

# James Scarborough Theodore Pollard (1889 – 1919)

James Pollard was from a large and established Farnhill family. His mother died when he was seven years old and, after attending Kildwick School, James worked in one of the local mills.

Assigned to a battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment he went to France in 1916 and his service record, in 1918, showed him as being a drummer.

Continuing to serve with the army after Armistice he was finally demobilized in October 1919. He did not live very long to enjoy civilian life as he died of double pneumonia shortly afterwards. He was buried in Kildwick churchyard and his name recorded on the Kildwick War Memorial.

No Photo  
Available

## Pre-war life

James Pollard was born in Farnhill on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1889, the fourth son (and fifth child altogether) of an established local family.

His father was Theodore Pollard, born Farnhill in 1854; his mother, Priscilla, born in Glusburn, also in 1854, was the illegitimate daughter of Margaret Brown – who married James Walmsley in 1856.

James was born to an already large family, which was continuing to grow. Theodore and Priscilla would have a total of 10 children altogether:

- William; b. 17/7/1882
- Frank; b. 29/6/1883, d. 26/3/1891
- John; b. 18/5/1885
- Martha Ann; b. 20/6/1887
- *James Scarborough Theodore Pollard; b. 28/6/1889*
- Sarah Margaret; b. 1/1/1891, d. 1892
- Frank; b. 15/3/1893
- Harry; b. 28/11/1894
- two others, names unknown, who died prior to 1911

On the 1891 census, James Pollard, aged one, was recorded as living with his parents and sisters, Martha Ann and Sarah Margaret, in High Farnhill.

Priscilla Pollard died, in Farnhill, on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1897 and was buried in Kildwick churchyard three days later. She was aged 42 or 43; James was aged just 7.

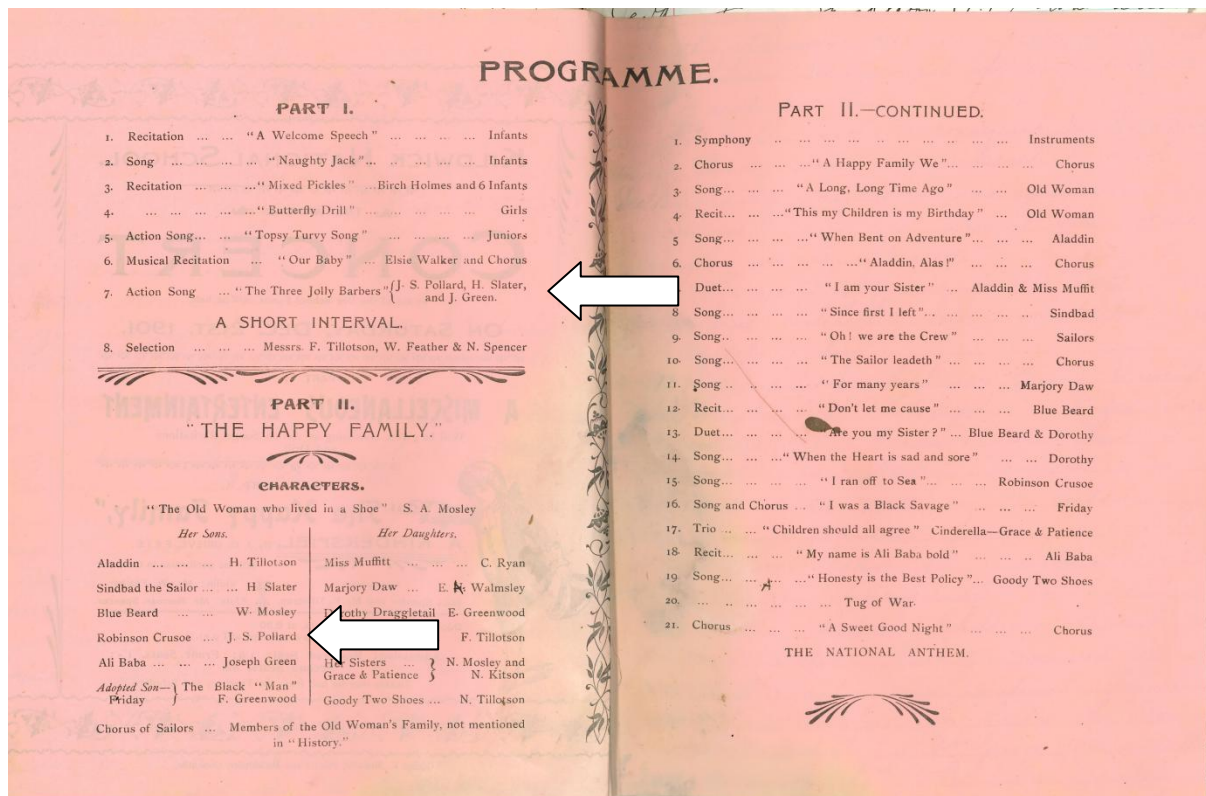
The 1901 census gave the family's address as 42 Main Street.



Main Street, High Farnhill, showing number 42  
(Photograph courtesy of Farnhill and Kildwick Local History Group)

The family later moved to the Arbour, some time prior to the 1911 census.

James attended Kildwick school and at Christmas 1901, when he would have been aged 12, he took part in the annual school concert.



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This must have been close to the end of his school career, as most children did part-time work from age 12 and left school at 14; usually to work in one of the local mills

The 1911 census recorded James, aged 21, as a "Cotton Weaver".

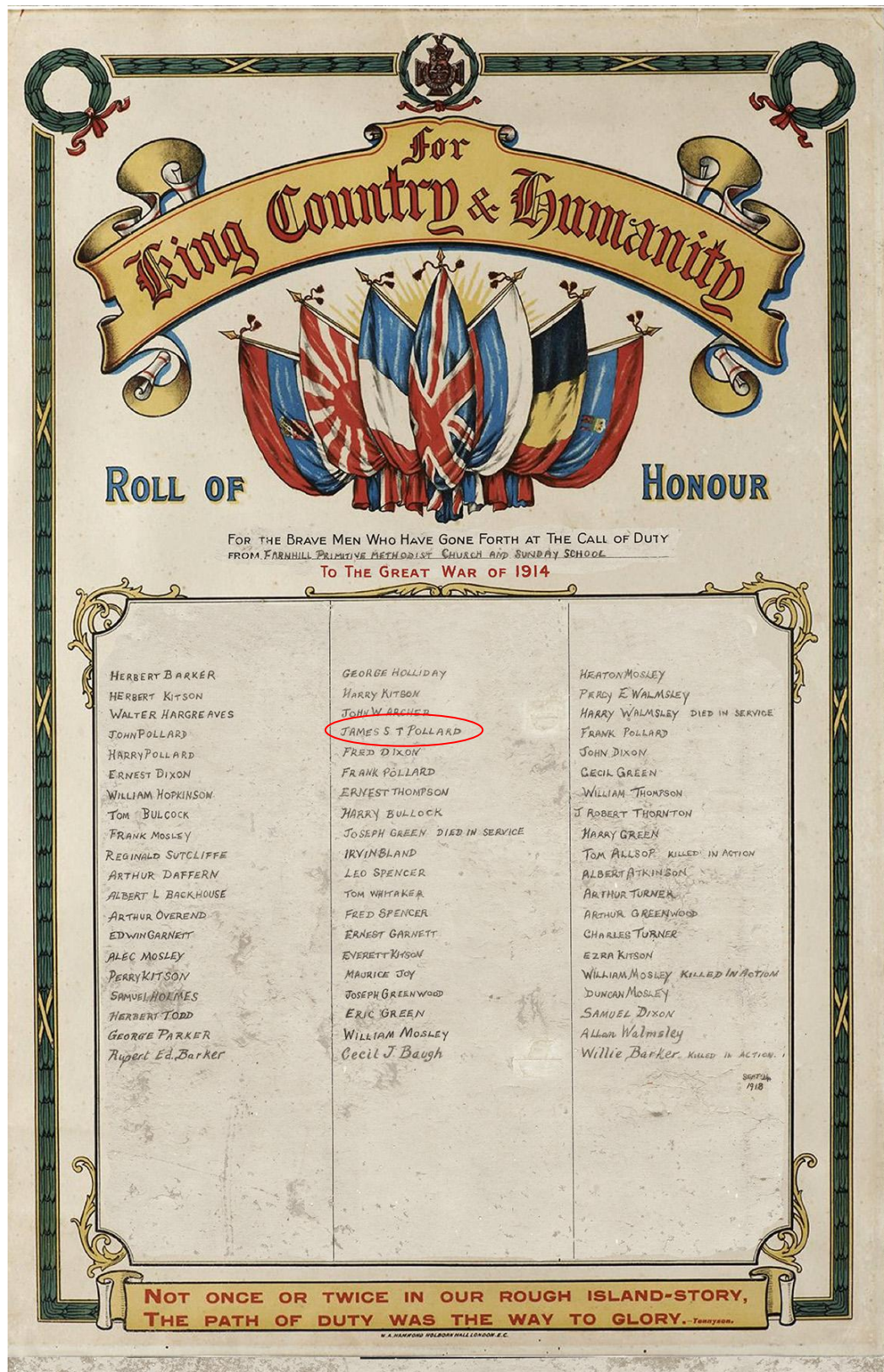
## WW1 service

James attested his willingness to serve on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1915 and was almost immediately assigned to the reserve unit, the 3/5<sup>th</sup> battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment.

A medical examination carried out when James joined his battalion, on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1916, recorded that he was 5 feet 4¾ inches tall (164 cm) and weighed 105 lbs (47.6 kg). He also had an interesting distinguishing feature: a "Buffalo Bill tattoo" on his right arm.

James was transferred to the 1/5<sup>th</sup> battalion in June 1916 and was shipped over to France on the 16<sup>th</sup> – he was one of over 300 men who joined the battalion in the field that month.

James' name was recorded on Farnhill Methodist Chapel's Roll of Honour, which also includes the names of his brothers – John, Harry and Frank. This was unveiled on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1916, by which time James was already serving in France.



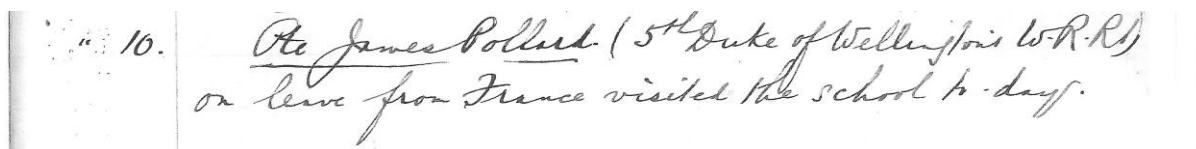
The digitally-restored Farnhill Methodist Roll of Honour (1916)

The service records for James Pollard have survived, although they do not provide much information on how he fared in the war, and there were no specific references to him in this period in the local newspapers.

It is clear that James was transferred from 1/5 battalion to 2/5 towards the end of January 1918, but at the end of the month both battalions were merged anyway, to form a single 5<sup>th</sup> battalion.

His service record shows that he was appointed "Drummer" on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1918.

He was given leave in England from 8<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1918 and during this period he paid a visit to his old school.



Entry in Kildwick School Log – 10<sup>th</sup> October 1918  
Reproduced by kind permission of Kildwick School

James continued to serve with the army after the armistice and was with the 5<sup>th</sup> battalion when it was moved to Germany. On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1919 he was transferred to 2/4 battalion, as recorded in the Regimental War Diary:

*March 10<sup>th</sup> 1919: The retainable men of the battalion (those joining the colours subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> Jany. 1916) were transferred to 2/4th. Duke of Wellington's Regt. and marched to ZULPICH [near Bonn]. In all yesterday and to-day 12 officers and 298 other ranks were transferred.*

More leave in England was granted between 26<sup>th</sup> May and 9<sup>th</sup> June 1919, before James was finally sent home for the last time in September 1919. He was finally demobilized on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1919.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
POLLARD	W. R. L. R.	Pte	241427
James S.T.			

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	0/2/101	B20	2859.
BRITISH	do.	do.	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380

James Pollard's WW1 Medal Card  
Used under licence from the National Archive

## Post-war life

James returned to his old family home in the Arbour, which was occupied by his sister, Martha Ann, and her husband Sam Tillotson. (James was a witness at their wedding, in Kildwick Church, on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1915.)

When James left the army dispersal camp in Ripon on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1919 his discharge certificate recorded his medical condition as A1. However it appears that he was not very well, as shortly afterwards his brother-in-law, Sam Tillotson, wrote the following (undated) letter to the Army.

Dear Sir,

No. 241472 Pte. J.S.T. Pollard 2/4 Duke of W. Reg. has been in very poor health since being demobilized & as there is no Military Hospital within the four miles we have been obliged to call in a local Doctor. The above named is at now suffering with a very serious attack of pneumonia with the Dr. attending frequently daily. His claims for attention I suppose will be sent you in due course.

OFFICER. C. Records.  
109/2 3628  
Dear Sir.  
No. 241472.  
Pte. J.S.T. Pollard.  
2/4 Duke of W. Reg.  
has been in very poor health since being demobilized & as there is no Military Hospital within the four miles we have been obliged to call in a local Doctor. The above named is at now suffering with a very serious attack of pneumonia with the Dr. attending frequently daily. His claims for attention I suppose will be sent you in due course.  
S. Tillotson  
Arbour Cottage  
Farnhill  
W. Kershley

Letter about James Pollard's health, from his brother-in-law Sam Tillotson  
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James Scarborough Theodore Pollard died of double pneumonia on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1919 and was buried in Kildwick churchyard, in the family plot, a few days later. He was aged 30.



Part of the kerbstone of the Pollard family plot – commemorating James Pollard

James is commemorated on Kildwick war memorial, unveiled in 1921.





Photographs provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive

His name was also included on the Kildwick School WW1 memorial, which records the names of former pupils who died in the war.

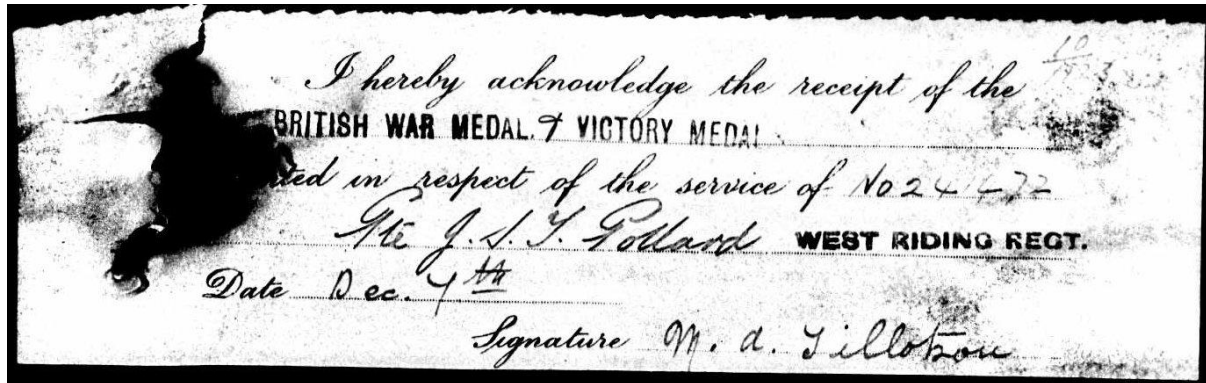


The only known photograph of the Kildwick School WW1 memorial, courtesy of Anne Hweitt.  
The memorial itself remains missing, presumed destroyed.

## Postscript

Early in 1920 letters of administration were granted to William, James' oldest brother to enable him to settle his affairs. James Pollard's total effects were valued at £97-2s-7d.

On 7<sup>th</sup> December 1920 James' sister, Martha Ann Tillotson, signed a receipt for the British War Medal and Victory Medal awarded to him for his war service.



Receipt for James Pollard's WW1 medals, signed by his sister  
Used under licence from the National Archive

## James Scarborough Theodore Pollard – a life in summary

**Born:** 28/6/1889, Farnhill

**Baptised:** 29/9/1889, Kildwick

**Died:** 7/10/1919

**Aged:** 30

**Home address:** The Arbour, Farnhill

### Parents

**Father:** Theodore; b. 16/6/1854, Farnhill; d. 15/10/1913, Farnhill

**Mother:** Priscilla (nee Brown, later Walmsley); b. 1854, Glusburn;  
d. 24/2/1897, Farnhill; buried 27/2/1897, Kildwick

**Married:** 1882, Skipton (Registration district)

### Siblings

William; b. 17/7/1882, Farnhill; m. Ellen Cockcroft, 14/5/1910, Steeton; d. 7/9/1944, Farnhill

Frank; b. 29/6/1883, Farnhill; d. 26/3/1891, Farnhill

John; b. 18/5/1885, Farnhill; m. Ada Blanche Thomas, 9/1/1906, Skipton Registry Office;  
d. 4/11/1919, Pas-de-Calais

Martha Ann; b. 20/6/1887, Farnhill; m. Sam Tillotson, 27/12/1915, Kildwick;  
d. 1967, Staincliffe (Registration district)

Sarah Margaret; b. 1/1/1891; d. 1892 – buried 12/1/1892

Frank; b. 15/3/1893, Farnhill; d. 1/10/1932, Crosshills

Harry; b. 28/11/1894, Farnhill;

m. Eleanor Walmsley, 19/5/1917, Methodist Chapel, Grange Road, Skipton  
d. 30/10/1971, Bradley

plus two others who died prior to the 1911 census

### Relationship to other volunteers

John Pollard – brother

Frank Pollard – brother

Harry Pollard – brother (lived with his uncle and aunt)

## WW1 service

**Attested:** 11/12/1915  
**Service period:** 15/2/1916 – 2/10/1919  
**Regt.:** 3/5<sup>th</sup> battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regt.  
(Private. no. 4813, later 241427); 1/5<sup>th</sup> battalion; 2/5<sup>th</sup> battalion;  
5<sup>th</sup> battalion; 2/4<sup>th</sup> battalion  
**Medals:** Victory Medal, British War Medal  
**Home address:** The Arbour, Farnhill

