

## Fred Holmes (1881 – 1937)

Fred Holmes was born into a large Farnhill family and his mother died when he was nine years old.

After leaving Kildwick school, in his early teens he was working part-time and when he was 19 he was employed as a basket maker. Following his marriage Fred worked for a worsted manufacturer as a warp dresser.

Nothing is known of his war service but his name appeared on Farnhill Parish Council's Roll of Honour.

Fred Holmes married and he and his wife would move to Keighley, then to Haworth and finally Upper Marsh in Oxenhope. He died in Victoria Hospital Keighley in 1937.



No Photo  
Available

### Pre-war life

Fred Holmes was born in Farnhill on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1881.

His parents, John and Ellen (nee Hudson) were both from local families. They had married in 1863 and Fred, their youngest child, was born into a family that already included five sons and a daughter.

Fred was born shortly after the 1881 census, taken on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, which showed the Holmes family living at Bucklar Hill, Farnhill.

The family were still at Bucklar Hill when the next census was taken in 1891 – on which Fred does appear. However by this time there had been some considerable changes. Fred's sister, Lucy, had died in 1888, and his mother in 1890; two of his brothers had moved away; and another brother had married but was still living in the family home with his wife and young son. Fred himself was recorded as being nine years old and a Scholar (presumably a pupil at Kildwick school).

It is likely that, in common with many local children of the time, Fred left school in his early teens – perhaps working part-time initially, while he completed his schooling. By the time of the 1901 census he was living at 10 Bright Street, Farnhill, with his father, his stepmother (his father had remarried in 1895), and just one of his brothers. He was recorded as being 19 years old, and was employed as a basket-maker.

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1904, Fred married Jessie Williams at St. Andrew's Church in Kildwick. He was aged 23; she was 27. Jessie's family was originally from Manchester but had moved to Keighley in the 1880s and then to Sutton-in-Craven. Her father and at least one of her brothers were upholsterers.

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
232	August 1 <sup>st</sup> 1904	Fred Holmes	23	Bachelor	Bachelor	Kildwick	John Holmes	Gutteman
		Jessie W. Williams	27	Spinster	Washer	Sutton	John Williams	Upholsterer.

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by John Williams or after Banns by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Fred Holmes } in the Presence of us, { John Williams } J. B. Manners Officiating Minister

{ Jessie W. Williams }

Fred Holmes' and Jessie Williams' marriage certificate  
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The couple's first child, a son called Wilfred, was born on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1904; a second son, John, followed three years later. The 1911 census records the family living, in just two rooms, at 7 Staincliffe Street, Farnhill. On this census Fred was recorded as being a warp-dresser, working for a worsted manufacturer.

**Note:** Staincliffe Street (or Back Staincliffe Street, as it was sometimes known) was the name given to a terrace of small dwellings, each typically just two or three rooms, that formed the rear basements of properties that had their fronts on Main Street, close to its junction with Grange Road. The rooms have since been incorporated into the Main Street properties.

By 1912 the family had moved to 2 South View, Farnhill, and then the following year, to 2 Bright Street.

## Fred Holmes during WW1

There is no doubt that Fred Holmes volunteered to serve in WW1 – otherwise his name would not have been included in the Farnhill Parish Council Roll of Honour. However, it has not been possible to say when, where, or how he served.

The only piece of evidence the project has found that Fred saw active service comes from the 1918 electoral roll. This records him living at 2 Bright Street, Farnhill, and eligible to vote because of his military or naval service.

Apart from this, there are just two things that we know happened in Fred's life during the war years. The first is that in the summer of 1914 Wilfred, his son, appeared in a Kildwick school class photograph; he was aged nine, was in class Standard III, and was taught by Miss Florence Spencer.



Kildwick school class photograph (Standard III), summer 1914  
By kind permission of Margaret Yao

We also know that Fred's father, John, died on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1918.

## Post-war life

After the war Fred returned to Farnhill. The 1921 census records the family living at 2 Bright Street; Fred is employed as a skep-maker (basket-maker), working for Fred Stell & Son in Crosshills.

The Holmes family continued to live in Farnhill until 1923, when they moved to Keighley. They lived at 25 Prior Street until 1928, spent a year in Haworth, and then moved to Upper Marsh, Oxenhope.

**Note:** A 1923 date for the family's move to Keighley coincides with Fred giving up his allotment, which he had rented for three years from Farnhill Parish Council, at a cost of 12/6d (31p) per year. His final payment was for the year up to the end of March 1924.

The two sons married: Wilfred to Elizabeth Eleanor Lowther, in 1926; and John to Bridget Kenna, in 1935.

Fred Holmes died, of stomach cancer, in Victoria Hospital Keighley on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1937, aged 55. His son Wilfred was present.

REGISTRATION DISTRICT					KEIGHLEY				
1937 DEATH in the Sub-district of Keighley					in the County of York W.R.				
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
319	Sixth January 1937 Victoria Hospital Keighley	Fred Holmes	Male	55 years	25 Upper Marsh Oxenhope S.B. Sheep Marker at a Worsted mill.	I a. Carcinoma of Stomach Certified by Margaret S. Passton M.B.	Wilfred Holmes Son In attendance 12. Mary Street Millhead Carnforth	Seventh January 1937	Walter Smith Interim Registrar

Fred Holmes' death certificate  
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## Postscript

Fred's widow, Jessie, continued to live at Upper Marsh, Oxenhope, until at least 1940 at which time she disappears from all records. It has not been possible to determine when or where she died.

Fred and Jessie's youngest son, John Holmes, died in 1977.

Wilfred and his wife Elizabeth moved to Carnforth, where he died in 1941. (Elizabeth remarried and died in 1983.) It is possible that their children or other descendants are still living in the Lancaster area.

## Fred Holmes – a life in summary

**Born:** 11/5/1881, Farnhill

**Baptised:** 26/6/1881, Kildwick

**Died:** 6/1/1937, Victoria Hospital, Keighley      **Aged:** 55

**Home address:** 8 Upper Marsh, Oxenhope

### Parents

**Father:** John; b. 23/4/1834, Kildwick; d. 7/1/1918

**Mother:** Ellen (nee Hudson); b. 1834, Kildwick;  
d. 17/9/1890, Farnhill; buried 20/9/1890, Kildwick

**Married:** 1/6/1863, Kildwick

John married a second time, to Harriet Waddington, in 1895.

### Siblings

James (Hudson) - half-brother (?); b. 6/10/1861, Kildwick;

m. Sarah Hannah Hargreaves, 14/1/1893, Kildwick; d. 15/3/1909, Farnhill

Lot; b. 4/10/1863, Kildwick; m. Elizabeth Tiffin, 1890, Skipton (Registration district);

d. 15/1/1946, Eastburn

Asa; b. 23/12/1865, Farnhill;

m. Sarah Ann Warner (nee Conyers), 1895, Skipton (Registration district);

d. 5/3/1955, Cononley

Seth; b. 30/8/1868, Farnhill; m. Susannah Conyers, 29/10/1892, Lothersdale; d. 24/11/1943, Cowling

Lucy; b. 18/9/1870, Farnhill; d. 4/9/1888, Farnhill

Dan; b. 30/12/1876, Farnhill; m. Ethel Proctor, 1902, Lincolnshire (?); d. 1926

### WW1 service

Service details not known.

### Relationship to other volunteers

Ada Holmes, the mother of William Birch Holmes, was Fred's cousin

### Marriage

**Wife:** Jessie Williams; b. 22/1/1877, Manchester

**Date:** 1/8/1904 at St Andrew's, Kildwick

## Children

Wilfred; b. 28/12/1904, Farnhill; m. Elizabeth Eleanor Lowther, 23/10/1926, Eastwood, Keighley;  
d. 1941, Lancaster (Registration district)

John; b. 5/12/1907, Crosshills; m. Bridget Kenna, 1935, Keighley (Registration district);  
d. 1977, Keighley (Registration district)

