

## **Albert Mannell**

**Born 22 November 1896**

**Died of Wounds - 19 September 1916, aged 19**

Albert was born in Lanteglos Workhouse in Camelford. His mother was Mary Emma Mannell, who was born in Bodmin in 1873, the daughter of a rural postman who lived in Viant's Court, Fore Street, Bodmin, before moving to Higher Bore Street in Bodmin. Mary worked as a domestic servant at East Cornwall Hospital in 1891 but moved to Plymouth in 1899 when she married Robert Ford. Two more sons, William and Robert, were born in 1900 and 1903, neither of whom went to war, although Mary did lose a brother who was in the Navy.

Albert's christening is registered in both Camelford Methodist Church and St. Tudy Chapel on the same day – the 18<sup>th</sup> of February, 1897, so we assume this is when he came to live with the Nicholls family. He was adopted by John and Phillipa Nicholls of Bodinnick, St. Tudy as a very small baby and, as far as we know, lived with them until he enlisted. There may be a family connection as the Symons family lived next door to the Mannells in Bodmin in 1881. Mrs Symons was Johannah Winnicott who had married into the Nicholls family.

Albert probably left school at the age of 14, obtaining employment as 'Farm Labouring Cattle Boy on Farm' to quote the 1911 Census. He enlisted in the DCLI at the Regimental Depot at Bodmin on 12 May 1915 where he was recorded as being 19 years and six months of age and 5ft 9 inches tall. He was posted to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Training and Reserve Battalion DCLI at Freshwater Fort, Isle of Wight to carry out recruit training. Probably in November 1915, he was posted to 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, DCLI then operating in the Ypres Salient.

In March 1916 the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved to join the fighting on the Somme. They were deployed in the final stages of the Battle of Delville Wood in August, then the Battle of Guillemont on 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September, and finally the Battle of Flers-Courcelette on 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September where Albert died of wounds on 19<sup>th</sup> September. He was one of 294 soldiers out of a Battalion of 550 who were killed or injured in that last engagement. The Battalion would have been withdrawn to the Reserve to replace lost personnel with fresh soldiers. In the same battle 15 of the 20 officers were also killed or wounded. It is uncertain precisely when he suffered his fatal injury: it could have been any time between 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 1916

He is remembered with honour at the Heilly Station Cemetery, Méricourt-l'Abbé, and on the War Memorial beside St. Tudy Church.