

WILLIAM BRAY



DUKE OF CORNWALL'S LIGHT INFANTRY

Private William Bray 18829 was born in 1890 in Liskeard, one of six children born to William Henry Bray and his wife Harriet. In the census of 1901 William's family was living in Menheniot and his father was working as a yard and cattleman on a farm. By 1911 his family had moved to St Ive Cross and William, aged 19, was working as a ploughman at Ludcott Farm, St Ive for the Bennett family.

It is unknown when William joined the First Battalion of The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry but by August 1916 records show that his regiment was fighting at the Battle of High Wood in France, one of the battles that made up what is now known collectively as The Battle of the Somme. The battle for High Wood's 75 acres started on 14th July and raged nearly continuously for 64 days. It opened with a disastrous British cavalry charge and ended after the abortive first use of tanks. During those two months, the Germans furiously repelled or counterattacked every British assault. By the beginning of August, artillery from both sides had erased the trees and High Wood was 75 acres of stumps, craters and trenches.

Private William Bray died on 23rd August 1916 aged 26. His name is recorded on the Thiepval Memorial in the Somme, which commemorates 72,000 officers and men who have no known grave.