



Percy Harold Holmes

1886-1918

Percy was born on 28th March 1886 at 129, Newark Road, Lincoln; his true birth name was *Percy Harold Giles*. His father was George Giles, a Joiner born in Branston, Lincolnshire in 1850. His mother was Mary Jane (nee Foster) born in Wragby, Lincolnshire in 1853. They were married in 1875.

Their other children (all born with the surname *Giles*) were; John William, born in Lincoln in 1876 and died in 1877, Bertie, born in Lincoln in 1878, Kate, born in Luton, Bedfordshire in 1880 and died in 1883, Fanny Elizabeth, born in St. Albans, Hertfordshire in 1883, George Henry, born in Leeds in 1889 and Beatrice May, born in Leeds in 1897.

On the 1891 Census the family were living at 25, Kenealy Street, Leeds (surname *Giles*), in 1901 at 32, Dawlish Mount, York Road, Leeds (surname *Giles*) and in 1911 at 766, Oldham Road, Newton Heath, Manchester (surname *Holmes*) and later at 35, Dean Lane, Newton Heath (surname *Holmes*). On 25th December 1899 Fanny was married to a Squire Foster in Leeds, but in 1901 she is back living with her family and is recorded on the census as single with the surname *Giles*. In the 2nd quarter of 1904 Fanny is married to a John Holmes in York and in October 1904 they have a son, Edward, born in Killinghall near Harrogate. On the 1911 Census Fanny Holmes is shown as single and Edward (Eddy) is recorded as "son", inferring that he is the son of George and Mary Jane who were by then aged 62 and 59 years old respectively. This is a possible reason why all the family have changed their surnames to Holmes.

Percy's occupation in 1901 was shown as a Wood Labourer; he was married to Lucy Briggs (born in West Ardsley in 1889 and died in 1974) on 14th March 1909 at Holy Innocents Church, Thornhill Lees, they had a son, George Edward (Eddy) born that same year. On the 1911 Census they are living at 20, Howard Street, Ardwick, Manchester, Percy's occupation is shown as a Railway Porter and he gives his place of birth as St. Albans. They had two more children whose births were registered in Dewsbury; Lucy, born in 1913 and Percy, born in 1916. Lucy's address on the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was 113, Mann's Buildings, Lees Moor, Thornhill Lees.

He enlisted in Dewsbury giving his birthplace as Lincoln serving as Private T4/185108 in the Inter Supply Depot of the Army Service Corps. He died of malaria in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) on 7th August 1918 and was buried in Amara War Cemetery. Percy was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Amara is a town on the left bank of the river Tigris some 520 kilometres from the sea. It was occupied by the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force on 3rd June 1915 and it immediately became a hospital centre. The accommodation for medical units on both banks of the Tigris was greatly increased during 1916 and in April 1917, seven general hospitals and some smaller units were stationed there. Amara War Cemetery contains 4,621 burials of the First World War, more than 3,000 of which were brought into the cemetery after the Armistice. 925 of the graves are unidentified. In 1933, all of the headstones were removed from this cemetery when it was discovered that salts in the soil were causing them to deteriorate. Instead a screen wall was erected with the names of those buried in the cemetery engraved upon it.

Percy is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the War Memorial in St. Michael and All Angels Church, Thornhill. His name is shown as *Percy Holmes* on all the above.

In Memory of

Private

P H Holmes

T4/185108, Inter Supply Depot, Army Service Corps who died on 07 August 1918 Age 32

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, of 35, Dean Lane, Newton Heath, Manchester; husband of Lucy Holmes, of 113, Mann's Buildings, Lees Moor, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Remembered with Honour

Amara War Cemetery



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

