

World War 1 - Upper Hopton Village



Walter Sykes

Rank: Private

Died: 3rd May 1917 (France & Flanders)

2nd/5th Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)



Summary

Walter Sykes family home was Hollin Hall, Upper Hopton where he was raised by his parents Arthur and Ellen Sykes and worked as a wool spinner.

He died whilst serving on the Western Front (Battle of Bullecourt) in May 1917 (age 24) and his sacrifice has been remembered at the Arras Memorial in France.

His elder brother Willie died in hospital in November 1918 (age 27) after fighting on the Western Front and his younger brother Herbert survived the war but had to have both of his legs amputated. The youngest brother Joe was wounded in 1917 and hospitalised, also gassed in 1918 and spent time in the Dewsbury War Hospital. He was discharged on the 21 May 1919.

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Walter Sykes

Family details

Date of Birth	11th December 1892
Date of Baptism	2nd April 1893
Church Baptised	St John's, Upper Hopton
Father	Arthur 1860-1939
Father's occupation	Waste bleacher
Mother	Ellen (nee Mann) 1863-1935
Siblings	Alan, Alice, Ernest, Willie, Herbert, Joseph, Lizzie, Annie, Nelly & Hilda (one child died in infancy)
Parents residence	Hollin Hall, Hopton (1911)
Soldiers residence	
Soldiers Occupation	Wool Spinner (1911)
Married	
Spouse	
Children	
Burial / Memorial	Bay 6 Arras Memorial at Faubourg-D'Amiens Cemetery Arras, France
Age at death	24

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Walter Sykes

Sykes family 1911 Census

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in the spaces provided, and the Schedule should be filled up to the best of your knowledge and belief.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, or in connection with the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE last Birthday and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards	EDUCATION	RELIGION	INFIRMITY
Walter Sykes	Head	40	Married	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Ellen Sykes	Wife	42	Married	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Edith Sykes	Daughter	25	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Ernest Sykes	Son	21	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Willie Sykes	Son	19	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Walter Sykes	Son	18	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Herbert Sykes	Son	16	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Joseph Sykes	Son	12	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Loggie Sykes	Daughter	11	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Ernest Sykes	Daughter	9	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Willie Sykes	Daughter	8	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	
Hilda Sykes	Daughter	4	Single	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	Waste Blanket Maker	

(To be filled up by the Enumerator)

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: *Walter Sykes*

Post Address: *Hopton Hall, Hopton, Cheshire*

Walter's brothers

His elder brother Willie lost his life whilst serving on the Western Front November 1918.

Herbert survived the war but had to have both his legs amputated.

Alan and Ernest were both coal miners and no records could be found about their military service. Ernest was buried at St Johns church Upper Hopton on the 1 April 1929 age 40.

The youngest brother, Joe was born on the 17 July 1898. He enlisted in the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment (Reg. No. 63556), rank Private . He was wounded in 1917 and hospitalised, also Gassed in 1918 and spent time in the Dewsbury War Hospital. He was discharged on the 21 May 1919. On the 10th February 1934 , Joe married Hilda Brewer at St. Pauls Church, Eastthorpe. The marriage certificate states that he was a railway man and still living at Northgate.

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Walter Sykes

Military Details

Attestation / Enlistment

Deployment

Rank

Private

Medals

British War Medal

Victory Medal

Regiment number

241919

Regiment

2nd/5th Bn., Duke of Wellington's
(West Riding Regiment)

Regimental Badge



Killed in Action

3rd May 1917 (France & Flanders)

Cemetery or Memorial

Bay 6 Arras Memorial at Faubourg-
D'Amiens Cemetery Arras, France

Age at death

24

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Walter Sykes

2nd/5th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) Territorial Force

The 2nd/5th Battalion was formed at Halifax in September 1914 as a home service.

Jan 1917 Mobilised for war and landed in France and engaged in various actions on the Western front including:

- The Operations on the Ancre.
- The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line.
- The first attack on Bullecourt (part of the Arras offensive)
- The German attack on Lagnicourt (part of the Arras offensive).
- The Battle of Bullecourt (part of the flanking operations round Arras).
- The actions on the Hindenburg Line.
- The Cambrai Operations.

Walter lost his life on the 3rd May 1917 which coincides with the Third battle of Scarpe 3 to 4 May or the Battle of Bullecourt 3 to 17 May (Arras Offensive). The Regiment's war diaries below suggest that he was at the Battle of Bullecourt when he lost his life. The war diaries show that the Regiment was at Ecoust when Walter lost his life, Ecoust is 18km south east of Arras and 26km west of Cambrai.

War Diaries - 2 / 5th Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment

2nd May 1917 – MORRY

9 to 12.30 - Interior Economy and preparation for going into the line. Afternoon Coys again went over miniature trench system of BULLECOURT.

9.15pm – Batt'n marched to ECOUST (Embankment) where they drew mats for getting over wire, bridges for crossing trenches and bombs. They then formed up on tape line Ref.Map 1:10000 ECOUST ST MIEN U 26 d 99 to U 26 b 71 all was completed by 1.30am and without casualties. Tanks followed the Batt'n down from L'HOMME MOYT to ECOUST.

3rd May 1917 – ECOUST

3.45am - Zero hour. At zero hour minus 8 minutes Batt'n moved forward to attack HINDENBERG LINE West of BULLECOURT. A heavy barrage commenced at zero. 'A' Coy reached their objective and held it until 4.00pm when they were counter attacked and bombed out, they retired on to Embankment.

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Walter Sykes

'B', 'C' and 'D' Coys came under heavy shell, rifle and Machine Gun fire and were held up in front of enemy front line trench, small parties holding out in shell holes until after dark when they retired to Embankment. Batt'n suffered heavy casualties. The following officers were Killed Capt and Adj T.BENTLEY, LIEUT D.WALKER. Missing believed killed 2/Lieut Jacobs. Missing Capt G Glover, LIEUT G Ridley MC. 2/Lieut E.T.Sykes. 2/Lieut Heaton, 2/Lieut's Darwent and Hutton. Wounded Capt W Shaw. 2/Lieut's Fisher and Simmonds. Shell Shock Lieut K.C.Feather and Capt Walker J. N.P.O. plus other men killed 2, missing 123, wounded 275.

8.00pm – Six posts were put out in W 26 B & D under Capt Goodall. Lieut Haigh went out with stretcher bearers to bring in wounded.

4th May 1917 - ECOUST

Batt'n still holding the line, wounded dribbled in all day, shelling was heavy. At night Batt'n were relieved by 2/6th and 2/7th Duke of Wellingtons and marched back by companies to MORY. Cops into camp. During relief there were no casualties, Arrived MORY Cops about 2.30am next day.

5th May 1917 – MORY Cops

Morning. Batt'n rested and moved camp across MORY – St LEDGER Rd. Afternoon took steps to reorganise.

7.00pm Draft of 5 officers arrived. Consisting of Lieut's E.Ainley and Moxon C, 2/Lieut's G.Bodkin, Black and A.S.Jack.

The Battle of Bullecourt 3rd May 1917

The total failure of General Nivelle on Chemin des Dames Ridge led the French Army to call for a renewed British offensive at Arras, Despite the hopeless nature of the situation. The Australians of the 1st ANZAC launched a new assault at Bullecourt in the company of the British 62nd Division. The second Battle of Bullecourt began at 3.45am on the 3rd May with eight successive waves of infantry, this time supported by artillery fire. The Australians broke through the partially destroyed barbed wire entanglements, passing many of their comrades killed the month before and still lying in the mud. The 5th Brigade, cut to pieces by machine gun fire, was forced to withdraw before crossing the barbed wire and this brought to a halt the following waves of infantry. A few young officers intervened to get men moving forward again but by the end of the day no real gain had been made and the second Battle of Bullecourt deteriorated into a tragic repetition of the first. Only the survivors of the 6th Brigade managed to take 400 metres of the German front and press on to the second line, receiving reinforcements under the cover of night.

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Walter Sykes

In Memory of
Private

Walter Sykes

241919, 2nd/5th Bn., Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) who died on 03 May 1917

Remembered with Honour
Arras Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Arras Memorial

Walters recorded effects

WORM. FORM 7-17-100 REG.-VI, & Suppl., Ed. 1964

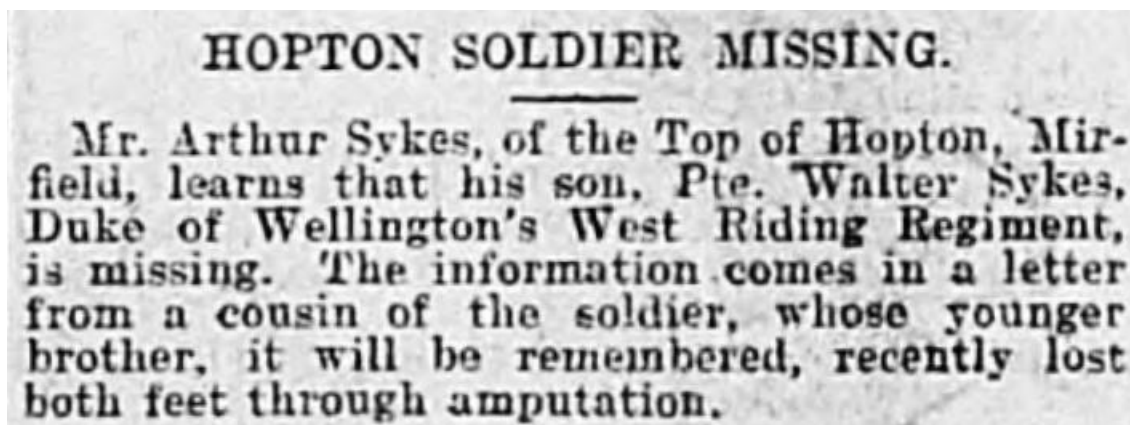
Record No.	Registry No.	Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Account and Date	Date of Authority	To whom Authorized	Amount Authorized			No. of List in which advertised		
					£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.				£	s.	d.			
688451	223085	Shaver David Alfred	2/5 th Bn N. Riding Hq Co 202085	Grosvonts York 3.5.17 Death pres?	↓	3	3	9		3	3	9	Mae JTB	11.5.18	Wid. Louisa	3	3	9	Self
														20.12.19	Wid. Louisa	8	-	-	Pto
					WAR GRATUITY 19.20 Transfer 6.25 Rings Paper 2.35 Serial no. 20096														
					A. F. DATE 3/1/19														
688452	224909	Lyles Wallen	2/5 th Bn N. Riding S/Lt 241919	Grosvonts York 3.5.17 Death pres?	↓	3	15	4		3	15	4	moe v 18	19.6.18	Gen. Arthur	3	15	4	Self
														14.11.18	Gen. Arthur	4	-	-	PD
					WAR GRATUITY 19.20 Transfer 4.89 Rings Paper 2.55 Serial no. 7-857 Z 162														
					A. F. DATE 3/1/19														

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Walter Sykes

Dewsbury Reporter Saturday 19th May 1917



The above newspaper article is referring to Walters brother Herbert who lost his feet through injuries and amputation.

Herbert is in the photo below, second from the right with his walking stick. The photograph was taken circa 1940. (From left to right Peter Castle, John Castle, George Haigh, George Castle, Herbert Sykes, Oliver Castle)



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Walter Sykes

Walter's family grave in St John's churchyard Upper Hopton



Gravestone for Walter's parents Arthur and Ellen Sykes and their eldest son Alan. Ellen died 1935 living at Northgate, Arthur 1939 at Jackroyd Lane and Alan 1954 at Beech Street, Mirfield.

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Walter Sykes

Walter is mentioned in the St John's church Parish Magazine.

ABSENT FRIENDS.

It was heart breaking news which came to Mr. Robert Castle and his family, that Herbert had been killed. It so happened that word came of this a few days before our appointed Sunday for a special Commemoration of those fallen in the War, and particular point was given to this Solemn Requiem by the sad event. And since then we have welcomed home Sergeant Harry Castle and had a Memorial Service, for which the Church was filled, to honour his brother's memory.

We wish all happiness to the gallant Sergeant on his marriage to Miss Ada Jackson. God grant he may return safely to his Bride.

Private Arthur Fisher has been in Hospital with a troublesome skin trouble, due to the food which the advance from the trenches involved ; but he writes happily from a Base Hospital in France.

Privates Walter Sykes and Arthur Loader, both of Northgate, are reported missing, and it is believed that they are Prisoners of War, but definite news of this is slow in coming to hand. Our respectful sympathy is extended to the families of these two, and may they soon get news.