

RUFUS OLIVER

Rufus Oliver was born in 1892 in Ingoldmells. His father Thomas was a farmer. In 1901 the family were living in Skegness Road, Ingoldmells.

By 1911 Rufus and his brother Garnet were both working as Waggoners on a farm in Scremby. They were boarding with the farm foreman, Asher Saunders. Their father was now farming in Ashby-by-Partney.

A waggoner would have to get up about six in the morning to feed the horses and get them ready. He went out to work at half past seven, when it was light. Sometimes he would go out with hurricane lamps hung on the manes of the horses, waiting for the light. He went out until twelve o'clock and then came in and had two hours for dinner, one hour of which was spent preparing the food for the horses for the night. And then he had his own dinner time. And then he went out to work again until it got dark in the winter, six o'clock in the summer, six days of the week. There were no August Bank Holidays and Saturdays and Spring Bank Holidays.

Rufus served as a gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery during the First World War. His regimental Number was 84375. The RGA developed from fortress-based artillery located on British coasts. From 1914 when the army possessed very little heavy artillery it grew into a very large component of the British forces. It was armed with heavy, large calibre guns and howitzers that were positioned some way behind the front line and had immense destructive power.



A Heavy Battery of the RGA tows its 60-pounder guns along the roads of Northern France.

He was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.

He married Olive Cheffings in 1921.