

HILTON, JOHN 23083 Private 6th Battalion 38th Brigade 13th Division

THE LOYAL NORTH LANCASHIRE REGIMENT

Born Leyland Enlisted Leyland Living Leyland

Killed in Action Mesopotamia 18th April 1917

Ref: 'Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914-1919', Part 50.

Lancashire Daily Post Thursday May 3rd, 1917

Mr James Hilton, Eagle and Child Hotel, Leyland has received information from the War Office of the death in action on April 18th in Mesopotamia of his son Pte J. Hilton, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. Deceased was 25 years of age and joined up on February 14th last year, prior to which he was employed at the Leyland Motor Works. He had been connected with Leyland St. Andrew's Church Lads Brigade and the Leyland Boy Scouts. He was a regular worshipper at the Leyland Parish Church.

Chorley Guardian and Leyland Hundred Advertiser Sat 5th May 1917

Pte John Hilton, only son of Mr J. Hilton, Eagle and Child, Leyland has been killed in action April 18th, 1917 in Mesopotamia. He was 25 years of age and in the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment; he enlisted in February 1916. A member of the Church Lads Brigade and Boy Scouts, he was formerly employed at Leyland Motors Ltd. (Photo). (A similar report with photo is in the Preston Guardian of the same date).

Leyland St. Andrew's Parish Magazine May 1917

'We regret to record the death in action of John Hilton, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, on April 18th, 1917.'

Ditto June 1917: John Hilton was included in those recently fallen in a Memorial Service held on the evening of Ascension Day.

A Memorial Inscription is on the family grave in St. Andrew's Churchyard:-

On the grave of his parents, James and Emily Hilton

*Also, John beloved son of the above
Killed in action April 18th, 1917
Aged 25 years.*

Leyland St. Andrew's Baptismal Register. September 6th, 1891 Bapt: John son of James and Emma Hilton of Leyland, Mechanic.

Continued

John Hilton's name is on the following local memorials:-

War Memorial, Church Road, Leyland
Mural Plaque in St Andrew's, Leyland

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

With no known grave, John Hilton is commemorated on the:-

BASRA MEMORIAL, IRAQ

The names of the Loyals are on Panel 27. No next-of-kin information.
The Memorial, within Basra War Cemetery, is about 9 km north-west of Basra.

Lancashire Daily Post Friday April 19th, 1918

'In Memoriam'

HILTON – In loving memory of our dear son John Hilton, L.N.L. Regt., Killed in action, April 18th., 1917.

*'Too far away your grave to see
But not too far to think of thee.'*

– Deeply mourned by his loving Father, Mother and Sister Norah, Eagle and Child Hotel, Leyland.

*'In a far and silent graveyard
Where the trees their branches wave
There lies a loving brother
In a cold and silent grave.'*

*'Fondly we loved him, he is dear to us still
But in grief we must bend to God's holy will
Our sorrow was great our loss hard to bear,
And angels, dear brother, will guard you with care.'*

– Deeply mourned by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Lily and Jim.

*'I do not forget him, nor do I intend,
I think of him daily, and will to the end;
I mourn in silence and sorrow unseen,
And dwell in the memories of days that have been.'*

– Deeply mourned by Lilian.

*'I mourn for him in silence unseen,
And live in the memory of days that have been.'*

– From his ever loving pal Jim.

Continued

March 6th, 2000. A photograph of John Hilton had been left recently at the South Ribble Museum and was passed on to me today by the Curator, David Hunt: the photo had been left by a Mr and Mrs A. H. Smalley of Walkden. I wrote thanking them for their kindness.

March 13th, 2000. Mr Smalley rang me from Walkden to thank me for my letter of the 7th in which I had included what information I had on John Hilton.

He told me that he was James Hilton's grandson and that Lilian was his mother. He has a brother John aged 84 and living in New Zealand and who had sent the photo for me: other family photographs had been lost over the years.

A Lily Swarbrick was John's lady friend and she lived on the corner of Sandy Lane/Church Road: the end house now demolished (No. 29, Church Road, formerly known as 1 Park View). She never married and died at the age of 93 (Presumably this is the Lilian whose 'In Memoriam' appears above).

He also mentioned that Polly Crook (of the 'Ice Cream Shop, Towngate' fame) was his mothers aunt.

'The History of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment', Col. H. C. Wylly, C. B.

April 17/18th, 1917: An attempt at the River Tigris to force passage, at dawn on the 18th, at the mouth of the Nahrwan Canal. Taking up their positions on the night of the 17th prior to attacking the XIIIth and XVIIIth Turkish Corps on the morning of the 18th of April in conjunction with South and East Lancashire Battalions.

Before dawn on the 18th "B" and "D" Companies of the 6th Battalion achieved their first objective but their C/O – Major Thorne – was killed by a stray bullet. By 2.0 pm the artillery opened a heavy barrage and the infantry advanced: the result was a complete success.

During these operations the casualties in the Battalion may be said to have been light, one officer – Major Thorne – and one man killed, and five men wounded. If these figures are correct, the 'one man killed' was John Hilton.

Hilton, John.

W. E. Waring 2003