

Robert LOWTHER c 1897 – 2 August 1917

Robert was born about 1897 in Bolton, son of Richard and Ann Lowther. Richard was 42 when Robert was born and Ann was 40. Richard was born in Manchester and Ann in Horwich. They had two other sons Percy, who was born in 1881 in Wigan, and Richard who was born in 1895 in Bolton. Sister Lilian was born in 1891 in Aspul. In 1901 they were living at 131 Bennetts Lane, off Harpers Lane in the heart of Halliwell. Richard was a joiner clerk whilst Percy was a joiner.

Coincidentally on the 1891 Census the family appear on the same census page as the **Ainsworths of Smithills Hall** and their staff! The Lowther family then consisted of Richard, Ann, Percy and Lilian.

The 1911 Census showed them living at 9 Albion Terrace (part of Forest Road) close to the current Moss Bank Park. Percy was not living with them on census day but all other members of the family were there. Robert's father Richard was described as a joiner working on a "Private Estate." Lilian was employed as a Cloth Stitche Marker in a bleachworks, Richard Jnr was a Chemist Apprentice and Robert (aged 14) was doing card testing and spinning.



A family tree seen shows that Robert's brother, Richard Jnr, married a lady called Ruth Gaunt. Richard died in 1972 and his wife Ruth in 1970. They had two sons Robert G and Richard G. The family tree shows that Robert G married a Maggie Yates from Rawtenstall, and their daughter Katherine Collins lived from 1949 to 2012. She was married to a Stephen E Collins.

Robert was in the Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery (Territorial Force) as a Gunner. He was in "D" battery, 103rd Brigade in the 'Western Theatre of War' (France and Flanders). In 1917 his division took part in the Battle of Ypres and Cambrai.

The Bolton Journal of 10th August 1917 reports "*Gunner R. Lowther of the R. F.A., who lived with his mother at 133, Bennetts Lane, Bolton was killed by a shell which dropped on the telephone pit in which he was engaged on August 1st. Deceased joined the R. F. A. in May 1915, and had been at the front since last February. He*

*worked as assistant comber overlooker at Messrs. R. Harwood and Son's Brownlow Field Mill, and was on the Roll of Honour at **Smithills Chapel**." On 2 August 1917, he was 'killed in action'. He was 21.*



He is remembered with Honour at the Larch Wood (Railway Cutting) Cemetery at West Vlaanderen, Belgium. This cemetery is situated at the north end of a small plantation of larches. The cemetery was used by troops holding this sector but was expanded after the Armistice for casualties from other battlefields.

His name is also on the Bolton Artillery War Memorial in Nelson Square, Bolton

