



John Edward Holmes

1887 - 1917

John was born on 5th March 1887 and baptised on 9th April 1887 in All Saints Church, Dewsbury. His father was Thomas Holmes, a Card Cleaner in a woollen mill born in Howden Clough near Birstall in 1861 and died in 1932. His mother was Mary Jane (nee Firth) born in Dewsbury in 1865 and died in 1913. They were married at St. John the Evangelist Church, Dewsbury Moor on 21st February 1885.

Their other children were; Louisa, born in 1885, Ann/Annie, born in 1889 and Emma, born in 1894 and died in 1894.

On the 1901 and 1911 Census Records the family were living at 40, Huddersfield Road, Westtown, Dewsbury.

John was a Dyer's Labourer with Messrs Swire of Ravensthorpe. He was married in 1912 to Mary Jane Crosby (born in 1892 and died in 1977) and had two children; Catherine Ella Crosby, born in 1912 and Mary Millicent Holmes, born in 1913. Mary was remarried on 4th January 1919 at All Saints Church, Dewsbury to John Thomas Garforth (born in 1884 and died in 1960). They had five children between 1920 and 1928.

He enlisted in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry with the Service Number 11764 later transferring to the 1st/10th Battalion Manchester Regiment as Private 376919, formerly 4919. The date of attestation is not known but the press report of his death states that he enlisted nearly three years before. He arrived on the Western Front on 21st May 1915 but was later posted to Egypt before returning to the Western Front in March 1917. He died of uraemia in a Casualty Clearing Station at Bray-sur-Somme, France on 26th April 1917 and was buried in Bray Military Cemetery, Bray-sur-Somme. John was awarded the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Bray-sur-Somme is a village about 9 kilometres south-east of Albert. Bray Military Cemetery is north of the village, a little west of the road to Maricourt. The cemetery was begun in April 1916 by fighting units and field ambulances. In September 1916, the front line having been pushed further east, it was used by the XIV Corps Main Dressing Station and in 1917, the 5th, 38th and 48th Casualty Clearing Stations came forward and used it. In March 1918, the village and the cemetery fell into German hands, but were retaken by the 40th Australian Battalion on 24th August, and during the next few days the cemetery was used again. After the Armistice graves were brought in from the battlefields immediately north and south of the village and in 1924, further isolated graves were brought in. Bray Military Cemetery now contains 874 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 127 of which are unidentified.

John is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library.

In Memory of

Private

J E Holmes

376919, 1st/10th Bn., Manchester Regiment who died on 26 April 1917

Remembered with Honour

Bray Military Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

