

Harold Holden

(16th January 1899 -)



(30)

War Record

Harold (Harry) served with the South Wales Borderers, which we can see from his cap badge. Although there are no service records, there is only one Harry Holden recorded on the medal rolls with the South Wales Borderers, service number 49778. This tells us that Harry received the Victory and British War Medals.⁽¹⁶⁾

The standard uniform in August 1914 was the 1902 Pattern Service Dress which included two elements – rifle patches on the shoulder and a pleat on the pocket. However, as the war continued demand for uniforms grew. The “utility” uniform was introduced from the end of 1914 onwards without these elements, which simplified manufacture, saved material and helped to speed up production. If a soldier is shown wearing the “utility” uniform it is likely that he was a late volunteer or a conscript.⁽¹⁸⁾

Harold is wearing the standard 1902 Pattern Service Dress tunic, so it is likely that he volunteered. However, he does not have the 1914-15 star so he had not served in a theatre of war before December 31st 1915.⁽²⁾

Family History

Harold Holden was born in Ramsbottom, Lancashire in 1899. His father Thomas was a labourer, born in Edgworth and his mother Betsy Alice had come from Tottington. Harold worked as a “crealer” in a cotton mill.⁽¹⁾

In 1911 there were five children in the family and they were living at 7 Thomasson Fold, Edgworth⁽¹⁾. Harold later lived at 457 Blackburn Road, working as a Tenter in the cotton mill, whereas John lived at Sandy Bank, Edgworth and Jim moved to Hawkshaw, where he is remembered as being adept at playing the concertina!⁽¹⁷⁾⁽¹¹⁾

Mary Ellen	Weaver	b 1897, Edgworth
Harold	Crealer	b 1899, Ramsbottom
John		b 1901, Edgworth
Fred		b 1904, Edgworth
James		b 1907, Edgworth

The 1939 Register shows the family still living at 457 Blackburn Road. Harold is a Production Process Worker – Textile Printing – Heavy Worker (born 16th January 1899). His wife Ethel was born on 19th April 1899 and son Harold F born 6th October 1928 is at school.⁽³⁶⁾

Research: Linda Spencer

Standard References: Standard references: 1, 2, 30, 11, 36, plus:

- 16 www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org
- 17 Memories of local resident
- 18 <http://www.loyalregiment.com/photo-identification/>