

Joseph Owen Wood



Rank: - Private

Number: - 14660808

Regiment: - Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) 1st Bn.

Died: - Killed in Action, 04/04/1944 Age: 31 years

Cemetery: - Beach Head War Cemetery, Anzio XII. A. 7.

Joseph Owen was born on 8 September 1912 in Batley the son of William Owen and Edith Wood nee Richardson, who had married on 29 October 1898 at Batley Parish Church. Maud Mary was born in 1899 and Kathleen 1904 was adopted. The family lived at 29 Healey Street, Batley.

Joseph attended Healey School and St. Patricks School, Heckmondwike and worshipped at St. Patricks Church.

In 1938 he married Doris May Findlay of Bradford. Michael was born in 1941.

He worked at Renden Manufacturing Co. Heckmondwike before he joined up in July 1943. The couple lived at 2, Colbeck Terrace, Healey.

On 3 September 1943 the Allies invaded the Italian mainland, the invasion coinciding with an armistice made by the Italians who then re-entered the war on the Allied side.

Progress through southern Italy was rapid despite stiff resistance, but by the end of October, the Allies were facing the German winter defensive position known as the Gustav Line, which stretched from the River Garigliano in the west to the Sangro in the east. Initial attempts to breach the western end of the line were unsuccessful. Operations in January 1944 landed troops behind the German lines at Anzio, but defences were well organised and break through was not achieved until May.

DIED FIGHTING TO LAST.


HEALEY MAN KILLED AT ANZIO

Mrs. J. O. Wood, 2, Colbeck Avenue, Healey, Batley, received notification from the War Office on the third birthday of her only son, Michael, that her husband, Pte. Joseph Owen Wood (31), was killed in action in Italy on April 4th.

Pte. Wood was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. William Wood, 29, Healey Street, Healey. He attended Healey School and St. Patrick's School, Heckmondwike, and worshipped at St. Patrick's Church. Six years ago he married Miss Doris Finlay, of Bradford. He worked at the Renden Manufacturing Co., Heckmondwike, before he joined up last July.

Since January he had served in the Anzio Beach-head.

Mrs. Wood has received an airgram from his friends in the platoon, which states: "It is with the sincere sympathy of myself and the platoon that I write this letter. Your husband was a great fellow, and a great friend of the platoon. He died fighting to the last for a great cause, which I sincerely trust will be worth his sacrifice."



Joseph Wood.

Batley News, 29 Apr 1944

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Burials were made direct from the battlefield.

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS

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



Researched by members of
Batley History Group