annie Ramakers (1914-1999) took a photo of the grave and was in touch with his family in England. She married Harry Hermans (1917-1997) who was a translator and lived in Holtum, who kept in touch with the English soldiers who gathered there on the run up to Operation Blackcock. One of these soldiers was Richard Turner. The contact with the Turners was so good that the families visited each other and their son Jos. Herman continued this contact until the death of the Turners and has adopted the grave and the family want to continue to do this.

Richard is remembered with Honour at Batley Grammar School and Batley War Memorial.

Thanks to Henk Penders, Dieteren, NL who asks that if anyone has more information, please contact the webmaster at info@deetere.nl.

On Active Service

TURNER.—In January, 1945, killed in action in Western Europe, aged 19 years. **RICHARD**, dearly loved son of Richard and Gladys **TURNER**, "Wildair," Deighton Lane, Batley.—No letters, please.

