



PRIVATE NORMAN COLLEGE HOLTBY

1st Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion

(1st Central Ontario Regiment or Saskatchewan Regiment)

Service number 182749

3rd October 1916 – died of wounds at No.11 Stationary Hospital, Rouen age 24

Buried at St Sever Cemetery, Rouen (Plot B.17.48)

Born Marshchapel, Lincolnshire on 5th June 1892

Father – John (Farm Bailiff). Mother – Florence Isabella

No brothers or sisters.

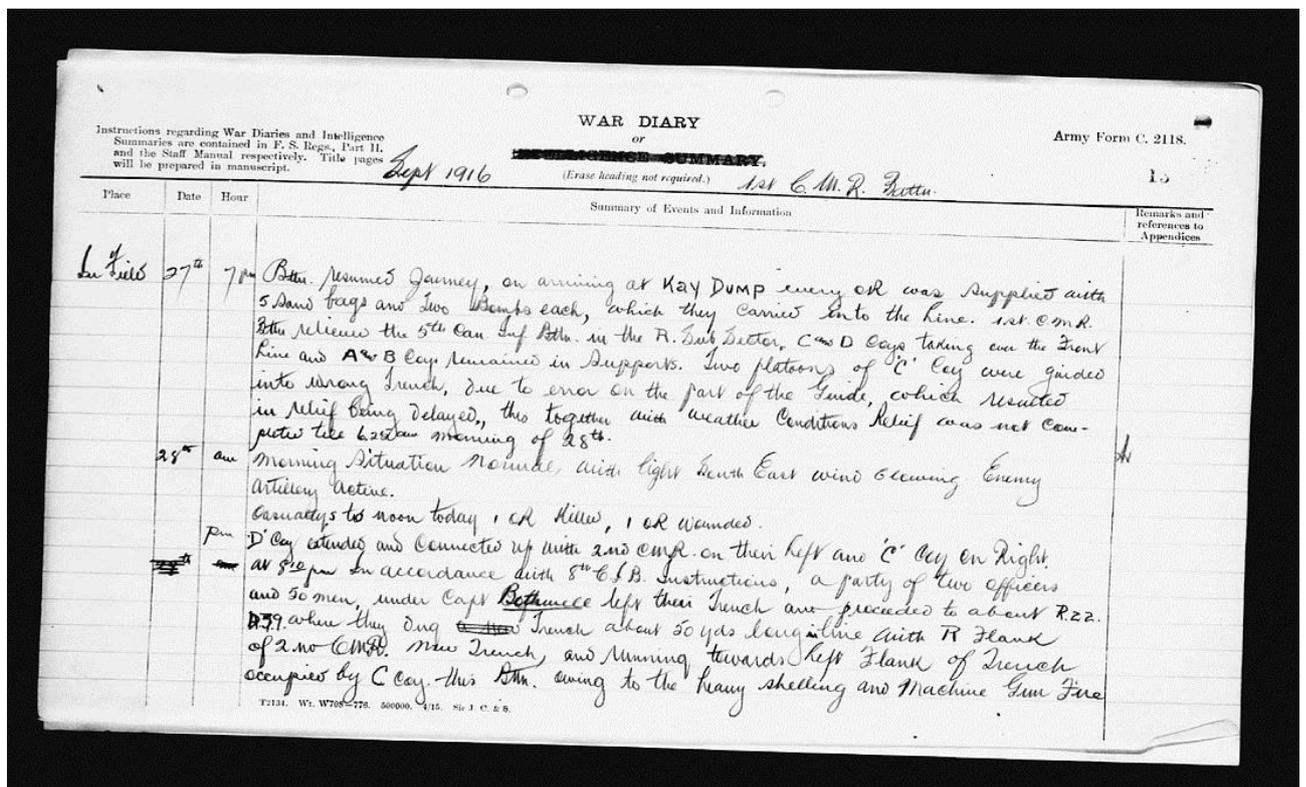
Lived at High Wood, Althorp Park.

Norman became a grocer's assistant.

Norman described himself as being born in Marshchapel, Lincolnshire which is close to North Cotes, Utterby and Louth. His birth was registered in 1892 at Louth, Lincs. Nothing is known of his early life except that it must have centred on farm life and work in rural Lincolnshire. He moved with his family to an estate near Southam and then Althorp (see below). Norman was identified in the 1911 UK census as being an 18-year-old single grocer's assistant. This census was taken on 2 April 1911. It seems that he emigrated to Canada soon afterwards 1911, possibly via St Albans, Vermont. The Index to Alien Arrivals at Canadian Atlantic and Pacific Seaports records the arrival of a Norman Holtby, age 19 probably in 1911. The 1911 census of Canada, taken 2 months later on 1 June 1911, records a Norman Holtby who was born June 1892 in England with Canadian citizenship working as a labourer on the farm of Robert and Fannie Alexander (interestingly aged 26 & 24) in Macdonald, Manitoba. He enlisted in the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force at Winnipeg (109 Km from Macdonald), Manitoba on 3.11.15. At that time, he gave his trade as 'Fireman'. While there are some inconsistencies between the data, it seems likely that they all relate to Norman College Holtby.

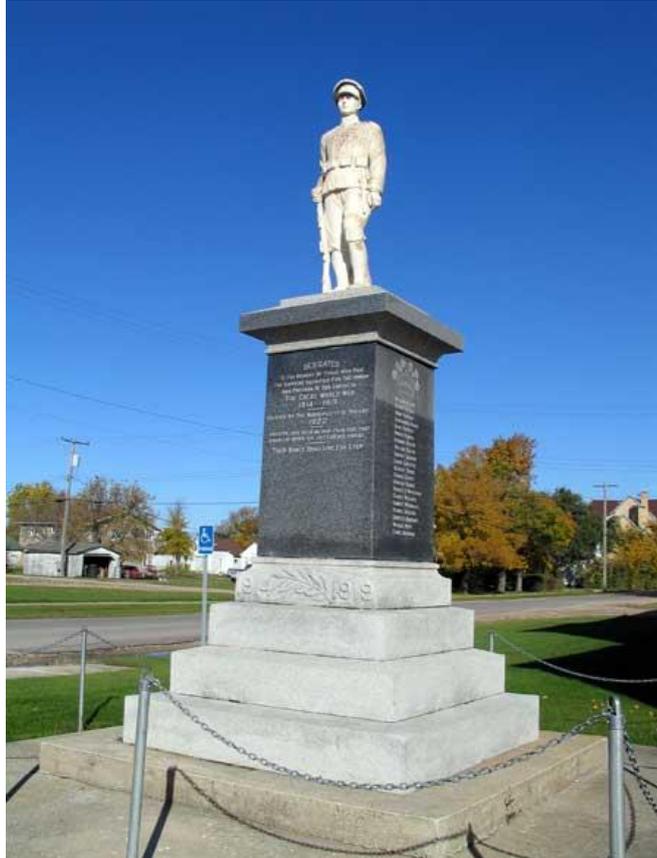
There is also some doubt about the Regiment with which Norman served. The record of memorials suggests that this was the Saskatchewan Regiment but the Forces War Records website states that he served with the 1st Central Ontario Regiment. His residence before the enlistment would have lain almost exactly half way between Saskatchewan and Ontario offering no indication as to which was correct.

The Battles of the Somme represented the debut of the Canadian Corp and it seems most likely that Norman Holtby was seriously wounded in late September 2016 at one of the battles at that time i.e. Flers-Courcelette (September 15-22), Morval (September 25) or Thiepval Ridge (September 26-28).



Extract from War Diary of 1st Canadian Mounted Regiment for 27 & 28 September 2016

Norman Holtby died of his wounds on 3 October at No 11 Stationary Hospital, Rouen where he had been admitted with a fracture caused by a gunshot wound to the right knee and had had his femur amputated. He was buried at St Sever Cemetery, Rouen and he is also commemorated on the war memorial of the Rural Municipality of Manitoba.



Family history

Norman was the son of John Thomas Holtby who was born in North Cotes, Lincolnshire. John Holtby was a common name in the agricultural communities of South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire so it seems likely that he came from a local family there. John was described as a farmer in 1876 at the approximate age of 23. It may be that his father died leaving him in charge at a young age because by 1881 census, at the age of 28, he was a farmer with 316 Acres; living at The Grove, Utterby, Louth, Lincs. John married Florence Isabella who had been born in Glasgow but I have seen no indication as to how they met. Their first child, Emmeline Doris was probably born in 1889 at Louth, Lincs. The family was still living in Lincolnshire when Norman was born in 1892 but, by 1901, it had moved to Long Itchington, Southam, Warwickshire where John had become Farm Manager at Stoney Thorpe near Southam. From there they moved to Althorp, where he was described in the census in 1911 as the Farm Bailiff at Althorp. The family lived at High Wood, which was the best residence for workers on the Spencer Estate, in the early 1900s. After his time at Althorp, John Holtby was followed as manager by Mr Reeve but it is likely that he did not leave the service of the Spencer family because both he and his wife ended their lives at Wormleighton: Florence dying on 4 September 1939 and John dying on 26 January 1946.

Neither Emmeline Holtby nor Norman seem not to have married and there were, therefore, probably no descendants.