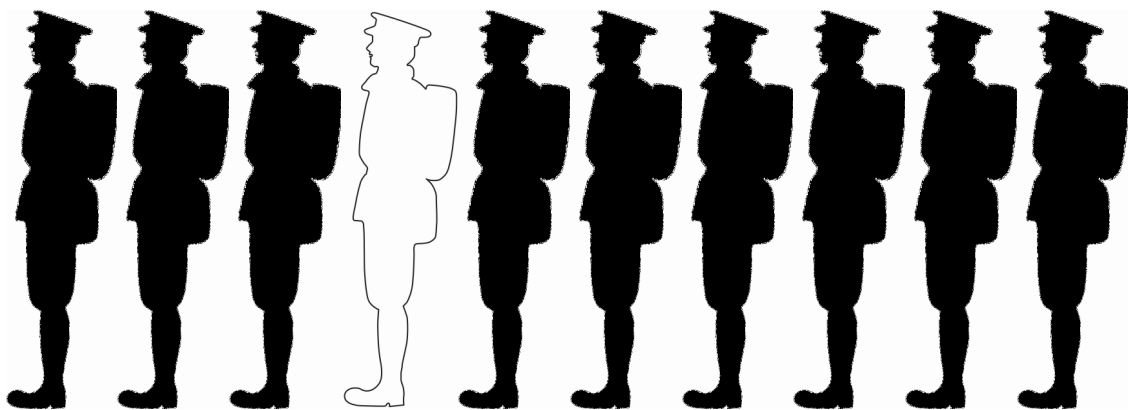


The Great War
Our Community Commemorated

The Men Who Went to War



Booklet 3: John Clowes, Peter Cotton, John
Cowburn and Valerie White



Holmes Chapel and District U3A Local History Group

This booklet, third in a series about the effect of the First World War on Holmes Chapel, summarises the experiences of the 225 men who went war from the community. A series of 225 pen portraits have also been produced which give more details about the personal background and experience of each man. These can be seen at the exhibition and subsequently at the Holmes Chapel Library or St Luke's Church. They are also available to view on the web site www.holmeschapelhistory.co.uk.

This booklet explains the sources of information and provides an analysis of the backgrounds of the men, where they fought and how they fared. This is compared with the national casualty figures available.

Photograph on the Front Cover is of Percy Moody and Friends

The Men Who Went to War from Church Hulme

1. Introduction

Church Hulme sent its fair share of recruits to fight the war and this is the story of who they were. From the Roll of Honour in St Luke's church and the Parish Magazines of the day we can establish the names of those men who joined the forces who had connections with Church Hulme. The parish of Church Hulme covers not only what we know today as Holmes Chapel but also Cranage and Cotton which were part of the community served by St Luke's Church in Holmes Chapel. As far as we can tell the names include those who attended other churches and those who did not attend church at all. It is assumed to be a comprehensive list of those connected with the community who served.

From these names we have searched the available references to find more out about who they were, where they lived, which regiments they joined and what happened to them during and after the war. Many can be found to have lived all their lives in Church Hulme but others are more difficult to trace. In a few cases we can find no connection with the village but they must have had family links or come to the village without being recorded in any of the available sources. Two names appear of soldiers who died but are not on our memorial – their homes by the time of their deaths are elsewhere but they had had connections with the village sufficient to have been referenced in the Parish Magazine.

All this information has been gathered together and has been sorted in two ways. Firstly the information on each soldier has been consolidated into a pen portrait on a sheet of A4. This describes his background, his military career and what we know of his life after the war. Where possible we have added a photograph of him or relevant to him. This information you will find on the history group website as well as a hard copy version in the Holmes Chapel library and St Luke's church. An example of a pen portrait is given below as Appendix 6.3.

Secondly this paper summarises the information we have collected in various ways. This gives an overall picture of the men who went to war and in some cases allows us to compare what we know of the Church Hulme troops with the national scene.

2. Sources of Information

As mentioned above, the names of the men have been gleaned from three main sources – the memorial in St Luke's church yard which lists the dead from WW1, the Roll of Honour in the church which lists all the men who joined the forces from the parish, and finally the Parish Magazine which was published monthly throughout the war. It is not clear how decisions were made as to who should be listed. Was a decision made to include only those who were parishioners when the war started? This seems unlikely even with regard to the memorial to those who died as some men were already living outside the village. Equally, two men who had family connections with the village are not listed on the memorial – although they are listed on other memorials more relevant to their living arrangements at the time.

When it comes to the Church Roll of Honour it must have been more difficult to ensure it represented only village members. What about sons who were working away? What about families who had moved away but left relatives or friends in the village? Entries in the Parish Magazine must have been even more open to inaccuracies as the church would have wanted to be as inclusive as possible and probably would have included any information given by community members. This magazine had a dedicated section each month headed 'Roll of Honour' which gave news of the men who had signed up, where they were posted, whether they had been injured and of course when they died. It is possible the policy of who should be included changed over the four years as the recording of information in the Parish Magazine became more routine. An example of an entry in the Parish Magazine is given below.

1915 September Roll of Honour

We mourn the death of Lt. W E Reiss – 6th Manchester's & Sgt H Upton – Shropshire Light Infantry. Sergeant Upton was killed in action 9th August & Lt Reiss hit in the arm gallantly leading an attack on Tabruck trenches on August 7th & died next morning at base hospital. A memorial service for Lt Reiss on August 14th & Sgt Upton on August 25th. Private C Street, 7th Cheshire is in hospital at Chichester having been brought home from the Dardanelles. He wounded his hand opening a tin of fish.P Sankey, F Nixon, P Moody, R Reiss must be added to the list now serving abroad. Added to the Roll of Honour this month A Moss, Manchester Pals.

We can conclude that we have a list of names of men who joined the services with some connection to the Parish. Our list includes all 211 of the men on the Church Roll of Honour as well as 14 others who are recorded in the Parish Magazine at some time, where a connection with the village has been established. Thus the list totals 225 men altogether. Note that one name, Leonard James Cumberlidge, is entered twice on the Church Roll of Honour, once as 'James L' and then elsewhere as 'Leonard'. A full list of names is given as an Appendix to this report.

This does seem a large number when compared with the population of Church Hulme at the time of the census in 1911 when there were a total of 1257 men, women and children. An estimate of men of an age to serve can be calculated by taking all males from age 11 to 35 at that time (making an allowance for the agricultural college students who would have left when the war started) which gives a figure of 259. Thus it indicates that the 225 men who went to war are a very large proportion of available males living in the community. Having established the list of men, their background has been researched. The main sources were:

- a. Census Records – from these we can find out about the family of the man, his birth date and in many cases his occupation.

- b. Land Tax Survey of 1911 – this major survey of properties throughout the country identified who was living in particular houses at the time. This along with the Census of 1911 can be used in many cases to identify the exact house a soldier had lived in before he joined the services.
 - c. Military Records – unfortunately a large number of records were lost during the Second World War but many have survived and these can give information about where the serviceman was posted. We also find extra information such as his height, exact age on signing up and his job at the time.
- There are other sources such as local newspapers, absent voter's lists, birth, marriage and death registers and family personal records.

3. Analysis of Information

From the large database of information collected we are able to draw conclusions about the cross section of men who went to join the services. We can discover how old they were when they joined up, what jobs they had before the war, how old they were when they died and many other aspects of their lives.

We do not have all the information for all the men but there is enough to get a good cross section of what happened to them.

3.1 Occupations before the War

We can identify the jobs of 162 out of the total of 225 men. This information is from two sources, the 1911 census returns and in a number of cases the information when the men signed up. No information is available for the remainder. The main categories were:

Job Category	No of Servicemen	No of Dead
Agriculture	37	5
Students	2	0
Regular Forces	11	3
Labourers	9	1
Professional	10	2
Retail	24	2
Domestic Servants	27	6
Trades	42	4

The distribution is not surprising for the young men in a rural community. There were also 23 scholars shown on the 1911 census who, by the time they enlisted, would have been working in various occupations but these are usually not known. The number of domestic servants covered a range of activities from groom to motor car driver and gardener. They were employed at Cranage Hall and The Hermitage and also at smaller houses along Middlewich Road and in other parts of the village. It was quite surprising to see the number of men already serving in the Regular Forces but this must have been a good source of employment when jobs were scarce at home.

Amongst the occupations of those enlisting were motor driver, groom, wallpaper stainer, salesman, market gardener, waggoner, miller's labourer, clerk, butcher, cowman, mill manager, hall boy, post office telegram boy, threshing machine worker, baker, bootmaker, surveyor, postman, coachman, shipping merchant, commercial traveller, life insurance agent and gamekeeper.

3.2 The Services and Regiments

Of the 225 men listed we can identify the role they played in the war in 160 cases. It is interesting to see how widespread the men were distributed with only 40 of the total joining the Cheshire Regiment. Eight men joined the Royal Navy, three were in the Royal Flying

Corps and many joined the regiments of surrounding counties. This would certainly have avoided the disastrous losses which occurred in some Pals Regiments where a large contingent came from a geographically small area.

Regiment	Number
Cheshire Regiment	40
Army Service Corps	19
Army Ordnance Corps	12
Royal Field Artillery	12
King's Shropshire Light Infantry	10
Royal Navy	8
Manchester Regiment	7
Denbighshire Yeomanry	6
Royal Engineers	5
Royal Garrison Artillery	5
Royal Welsh Fusileers	5
Kings Liverpool Regiment	3
Machine Gun Corps	3
Royal Flying Corps	3
Army Veterinary Corps	2
Canadian Contingent	2
Dragoon Guards	2
King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry	2
Labour Corps	2
Lancashire Fusileers	2
Public Schools Corps	2
Reserves	2
Royal Army Medical Corps	2
South Wales Borderers	2
St John's Ambulance Association	2

We know all the regiments of the 31 men who died except one and they were as follows:

Regiment	Number
Cheshire Regiment	12
Manchester Regiment	3
King's Shropshire Light Infantry	2
Machine Gun Corps	1
Royal Field Artillery	1
North Lancashire Regiment	1
Canadian Contingent	1
Royal Fusileers	1
Inniskilling Dragoons	1
King's O.Y. Light Infantry	1
King's Royal Rifles	1
Labour Battalion	1
Northumberland Fusiliers	1
East Lancashire Regiment	1
South Lancashire Regiment	1
Royal Warwickshire Regiment	1

The losses are highest within the Cheshire Regiment and amount to 30% which is slightly higher than expected from the overall proportion serving from the village (22%). How do these losses compare with the national levels? A total of 8.9 million UK and Empire soldiers fought of which 908,000 were killed which amounts to 10.2%. Amongst the UK population of 45.5 million at the time there were 855,000 losses amounting to 1.9%.

The Roll of Honour records 211 men who joined the services and the memorial records 29 deaths out of a population of about 1257 people.

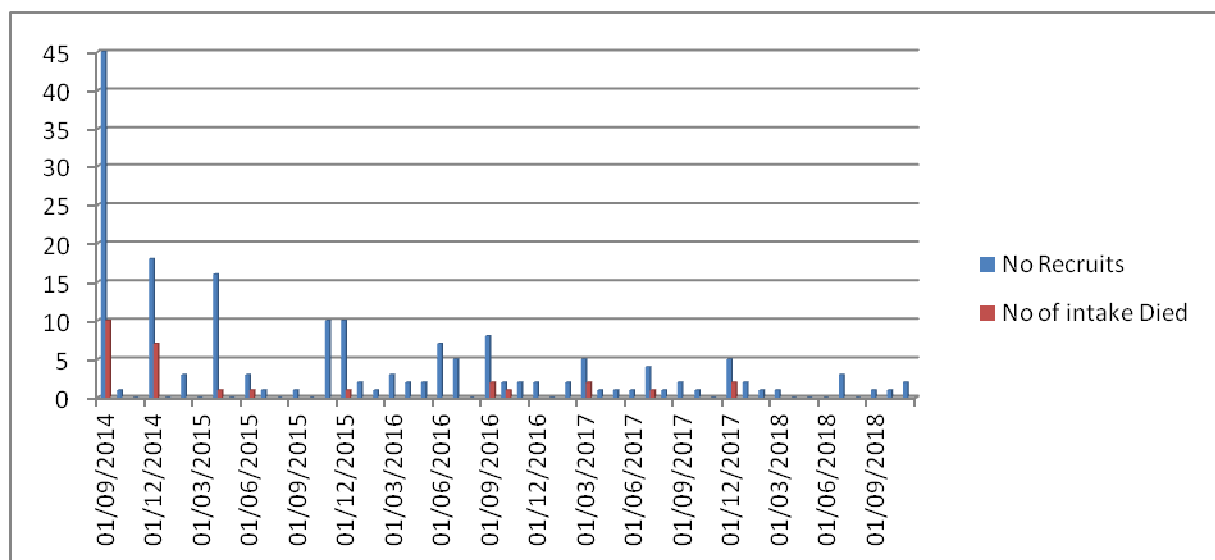
However, as mentioned above caution has to be used in extrapolating these figures and comparing with the national picture. It is possible that some of the men on the Roll of Honour were not resident in Church Hulme at the time but related in some way to

residents. A more accurate figure of those who were resident is given by selecting only those names which appear in the 1911 census, (i.e. they were resident a few years before the war) plus a few others for which there is definite evidence of residency. Using this figure of 137 men and deaths amongst this group of 16 the corresponding % losses amongst servicemen is 11.7% (compared with 10.2% nationally) and amongst the community 1.6% (compared with 1.9% nationally).

These figures are close to the national average and suggest Church Hulme suffered a typical level of loss within the community.

3.3 Recruitment

The graph below shows the number of recruits signed up month by month. We know this information from the Parish Magazine and also from some soldiers' military records. Because of the way the information was collected for the magazine it is not comprehensive covering only 178 of the soldiers but it is sufficient to show the pattern over the war.



In order to encourage support rallies were held and this was reported in the Parish Magazine:

SERIOUS NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

KITCHENER'S ARMY.

MORE MEN WANTED.

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held in the Assembly Rooms, Holmes Chapel, on MONDAY, September 7th, 1914, at 8 p.m.

Chairman: W. O. CARVER, Esq.

The Speakers, who will include G. C. HAMILTON, M.P., J. H. WHITWORTH, Esq., F. A. HAWORTH, Esq., will explain the Military situation in which the Country stands, and the urgent necessity for numbers of Recruits to join the Forces.

All are invited. Come and support the cause. God save the King.

Not surprisingly there was considerable enthusiasm at the beginning of the conflict and 45 men were recruited in the first month. Later recruitment campaigns were less successful and in late 1915 men were obliged to register under the Lord Derby scheme. This was continually modified as the need for more troops became ever more pressing until conscription was introduced in January 1916. Men from Church Hulme continued to join the services right up to September 1918 both as they became older and as the result of conscription.

3.4 Theatres of War

At first sight one would assume all the forces were serving in France and Flanders but this is far from the truth. The war was fought on many fronts and troops from Holmes Chapel were in several arenas. Apart from France and Flanders these locations have been identified:

Where Served	Number
Dardanelles	3
India	1
Ireland	1
Italy	5
Mediterranean	3
Mesopotamia	3
Palestine	1
Salonika	1
Scotland	1
Serbia	3
Turkey	2

3.5 How many were injured or ill?

The Parish Magazine often gave information about the welfare of the servicemen. There are many entries that they were 'in hospital' or 'injured' and this allows an estimate of how many men spent time in hospital. We cannot with certainty confirm they were injured in battle and some could be the result of illness or injury away from the front. Of the 225 troops listed from Church Hulme 74 (or 33%) different servicemen spent some time in hospital often on several occasions.

The causes varied from the bizarre 'He wounded his hand on a fish tin...' to the more common, 'We regret to hear that T Bishop of the Canadian Contingent has been wounded in France and is now in hospital in England'.

Of the servicemen who survived the war a question arises as to whether their health suffered leading to premature death. We will learn more when the 1921 census is released in a few years but the evidence suggests that the men survived to an age in line with the rest of the population. A more thorough analysis is required to compare death rates amongst those who did not go to war and the servicemen but the vast majority of the servicemen lived to be between 60 and 80 years old. It is likely that some were affected either from their injuries or from gassing. For example we know of Willie Davies '... *the gas did a lot of damage and he did not enjoy very good health after the war*' (ref c) but this is the only example we have.

3.6 Military Awards

Most servicemen received medals for their involvement in the conflict. These are the British War Medal, The Victory Medal and the 1914 or 1915 Star which are irreverently referred to as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'. However, a number of servicemen from Church Hulme received particular commendations for acts of bravery as detailed below.

- Sydney Cotton – **Military Medal**. *He was distinguished by conspicuous bravery between July 27th and Aug 2nd 1916 in the battle of the Somme.*
- Norman Birtles: *His military record shows that Sgt N Birtles, M.M. B/78th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery (Alderley Edge) received a **Distinguished conduct citation** 36839.*
- Wilfred Blease: *4th August 1918 he was awarded the **Meritorious Service Medal** (reason not known)*
- Herbert Bolshaw: *In September 1917 he was awarded the **Distinguished Service Certificate** for connecting telephone wires under heavy shell fire and thus keeping the battery in action.*
- William Henry Johnson: awarded the **Military Medal** for conspicuous act of gallantry in February 1918.
- Percy Sankey: *In September 1917 he was awarded the **Military Medal** for bravery in the field on 17th and 18th July.*
- William Stubbs: *“L-Cpl W Stubbs, South Lancashire Regiment, has been awarded the **Military Medal** for gallantry and services rendered to his country at Messines on September 29th 1918.”*

4 Conclusions

The story of the servicemen who joined the war from Holmes Chapel appears to be similar to those from the rest of the country. They fought in a range of countries, they died in similar proportions to the rest of the country and a large number experienced considerable periods in hospital.

Their backgrounds were mostly working class but a proportion of the wealthy were amongst them and a notable number of those who died were from this group.

The information we have suggests that those who returned after the war were, in general, able to carry on a normal civilian life. Ages at death seem to reflect those in the general population so although there were probably some physically affected by the war who returned to Church Hulme, the proportion were probably small.

5 References

- a. Census returns for 1841 to 1911
- b. Land Tax Survey of 1910
- c. Private correspondence from Mr D Cowgill
- d. St Luke's Holmes Chapel Parish Magazines 1914 to 1918

6 Appendices

6.1 Servicemen Recorded on the Holmes Chapel War Memorial – more details will be found in the pen portraits

6.2 Servicemen with Links to Church Hulme – see pen portraits for details

6.3 Example of Pen Portrait as produced for all servicemen but at A4 size. These can be seen in hard copy in the library and St Luke's Church or on the web site www.holmeschapelhistory.co.uk

6.2 Servicemen Recorded on the Holmes Chapel War Memorial

Name	Date and Place of Death	Age at Death
James Billington	24 May 1917, France and Flanders	28
Stanley T Bishop	20 April 1918, France and Flanders	29
Harry Blease	3 September 1917, France and Flanders	18
Samuel Bolshaw	28 October 1914, France and Flanders	33
Geoffrey Broome	10 July 1918, Scotland	22
Oswald A Carver	7 June 1915, Turkey	28
Basil A Carver	21 August 1916, France and Flanders	20
Thomas Connolly	26 April 1917, Serbia	25
John W Connolly	25 April 1917, Serbia	21
Leonard Cumberlidge	31 August 1918, France and Flanders	25
David Elks	1 November 1918, France and Flanders	35
George H Harrison	8 May 1915, France and Flanders	24
Leonard Hathway	23 October 1918, Italy	19
James Henshall	22 October 1914, France and Flanders	30
George Henshaw	19 September 1918, Serbia	30
Herbert Johnson	21 August 1918, France and Flanders	20
Norman W Lea	9 September 1917, France and Flanders	32
William Leach	9 October 1917, France and Flanders	35
Eric Meacham	9 July 1916, France and Flanders	21
Alec Mottershead	9 July 1916, France and Flanders	26
Eric Noppin	26 October 1917, France and Flanders	22
Wilfred Norbury	7 July 1916, France and Flanders	20
Willoughby Reiss	8 August 1915, Turkey	25
Charles Street	25 July 1918, France and Flanders	23
Joseph Stubbs	28 April 1917, France, Died of wounds	22
Henry Taylor	21 May 1916?, France ?	?
Sydney Thompson	26 July 1919, Shorncliffe, Kent	20
Herbert Upton	9 August 1915, France and Flanders	24
Harold E Veale	24 July 1917, France and Flanders	20

6.3 Servicemen with Links to Church Hulme – See Pen Portraits for Details

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Ackerley	Stanley	Hospitalised
Ackerley	Charles	Returned OK
Ackerley	Stephen T	Returned OK
Allcock	John	Returned OK
Allsopp	Charles	Returned OK
Allsopp	Clifford	Returned OK
Baddeley	Fred	Returned OK
Badger	Herbert W	Returned OK
Bailey	Samuel	Hospitalised
Barthorpe	Fred	Hospitalised
Baston	John Henry	Hospitalised
Bates	Alec	Hospitalised
Bateson	Harold	Returned OK
Bayley	Lionel	Returned OK
Beaver	Henry	Hospitalised
Beaver	Frederick	Returned OK
Bebbington	Thomas	Returned OK
Billington	James	Died
Birtles	Norman M	Returned OK
Bishop	Stanley T	Died
Bishop	Clarence	Hospitalised
Bishop	Herbert W	Hospitalised
Bishop	Leonard H	Hospitalised
Bishop	Frederick H	Returned OK
Blease	Harry	Died
Blease	Frank	Hospitalised
Blease	John	Hospitalised
Blease	Samuel	Returned OK
Blease	Wilfred	Returned OK
Blease	William	Returned OK
Bolshaw	Samuel	Died
Bolshaw	Joseph E	Hospitalised
Bolshaw	Frank	Hospitalised

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Bolshaw	Herbert	Hospitalised
Bolshaw	Frederick	Returned OK
Bowyer	John R	Hospitalised
Brereton	Ernest	Returned OK
Bright	Hubert	Hospitalised
Bright	Richard B	Hospitalised
Brisland	Richard	Returned OK
Broad	Henry	Returned OK
Broad	Hubert	Returned OK
Brookes	William	Returned OK
Broome	Geoffrey	Died
Brown	Alfred	Died
Brown	Henry/Harry	Hospitalised
Brown	Francis S G	Returned OK
Brundrit	William	Returned OK
Burgess	Harry	Hospitalised
Burgess	Tom Daniel	Returned OK
Burgess	Fred	Returned OK
Burgess	H	Returned OK
Burgess	Walter	Returned OK
Carson	Walter	Returned OK
Carter	James	Hospitalised
Carver	Basil A	Died
Carver	Oswald A	Died
Carver	Alan R	Hospitalised
Carver	Guy A	Returned OK
Clarke	Lot	Returned OK
Connolly	Thomas H	Died
Connolly	John W	Died
Corney	Charles	Hospitalised
Costello	Thomas E	Hospitalised
Cotton	Sydney A	Returned OK
Culley	Benjamin	Returned OK

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Cumberlidge	James L	Died
Davies	Edgar	Hospitalised
Davies	Willie	Hospitalised
Dix	William	Hospitalised
Egerton	Thomas	Hospitalised
Elks	David	Died
Ellison	Harry	Returned OK
Forshaw	Harold	Returned OK
Glover	John Harold	Hospitalised
Glover	Robert E	Returned OK
Gough	Thomas	Returned OK
Harper	George H	Returned OK
Harrison	George H	Died
Harrison	Sidney	Hospitalised
Harrison	Thomas B	Returned OK
Harrop	Joseph	Hospitalised
Hathway	Leonard H	Died
Haworth	Frank A	Returned OK
Henshall	James O	Died
Henshall	Charles	Hospitalised
Henshall	Jack /John	Hospitalised
Henshaw	George	Died
Henshaw	Gerald	Hospitalised
Henshaw	Wilfred R	Hospitalised
Henshaw	Albert T	Returned OK
Hewitt	William	Returned OK
Hill	Thomas	Returned OK
Hill	Thomas	Returned OK
Hochnell	Herbert A	Returned OK
Hulme	Eric P	Returned OK
Hulme	Percy	Returned OK
Hulme	Thomas	Returned OK
Johnson	Herbert E	Died
Johnson	Fred	Hospitalised
Johnson	William H	Hospitalised
Johnson	William C	Returned OK

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Killick	Claud	Returned OK
Latham	Charles D	Returned OK
Lea	Norman W	Died
Lea	Herbert	Hospitalised
Lea	Arthur E	Hospitalised
Lea	Joseph	Returned OK
Leach	William	Died
Leach	John	Returned OK
Lee	Frank M	Returned OK
Lester	William H	Returned OK
Lloyd	James	Returned OK
McHale	Thomas	Returned OK
Maddock	Richard	Returned OK
Massey	James	Hospitalised
Massey	Clifford	Returned OK
Massey	George	Returned OK
Massey	Harold	Returned OK
Mathews	Louis Henry	Hospitalised
Maybury	George	Returned OK
Measham	Eric	Died
Measham	Fred	Returned OK
Measham	George	Returned OK
Measham	Harry	Returned OK
Merrill	Thomas	Hospitalised
Merrill	Frank	Returned OK
Metcalf	John	Hospitalised
Metcalf	Hugh	Returned OK
Monaghan	John	Returned OK
Moody	Cecil	Hospitalised
Moody	Charles	Returned OK
Moody	Harry Bold	Returned OK
Moody	Harry	Returned OK
Moody	Percy	Returned OK
Morris	Frank	Returned OK
Moss	Harry	Hospitalised
Moss	Arthur	Returned OK

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Mottershead	Alec	Died
Mottershead	Herbert	Returned OK
Nixon	Fred	Returned OK
Noppin	Eric	Died
Norbury	Wilfred	Died
Oakes	Peter	Returned OK
Parrish	Edward	Returned OK
Parrish	James	Returned OK
Pickstock	Percy	Hospitalised
Pickstock	Victor	Hospitalised
Pickstock	Eli	Returned OK
Picton	Lionel J	Returned OK
Pierpoint	Wilfred	Hospitalised
Pitt	Donald	Returned OK
Postles	Harry	Hospitalised
Preston	Sydney	Returned OK
Reiss	Willoughby	Died
Reiss	Peter Q	Hospitalised
Reiss	Raymond H	Returned OK
Reiss	Vincent	Returned OK
Rose	Francis	Returned OK
Rosson	Sydney J	Returned OK
Rowe	William A	Hospitalised
Rowe	Percy C	Returned OK
Royle	Eli	Returned OK
Royle	John Owen	Returned OK
Royle	Josiah O	Returned OK
Sanderson	Robert	Died
Sankey	Percy	Hospitalised
Sankey	Harry	Returned OK
Sankey	James	Returned OK
Sankey	Wilfred R	Returned OK
Shellcross	George S	Hospitalised
Shepherd	Samuel	Returned OK
Shuttleworth	William jnr	Hospitalised
Shuttleworth	William snr	Returned OK

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Sidebottom	Ralph W	Returned OK
Simpson	Thomas	Hospitalised
Sinfield	George H	Returned OK
Snelson	William	Returned OK
Sproston	William	Hospitalised
Steele	Daniel	Returned OK
Street	Charles	Died
Street	Ernest 1	Hospitalised
Street	Frank 1	Hospitalised
Street	Frank 2	Hospitalised
Street	John Cecil	Hospitalised
Street	Thomas E	Hospitalised
Street	James	Returned OK
Street	William	Returned OK
Stubbs	Joseph	Died
Stubbs	Richard H	Returned OK
Stubbs	Samuel	Returned OK
Stubbs	William	Returned OK
Taylor	Henry	Died
Thompson	Sydney W	Died
Thompson	George W	Returned OK
Tomlinson	Horatio S C	Hospitalised
Turner	Robert	Hospitalised
Turner	Charles H	Returned OK
Turner	Fred	Returned OK
Turner	Frank	Returned OK
Upton	Herbert H	Died
Upton	Alfred E	Hospitalised
Upton	Ernest	Hospitalised
Veale	Harold E	Died
Veale	William A	Hospitalised
Venables	Harry	Hospitalised
Wainwright	Thomas P	Hospitalised
Wakefield	Sydney C	Returned OK
Walker	Harold	Hospitalised
Wharton	Charles F	Hospitalised

Surname	Christian Names	War Experience
Wharton	Hugh Holt	Hospitalised
Williams	Glendore V	Hospitalised
Williams	George	Returned OK
Williams	Griffith C	Returned OK
Williams	Maelgwyn	Returned OK
Williams	Thomas O	Returned OK
Wilson	Charles B	Hospitalised
Wilson	Hubert M	Returned OK
Winstanley	Frank	Returned OK
Winstanley	Jesse T	Returned OK
Winstanley	Percy	Returned OK
Woodcock	Richard	Hospitalised
Woodcock	Alfred	Returned OK
Worsley	John H	Returned OK
Yoxall	John	Returned OK

6.3 Example of a Pen Portrait as produced for all the servicemen

78

David Elks

Church View, Holmes Chapel

Killed in Action 1st November 1918



His Story

David Elks was born in May 1883 the son of Samuel and Ann in Pendlebury, Lancashire. We know that in 1891 he was living at 17 Park Street, Pendleton aged 7 and at school. In 1901 he was still in Pendleton and living at 12 Ernest Street. He was aged 17 and a paper mill worker at Plaiting Down Paper Mill. By 1911 he had moved as a boarder to the house of Charles M Pollitt, 102 Broughton Rd, Pendleton, aged 27. His job was now described as a wallpaper stainer.

In November 1911 he married Edith Gorton at St Barnabas Church, Pendleton and by the outbreak of war he had two children Christina and Edith.

Shortly after this he moved to Holmes Chapel and he was living at Church View. The move related to the opening of the wallpaper works on Macclesfield Road which attracted a number of people from the Pendleton area.

His War Record

He was called up in 1917 and enlisted at Middlewich as a Private into the 2/7th Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment Nr 29630. The Parish Magazine records his enlistment and in October 1918 that he was in hospital suffering from gas poisoning. This had occurred during the battles in France and Flanders.

He was killed in action in France on 1st November 1918. He was finally buried in Valenciennes Communal Cemetery (Plot 3 Row D grave 22) having been removed from Artres British Cemetery on 6th November 1920.

This cemetery, on the road from Artres to Preseau, contained the graves of 32 soldiers of the 61st (South Midland) Division who fell on the 1st November 1918, one of whom was David Elks.

David Elks was the only Holmes Chapel married man to be killed leaving his widow Edith who died in 1968. He received the Victory Medal and the British War Medal.

This is one of a series of booklets produced by the Holmes Chapel U3A Local History Group describing different aspects of life in Holmes Chapel before and during the First World War. The full list is as follows:

1. Holmes Chapel before the War
2. Village People 1914 – 1918
3. The Men Who Went to War
4. Refugees come to the village
5. Beating the Drum – Recruitment and Communication
6. The Community Response
7. Feeding the People
8. Rationing During the War
9. Rules and Regulations
10. Education
11. Life Goes On

For copies of booklets see web site
www.holmeschapelhistory.co.uk

First Published August 2014

WW1 and Holmes Chapel District

In 2011 a local branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A) was set up in the village and one of the activities under its umbrella was a local history group. This attracted people who had been involved in research in the past as well as some new volunteers eager to learn more. After an initial period of encouragement and training for the newcomers it was decided that the group would work together on a topic - The Story of Holmes Chapel and district during the First World War.

What you hold in your hands is one in a series of booklets describing different aspects of life in Holmes Chapel and district before and during the First World War. A full list of the booklets is given on the inside of this back cover.

Research Group Members: Bill Barber, Cath Cameron, Rod Cameron, John Clowes, Peter Cotton, John Cowburn, Stella Freer, Gwen Hayhurst, Barbara Jackson, Lynda Kappes, Val White, Janet Yarwood.



Supported by

The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

