

Bury Grammar School Centenary Roll of Honour

Former Lieutenant Harold Ashworth Shaw, Royal Engineers, died 25th April 1916, aged 23



Ex-Lieut. H. A. SHAW.



Harold Ashworth Shaw as a boy and as a Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers

Harold Ashworth Shaw was born on 24th May 1892, the son of Richard and Sarah Shaw of 55 Bolton Road, Elton in Bury. He was baptized at St Stephen's Church, Elton, on 9th June. His father Richard was the Company Secretary of Davenport's Brewery Ltd. in Bury. Harold attended Bury Grammar School from January 1904 until Christmas 1907, although the school register notes that he returned in April 1905 after what appears to be one term's absence. In 1905 he became a founder member of Kay when the school introduced a House system. The register records that after he left school he went to work as a draughtsman. On the 1911 Census he was living at 50 Moorgate, Bury, with his widowed mother Sarah and 12 year-old sister Elizabeth and was working as a Clerk in the Borough Surveyor's Office. His 'Bury Guardian' obituary records that he was employed successively by Bury, Bacup and Bolton Borough Councils. In 1912, the school magazine 'The Clavian' reported that he had taken the Studentship Examination of the Institution of Civil Engineers and in 1915 that he had passed the Institution's Associate Membership Examination.

On 1st July 1915 he enlisted in the Royal Engineers as a Sapper (the equivalent of a Private). 'The London Gazette' (the official paper of record) subsequently recorded that he had been commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the West Lancashire Divisional Engineers, effective 4th September 1915. However, only a few months later, the Gazette stated that Lieutenant Shaw had relinquished his commission on 25th February 1916, owing to ill-health. He died two months later, on Tuesday 25th April. He was buried in All Saints' Churchyard, Elton on 28th April 1916. 'The Bury Guardian' gave a detailed report of the funeral, which was conducted 'in the presence of a large number of people'. The coffin, covered with the Union Jack and floral tributes, was carried by six khaki-clad members of the Lancashire Fusiliers. The last rites were read by the Curate, the Revd J.L. Howell and the Last Post was sounded at the graveside. The mourners included the Borough Surveyor of Bacup and the Deputy Surveyors of Bury and Bolton. In his will, Harold left £55 19s 11d to his widowed mother, Sarah Shaw. Despite the military trappings at the funeral, the fact that he was no longer a serving soldier at the time of his death means that Harold Ashworth Shaw's name does not appear on the Register of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. He is one of three old boys whose names are listed on our Great War Memorial but are not commemorated by the CWGC. The others are Reginald Hall and Sydney Olive.

Left: The report of Harold Shaw's death which appeared in 'The Bury Guardian' newspaper on 29th April 1916.

