

William Mosedale GC

WILLIAM MOSEDALE WAS BORN ON MARCH 29 1894, IN HOPE STREET, HIGHGATE. LATER THEY MOVED TO 11 SHERBOURNE TERRACE, SHERBOURNE ROAD. HE ATTENDED SHERBOURNE ROAD BOARD SCHOOL IN NEARBY BALSALL HEATH FROM THE AGES OF THREE TO THIRTEEN. HE THEN STARTED WORK AS A TINSMITH AND CARRIAGE LAMP MAKER.



HE WAS ALWAYS BIG FOR HIS AGE AND AT JUST 14 HE ENLISTED AS A PRIVATE IN THE 5TH TERRITORIAL BATTALION OF THE ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT – PASSING HIMSELF OFF AS AN 18-YEAR-OLD. TWO YEARS LATER MOSEDALE JOINED THE 5TH ROYAL IRISH LANCERS AND WITHIN THREE YEARS HAD ACHIEVED THE RANK OF CORPORAL AND BECAME THE REGIMENT'S BOXING CHAMPION.

HE WOULD HAVE SERVED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR HAD TRAGEDY NOT STRUCK WHEN HIS MUM AND DAD DIED WITHIN MONTHS OF EACH OTHER. AS THE ELDEST BROTHER OF SIX SIBLINGS, MOSEDALE WAS FORCED TO LEAVE THE ARMY TO LOOK AFTER HIS FAMILY. HE WORKED IN A COAL MINE AND IN 1914 HE WAS OFFERED A JOB WITH THE BIRMINGHAM FIRE BRIGADE AND STEADILY CLIMBED THE RANKS TO THE POSITION OF STATION OFFICER AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

ON THE NIGHT OF THE 11 DECEMBER 1940, DURING THE BIRMINGHAM BLITZ, MOSEDALE RECEIVED A REPORT THAT A HOUSE AND AUXILIARY FIRE STATION HAD BEEN HIT BY A HIGH EXPLOSIVE BOMB. ON ARRIVING AT THE SCENE HE FOUND THAT BOTH HAD BEEN COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED. KNOWING THAT THERE MAY BE PEOPLE TRAPPED INSIDE, HE TUNNELLED FOR TWELVE HOURS TO REACH THEM. THE TUNNEL WAS IN CONSTANT DANGER OF COLLAPSE AND THE AIR RAID CONTINUED DURING THE NIGHT HOURS OF THE RESCUE OPERATION. MOSEDALE EVENTUALLY RESCUED TWELVE TRAPPED PEOPLE, PERSONALLY SAVING THEIR LIVES WITH COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR HIS OWN SAFETY.

MOSEDALE WAS AWARDED THE GEORGE CROSS FOR HIS BRAVERY. HIS AWARD WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE LONDON GAZETTE ON 28 MARCH 1941. IN 2008 MOSEDALE WAS COMMEMORATED BY THE NAMING OF A STREET, **MOSEDALE WAY, IN HIS MEMORY. THE STREET IS IN THE CENTRAL PARK DEVELOPMENT OFF LEE BANK MIDDLEWAY IN LADYWOOD, BIRMINGHAM. HIS NEPHEW KENNETH MOSEDALE OPENED THE ROAD ON 29 JULY 2008 IN THE COMPANY OF OTHER RELATIVES, FIREFIGHTERS, AND CIVIC DIGNITARIES.**

