



Holt

World War I Casualty Biographies

Fred Dean



Fred Dean was born in 1890 at Ringwood, Hampshire. His father was Walter, an engineering pattern maker born in Poole in 1860 and his mother Mary (1857). It's likely that he was a twin as another child is aged 1 on 1891 census, Ernest. By 1901 there were 8 children in the family and they were still living in Ringwood. The 1911 census shows Fred still living with his parents and 3 younger brothers at Ringwood and working as an engineering turner and fitter. When he moved to Holt is uncertain.

***FOR KING AND COUNTRY
A Trio of Fallen Heroes***

The sad news has just come to hand of the death of three Holt men at the front.

Private Arthur Usher , third son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Usher, was one of the first men in the village to join Kitchener's Army in August 1914, being one of a group of about a dozen that responded to Lord

Kitchener's first appeal. After being trained he was sent to Gallipoli. When disaster overtook the Wilts Regiment on August 13th 1915, he was fortunate to escape with only a slight wound. He received treatment at Southampton and was later sent out to Mesopotamia. On April 15th 1916, he was again wounded on the advance on Kut and he died from a third wound, being shot in the head, on January 26th 1917. Pte Usher, who was 22 years of age and unmarried, was formerly under gardener at Arboyne, the residence of Mr E C Beaven and for a little while he worked for the Avon Rubber Co. Melksham. He acted for several years as organist at Staverton Wesleyan Chapel and was respected by all. Mr F Usher has two other sons in the army – Sgt. H Usher at Sutton Veny and Pte. Fred Usher, stationed at Whitstable.

A second Holt man fell in the fighting before Kut in the person of Pte. F. Dean, who joined the Army about 12 months ago. He was gardener to Mr. E. C. Beaven and it is a curious coincidence that Ptes Dean and Usher should fall together. Pte. Dean has only resided on the village for about six years, but his pleasant manner and manly bearing had brought him a good share of popularity. He leaves a widow and one child.

Petty Officer George Williams was serving in the Navy on the outbreak of war. In April 1915 he was on one of the E boats in the Dardenelles, when the submarine had the misfortune to be captured by the Turks, and Petty Officer Williams and his companions were sent as Prisoners of War to Constantinople. His friends fear that their treatment at the hands of their captors left much to be desired and it is thought that the attack of erysipelas from which he died may have been due to bad prison conditions. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Williams, The Walk, Holt are old residents in the village. Two other sons are serving with the Forces – Warrant Officer Charles Williams and Howard Williams, A.B. Petty Officer Williams was married and leaves a widow and two children who reside at Portsmouth. A brother-in-law is Lance Sergeant Thomas Harrison R.H.A.

In each of the above cases the sad news is received with deep regret by the villagers and much sympathy is felt with the relatives.

Wiltshire Times 10.2.17 P8

Fred Dean died on 15th January 1917, probably whilst trench digging. An entry from the Regimental War Diaries reads as follows:

Improvements of the Hai and Swindon Street. Night 15/16 dug trench connecting Hai and Swindon Street. Sapheads and extending to River Bank. Line completed and occupied named King Trench... Casualties during night's digging 2/4S C. R. L. Clarke wounded, O.R – killed 1, O.R. – wounded 6

Swindon Street trench was 120 yards east of Hai and parallel to it. Might Fred Dean have been the O.R. (Other Ranks) killed?

He is buried at Amara War Cemetery, Iraq
Grave Reference: XVIII.C.13

Frederick Dean, Private, 25948, 5th Battalion Wiltshire Regiment

References

Ancestry
Commonwealth War Graves Commission
FreeBMD
Wiltshire Regimental War Diary
Wiltshire Times
Holt Village Hall