

## Gunner Norman Stump Gilkes

Died 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, aged 25 years

Norman was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1893 in Ludlow, the only son of surgeon Malin Gilkes and his wife Ellen Stump. He had a sister Margaret, a year older than him. The family in lived in comfort at 23 Broad Street, Ludlow, in this corner building which is today grade two listed.



His father was a highly respected surgeon in the town and served voluntarily throughout the Great War as a medical officer and anaesthetist at the Overmead Auxiliary Military Hospital in Ludow.

Norman was educated at Ludlow Grammar School from 1900 -1904. Then aged 11, he was sent to Dulwich College where his uncle, Arthur Herman Gilkes, was Master of the College. He only stayed for a year before leaving in 1905. However, in 1910, aged seventeen, he returned to the Dulwich College and stayed there for a further two years.

After leaving school Norman obtained a job with the Capital and Counties Bank, in Church Stretton. In 1913 the bank was located at 50 High Street, today's Middleton's Beauty Salon, and its manager was Thomas R. Thornes who lived in Bank House on

Longhills Road opposite where now stands the War Memorial. The Capital and Counties Bank was acquired by Lloyds Bank in 1918 and its building, now housing the TSB, was built about 1923.

With the outbreak of the Great War, Norman attempted to volunteer for the armed forces but was refused for service. We don't know why. However he kept on applying to join up. Finally, on his **sixth** attempt, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, he was accepted and signed up as a Gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery, Regimental number 160580.



He was attached to the 5<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery, R.G.A and sent to France in February 1918. During that summer his unit saw action in Ypres, Arras and Bethune and then in the autumn they were involved in the push into Belgium. According to war diaries of the time, in late October his section was essentially out of action due to wide spread illness of an unknown origin amongst the troops.

Norman died of double bronchial pneumonia in the No.32 Stationary Hospital, Wimereux, France on the final day of the war, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918.

He was buried in the Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, France (Grave ref.1X.E.12).

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He left his Soldiers Effects of £6 11s 7d (including a £2 War Gratuity) to his only sister, Margaret. In his civilian will he left £221 4s 11d also to her. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He is remembered on the memorial plaques of both schools where he had been a student and on the plaque in the entrance porch of St Leonard's church, Ludlow, as well as on the Church Stretton WW1 memorial.

Sources:

Image of 23 Broad Street, Ludlow. Google Earth 2018

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