

DAVID HOLMES

David Holmes was born in 1875 in Partney. In 1881 the family, including his father Charles, an agricultural labourer, lived near Partney Mill.

By 1891 David had left home and may have been working as a gardener for a Mrs Pegg in Halton, Guisborough, North Yorkshire. The Holmes family were now running the lodging house at Partney Mill that by 1911 would be run by the family of Harry Blakey, another soldier remembered on the memorial at St Nicholas Church, Partney.

In 1901 David was working as a coachman and living in Clee, Grimsby. He was married to Louisa Bevan on 28th August 1905 in the Priory Church, Great Malvern, Worcestershire.

They had four children:- Violet Louisa born 9th April 1906 in Great Malvern, Winifred Rhoda born 2nd December 1910 in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, Cecil Edwin born 15th March 1915 in Llanelli, South Wales and Maurice born 16th July 1917 in Spilsby

David enlisted on 19th July 1916 at Lincoln. He was 40 years and 294 days old, living at Old Hall, Langton-by-Spilsby., working as a gardener. He stood 5' 5¾" tall, had a 37" chest and weighed 128lbs. He had previously served in the Southern Rhodesia Volunteer Force.

The Southern Rhodesia Volunteers, a mounted corps supported by cyclists, signallers and engineers was created in 1898. The volunteers drilled a few nights a week and occasionally they went into camp with the British South Africa Police, these outings being regarded as much as social as military occasions.

Training never reached a very high level of efficiency; membership fluctuated as settlers drifted in and out of the country, but morale was high, reflecting the camaraderie of a country where almost everybody knew everybody else.

David was assigned to the 1st Middlesex Regiment with a regimental number of G/22269. On 19th October 1916 he was posted to France, returning on 27th December 1916.

He was admitted to the Eastern Command Hospital at Shoreham-by-sea on 24th March 1917 suffering from Trench Feet and rheumatism. He stayed there until 22nd May 1917.

He was discharged on 21st July 1917 as being no longer physically fit for war service. A pension of 27/6 a week was granted in view of his suffering from carcinoma of the tongue.

David was awarded the British Military Medal and the Victory Medal as well as the Silver War Badge.

David Holmes died on 11th November 1918.