Walter Holmes





Rank: - Trooper

Number: - 7901871

Regiment: - Royal Armoured Corps, 4th Queen's Own Hussars

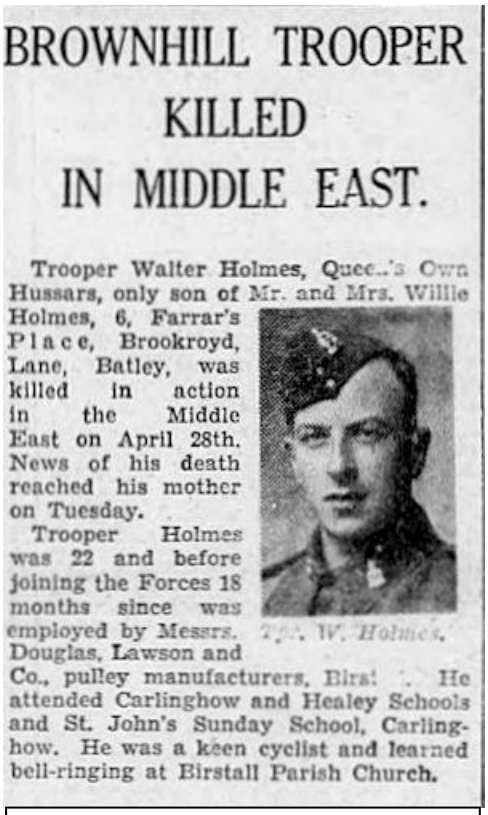
Died: - Killed in Action 26 April 1941 age 22.

Memorial: - Athens Memorial, Greece Face 1.

Walter was born on 15 September 1918 the only son of Willie and Alice Holmes nee Wilson who had married on 22 August 1908 at St Peters Church, Birstall. The family in 1939 lived at 5, Farrar's Place, Brookroyd, Batley.

Walter attended Carlinghow and Healey Schools and St. John' s Sunday School, Carlinghow. He was a keen cyclist and learned bell-ringing at Birstall Parish Church. Before he joined the Forces in October 1939, he was employed by Messrs. Douglas, Lawson and Co. pulley manufacturers, Birstall.

When the war broke out in September 1939 the 4th Hussars were stationed in Tidworth, Hampshire with the 1st Light Armoured Brigade, 1st Armoured Division, that went to France with the British Expeditionary Force and were evacuated at Dunkirk. After being re-equipped and re-trained in Britain, the 4th Hussars deployed in January 1941 to the Middle East with 1st Armoured Brigade. In March 1941 they moved to Greece to support 6th Australian Infantry Division. At the Corinth Canal Bridge the 4th Hussars fought a rearguard action to allow the allied forces to retreat to the Peloponnese Peninsula. During this action all the officers and 400 men were taken prisoner. Despite the brave resistance of the Greek and Commonwealth troops, the speed of the German 'Blitzkrieg 'overwhelmed their defensive positions. The Germans quickly captured the southern Greek cities and the struggle ended with the fall of Athens on 27 April 1941.



BROWNHILL TROOPER KILLED IN MIDDLE EAST.

Trooper Walter Holmes, Quee..'s Own Hussars, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Holmes, 6, Farrar's Place, Brookroyd, Lane, Batley, was killed in action in the Middle East on April 28th. News of his death reached his mother on Tuesday.

Trooper Holmes was 22 and before joining the Forces 18 months since was employed by Messrs. Douglas, Lawson and Co., pulley manufacturers, Birst . He attended Carlinghow and Healey Schools and St. John's Sunday School, Carlinghow. He was a keen cyclist and learned bell-ringing at Birstall Parish Church.

Batley News, 31 May 1941 (photo)

Walter is remembered with Honour at Batley and Birstall War Memorials. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group

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