



Holt

World War I Casualty Biographies

Drewitt, Edward Francis



Edward Francis Drewitt was born 1880. He was the son of Jacob (1851) and Mary (1852) Drewitt and the family lived at The Walk in Holt. Jacob was an agricultural labourer and Edward was the fourth boy in a family of five children (1881). Four other children were born subsequently. Interestingly Edward cannot be found on the 1891 census living with his family. As he was only 11 one can only speculate as to his whereabouts.

In the Civil Service Commission Appointments for 1906 he is recorded as a postman in Chippenham. In 1908 he married in Cardigan, Wales. His wife, Mary Rainger, was from Chippenham and had presumably followed him to Cardigan, where he had probably moved with his job. Their first child, Howard Sidney was born in 1909. The 1911 census shows the family living in St. Mary's Street, Newport, Pembrokeshire. Two daughters, Edith and Annie followed in 1912 and 1915 respectively.

IN DEFENCE OF COUNTRY

Residents of Holt have heard with deep regret of the death, resulting from wounds, of Private Drewitt, a native of the village who has for several years been residing at Newport, Pembrokeshire. He had previously served in the Army and his service on the reserve had expired two years before the war broke out. His platoon commander, writing on April 14th, expressed the hope that Pte. Drewitt would recover from his wounds, and said that just before he was wounded he distinguished himself greatly by his coolness, courage and good shooting, for which he was being recommended for the Military Medal. About 4 a.m. one day, whilst Pte Drewitt was on sentry duty, a party of Germans attempted a raid on the British lines. Pte. Drewitt "spotted" the party, and having given the alarm, shot at and killed one of the enemy. The Germans were then driven off by machine-gun fire. After the attackers had gone an officer, a sergeant and Pte. Drewitt went out to fetch the dead German. In the darkness the party were mistaken for Germans by the British machine gunners and all three were wounded. The Lieutenant added "Pte Drewitt was one of my reliable men. I was very sorry I was absent when the incident occurred, but my Company Commander has told me that in spite of his serious wound he uttered no complaint"

Private Drewitt has many friends and relatives in Holt. He was held in great esteem by his neighbours in Newport and great sympathy is felt with the widow and three young children in their great loss and under such unfortunate circumstances

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He died on 17th April 1917, of wounds sustained from what would now be called "friendly fire". Mary was then living at Sutton Road, Somerton, Somerset.

Edward Francis Drewitt was awarded:
Victory medal H/1/101B7 1516B
Star medal H/1/101B7 1516B

He is buried at Longuenesse Souvenir Cemetery, St. Omer, Pas de Calais, France
Grave Reference: IV.B.54

Edward Francis Drewitt, Private, 307170, 2nd/8th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers

References

Ancestry
FreeBMD
Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Holt Village Hall