



Thame Remembers

Corporal Ralph Line



Ralph Line (or Lines) was born in Hampstead, London on the 24th June 1887 to mother Ruth (nee House), and father Richard Line, a butcher. He was baptised in the parish church of Harmondsworth on the 7th August 1887, and was the eldest of seven children. Together with his then widowed mother and brothers, Ralph moved to Thame sometime in 1911 where they lived in Lower High Street. Ralph was employed in Thame as a warehouseman for warehouse and distribution company, Pursers. He served for three years with the local territorial yeomanry, the Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars, and on the outbreak of the war was one of the first to re-enlist. Within a matter of weeks, on the 20th September 1914 he embarked with C (Henley) Squadron for France, disembarking at Dunkirk two days later. In October, in northern France, they were the first territorial unit to see action in the war, but then spent much of the war with the 4th Cavalry Brigade in frustration, as no opportunities for mounted cavalry breakthroughs came to fruition. Much time was spent in trenches either as working parties or as mobile fighting infantry. At the end of April 1915 Ralph was one of several members of the regiment, including his future brother-in-law William Humphris, wounded by a bursting shell. He was invalided back to England, and after a period for recovery he rejoined the regiment in France. On the 7th November 1917, whilst on leave, he married Sarah Jeannie Humphris of 24 Upper High Street at St Mary's Church, Thame.

Corporal Ralph Lines was killed by machine gun fire during the Battle of St Quentin, part of the German spring offensive known as Operation Michael, on 23rd March 1918, age 30. His officer said "he was such a gallant fellow, and one of the smartest NCO's in the regiment and will be much missed." He was initially buried by the Germans in a local battlefield cemetery and was re-buried in 1919.

285209 Corporal Ralph Lines, Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars, is buried in the British Extension to Chauny Communal Cemetery, Aisne, France.



**The
Thame Remembers Cross
was delivered
to his grave on
27th June 2018
by
Adrian Dite**

