

## **ARTHUR ATKINSON**

### **1894-1916**



Arthur Atkinson was born in Lindale in 1894; he was the second child of four and the first son born to Robert and Jane Atkinson.

Arthur's father, Robert, was a stone mason from a family of stone masons who lived in Underbarrow. He married Jane Ann Benson in 1882 and the couple's first home was in Lindale where their oldest two children, Dorothy and Arthur, were born.

The 1901 census records the parents and two of their children, Dorothy and Ruth living at 4 Berriedale Terrace, Lindale Road, Grange over Sands. Arthur, then 7 years old, is recorded in the census as living in Witherslack with a farming family, the Dickinsons.

The 1909 Red Book and the 1911 census show the family living at 2 Berriedale Terrace with 2 boarders and a house servant also resident. 2 Berriedale Terrace is a handsome property, larger than the family's previous home at number 4, and providing sufficient space to accommodate boarders.



4 Berriedale Terrace



2 Berriedale Terrace

The family census details in 1911 were as follows:

Robert Atkinson 51 Stone Mason, b. Underbarrow  
Jane Atkinson 48 Company Housekeeper, b. Kendal  
Dorothy Atkinson 20 Mother's Help, b. 1891 Lindale  
'Arathen' (**misspelling of ARTHUR**) 17 Joiner's Apprentice, b. Lindale  
Ruth Atkinson 15 Mother's help, b. 1896 'London'(sic)  
Richard Atkinson 7 Scholar, b. 1904 Grange  
plus 3 Carruthers and 1 other.

### **Army experience**

Arthur probably enlisted in the army in 1914 in Grange over Sands. He enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Kings Own Royal Lancaster Regiment which was the equivalent of today's Territorial regiments. The Kings Own was the local regiment and it is likely that other young men of Arthur's acquaintance enlisted at the same time.

On the declaration of war on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 recruits to the 1<sup>st</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Battalion were called up as part of the general Mobilisation Scheme and were initially stationed in Barrow for basic training and defence of important local strategic sites such as the docks in Barrow in Furness and Vickers' works. On 11 August the Battalion was moved to Ulverston and was billeted in local schools whilst equipment and stores were issued. On 15 August the Battalion was transferred to Slough to guard one of the main Great Western lines.

It was not until May 1915 that the Battalion was posted to France and was first sent into the trenches on 24 May. On 13 June the Battalion took over the trenches at Festubert, some 25 miles south west of Ypres, 15 miles south of Armentieres and the scene of heavy fighting as the Germans attempted to break the Allied lines. An attack was made on the German lines on 15<sup>th</sup> June but battalion records indicate that it was unsuccessful and a retirement was ordered. A diary states that 'the Battalion emerged sadly depleted in strength by five officers and 147 'other ranks'. One of the 'other ranks' who was wounded was Arthur Atkinson. Details of Arthur's wounds are not available, nor is it known if he was treated in France or returned to England to recover. He did however rejoin the Battalion, probably in early 1916.

The Battalion was involved a number of skirmishes in the following months but in 1916 played its part in the Battle of the Somme. There were specific engagements at Guillemont, Ginchy, Flers-Courcelette and Morval. Accounts of the battle at Guillemont on 7 August make for grim reading with attacks by 'B' Company (Arthur's company) being repelled with heavy casualties. 17 officers were lost and 254 'other ranks', the figures including those killed, wounded and missing. One of the 'other ranks' was Arthur Atkinson.

On 9 September 1916 the Westmorland Gazette recorded that Arthur had been missing since 8 August but the edition of 14 October reported that Private A Atkinson had written to his parents informing them that he had been wounded and was now a prisoner of war in Germany. Subsequent records state that Arthur had died of his wounds on 30 August 1916, the discrepancy between the dates presumably attributable to delays in communication.

Arthur was initially buried in St Martin's Military Cemetery Extension, St Quentin. His body was exhumed in 1924 when some military cemeteries were consolidated and he was re-buried in St Souplet British Cemetery near Cambrai. The inscription on the headstone reads: '*Time passes but memory never fades*'.



### **The family in Grange**

The Grange Red Books indicate that 2 Berriedale Terrace remained in the possession of the Atkinson family until 1958. Robert, Arthur's father died in 1933 leaving his effects to his wife Jane. Jane died in 1944 and one of the daughters, probably Ruth, remained in the house until 1958.