


## John Pollard (1885 – 1919)

John Pollard, born in Farnhill, came from a large family. He attended Kildwick School and was only 11 when his mother died.

After marrying a Shropshire girl, and having two sons, it is thought that John joined the army before WW1 and that he and his wife lived abroad.

Recalled at the very start of the war, John was wounded in early actions. Discharged in 1915 he resumed his army career in 1919 and returned to France. John Pollard died of pneumonia in hospital at Wimereux, north of Boulogne, and he is buried in the British Cemetery nearby. His name was included on the Kildwick War Memorial.



No Photo  
Available

### Pre-war life

John Pollard was born in Farnhill on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1885, the third of three boys in 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.

After he was born John's family continued 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, John Pollard, aged six, was recorded as living with his grandparents, James and Margaret Walmsley, 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; John was aged just 11, and was probably attending Kildwick school – his younger brother James was certainly a pupil there.

The 1901 census gave the family's address as 42 Main Street. John had left school and was working as a bobbin-turner's labourer.



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

The family later moved to the Arbour, sometime between 1906 and 1911.

On January 9<sup>th</sup> 1906, John Pollard, who by this time was a joiner, married Ada Blanche Thomas at Skipton Register Office. Both the bride and groom gave their ages as 21, but John was four months short of his birthday and Ada was only 18.

1906. Marriage solemnized at <u>the Register Office, Skipton</u> in the District of <u>Skipton</u> in the County of <u>York</u>								
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.
24	9 <sup>th</sup> January 1906	John Pollard	21 years	Joiner Bachelor	Joiner	42 Main Street Farnhill	Theodore Pollard	Cotton Weaver
		Ada Blanche Thomas	21 years	Spinster	General Domestic Servant	Main Street Farnhill	William Thomas	General Labourer
Married in the <u>Register Office</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Church of England</u> by certificate before by me, <u>John Pollard</u> <u>Herbert Dean</u> <u>M. L. Fleming, Registrar</u> This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>Ada Blanche Thomas</u> in the Presence of us, <u>Alma Moody</u> <u>J. J. Martin, Deputy Reg.</u>								

Pollard – Thomas marriage certificate  
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Ada was from Shropshire, almost certainly from the small village of Bitterley near Ludlow, although at the time of the wedding she was living in High Farnhill.

Two sons were born to the couple. Cyril James in 1907, and William Ambrose in 1908. Both of the boys were born in the Ludlow area, suggesting perhaps that John and Ada set up home with or near her parents.

By the time of the 1911 census, Cyril was living with his Farnhill grandparents; William was living with the Thomas family, in Bitterley. Of John and Ada, however, there is no record. Possibly they were both abroad, as it is certain that John must have been in the army at some time between his marriage and the start of WW1.

## WW1 service

In 1914 John was in the army reserves and, as such, was recalled to his regiment, York and Lancaster (2<sup>nd</sup> battalion) at the very start of the war. The regiment were stationed in Ireland on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 and were immediately moved to Cambridge before being sent over to France on 9<sup>th</sup> September. Private John Pollard, service number 6801, was amongst them.

John's WW1 service records have not survived (70% of the records were destroyed during WW2, in the London blitz of 1940), but it is known that in the early phase of the war the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion York and Lancaster Regiment were in action on the River Aisne, after the Battle of the Marne, and took part in the "Race to the Sea", in the months September and October 1914 on the plains of Northern France. This saw the development of trench warfare in France and Belgium.

John was wounded in one of these early actions, as was reported in the West Yorkshire Pioneer on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1914.

### **FARNHILL**

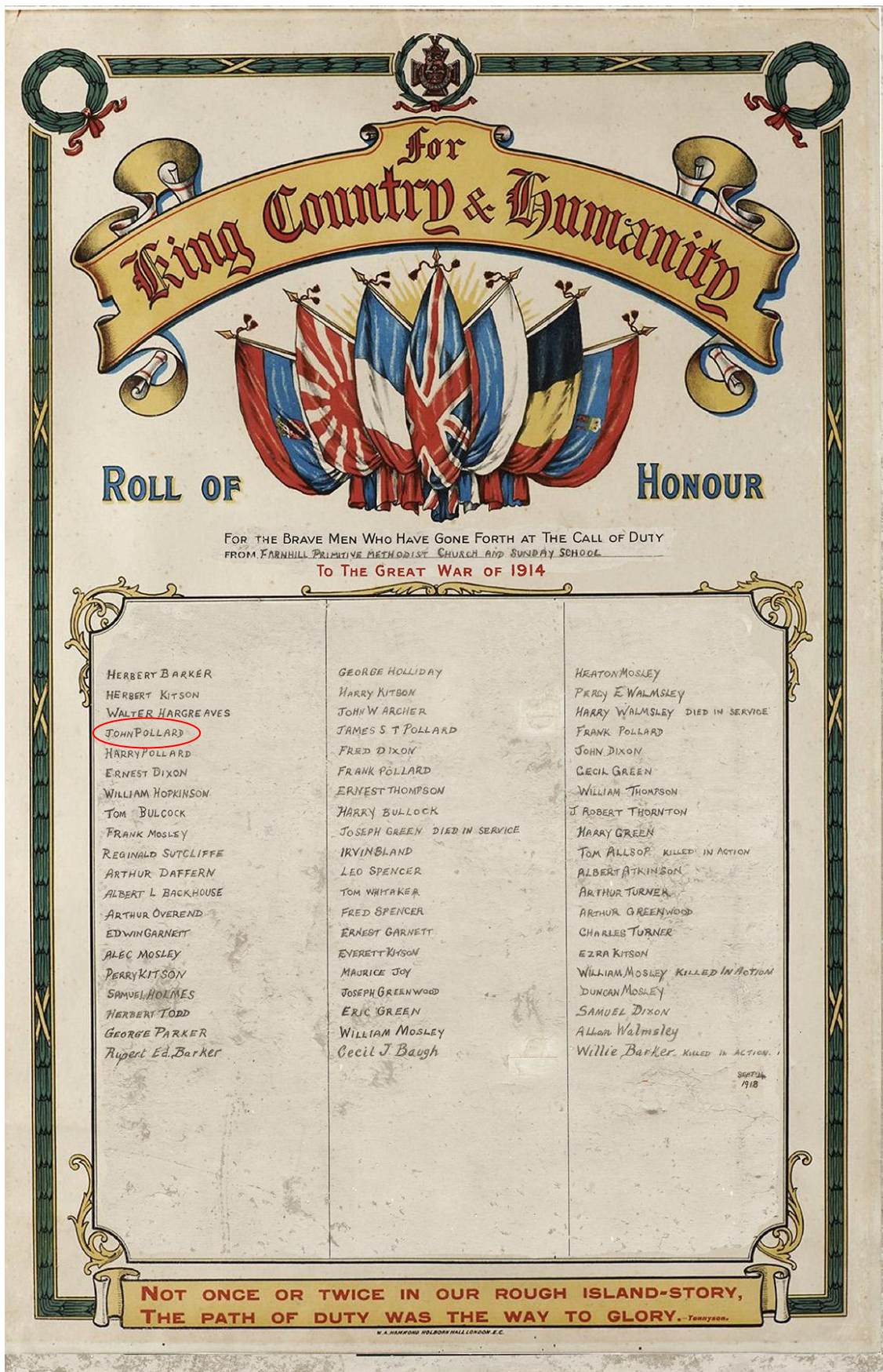
*News has arrived that Mr. Jack Pollard, a Reservist, who was called up to serve in his regiment, has been wounded. His brother, Mr. Jim Pollard, has received a message.*

The nature of this injury and whether John was able to return to active service is not known.

What is certain however is that John Pollard was discharged from the army at the end of his period of engagement, on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1915; although, perhaps surprisingly, this was not the end of his military career.

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





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



65

Name.	Corps.	Rank	Regtl. No.
POLLARD	x 2 York & Lanc R North, d	Pte	6801 89233
John			

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY x	0/1/105 B54	13/112	
BRITISH			
14 STAR	0/2/2	81	Disc -
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein	9-9-14		

K 1380.

John Pollard's WW1 Medal Card – showing his eligibility for a 1914 Star and his discharge from the 2<sup>nd</sup> York and Lancs Regt.  
Used under licence from the National Archive

2nd Battalion, YORK & LANCASTER      Regiment or Corps when Decoration was granted

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Decoration granted under Army Order 350 of 24th

To be left blank.	On Date of Disembarkation.		NAME.	Date of Disembarkation.	REMARKS. (a) If non-effective:—Cause, etc. (b) If transferred:—Present Regtl. No., Rank and Unit. (c) If forfeited:—Cause.	Record of discharge (a) P (b) L (c) T
	Regtl. No.	Rank.				
	6801	Private	POLLARD, J.	9.9.1914	Discharged 17.8.1915 Para. 392/XXI	

Extract from the 14 Star Roll of 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion York & Lancaster Regt.  
John Pollard discharged under paragraph 392/XXI King's Regulations – end of contracted service period.  
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There is evidence that John applied for a WW1 pension, but apart from his name, address and service details, the form is blank. There is no information provided on any payments made.

Form No. S.B. 36 *BQ.5E 8418*

Surname *POLLARD* Christian Names *John* Regional No. *4/M P/ 5271*

Unit and Regiment or Corps. *York & Lancs.* Regt. No. *6801* Rank *Sr.*

Date of Discharge *17.5.19* Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status ☐ S. = Single ☐ W. = Widower ☐ M. = Married

Address *Horton Hutments* *Kildwick* Date of commencement of Pension \_\_\_\_\_

Disabilities:— State whether attributable to or aggravated by Service or non-attributable:—

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

Particulars of Awards for previous Service (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

**DORMANT**

Extract from John Pollard's WW1 pension ledger (SB 36)  
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**Note:** The address recorded on this form is unusual. The location of Horton Hutments is not known.

John Pollard returned to the army in 1919. He joined the 39<sup>th</sup> battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, which was formed on 10<sup>th</sup> May, and served with this unit in France. He died, of pneumonia, in hospital at Wimereux, France – on the outskirts of Boulogne – on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1919; aged 34. After his death, his back pay – amounting to £10 5s – was forwarded to his wife Ada.

Soldier's Name	Regiment, Rank, No.	Date and Place of Death	CREDITS			CHARGES			Date of Authority	To whom Authorised
			Account and Date	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	Account and Date
<i>Pollard John</i>	<i>39 York &amp; Lancs. Pte 89233</i>	<i>4.11.19 Wimereux Pneumonia</i>	<i>York II 1.20</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>-</i>				<i>10/2/20 Ada B</i>

Soldiers' effects for Private John Pollard, service number 89233. Returned to his wife Ada.  
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John Pollard was buried in Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, a coastal town north of Boulogne.



Photograph by kind permission of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Photograph by Colin Chadwick, Harrogate; from Craven's Part in the Great War website ([www.cpgw.org.uk](http://www.cpgw.org.uk))

He is commemorated on the Pollard family plot in Kildwick churchyard.



John Pollard commemorated on the kerbstone of the Pollard family plot in Kildwick churchyard

He is also commemorated on Kildwick war memorial, unveiled in 1921. His is the latest WW1 death to be listed.







Photographs provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive

## Postscript

In February 1920, Ada received £10 5s back-pay due to John (there was no subsequent War Gratuity paid) and in the September 1920 she received the Victory Medal and British War Medal due to John for his war service. (His 14 Star had been sent out earlier, in May 1918.)

The 1921 census records Ada and her two sons as living in Todmorden. (There is actually no evidence of either her or John living in Farnhill after their marriage.)

Ada Blanche Pollard did not remarry. She died on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1982, in Todmorden.

Of John and Ada's children:

- William Ambrose died, unmarried, in 1946; in Todmorden.
- Cyril James married Eva Williams, of Todmorden, in 1926; they were both 19. They had at least three children. Cyril and Eva divorced and, in 1945, Cyril married Grace Burney of Liverpool. They set up home in Starkey Lane, Farnhill, where Cyril died in 1965. he was buried in Kildwick new graveyard.



At least one of John Pollard's grandchildren is known to live in the area.



## John Pollard – a life in summary

**Born:** 18/5/1885, Farnhill  
**Baptised:** 26/7/1885, Kildwick  
**Died:** 4/11/1919, Wimereux, France      **Aged:** 34

### 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  
Martha Ann; b. 20/6/1887, Farnhill; m. Sam Tillotson, 27/12/1915, Kildwick;  
d. 1967, Staincliffe (Registration district)  
James Scarborough Theodore; b. 28/6/1889, Farnhill; d. 7/10/1919, Farnhill  
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

James Scarborough Theodore Pollard – brother  
Frank Pollard – brother  
Harry Pollard – brother (lived with his uncle and aunt)

### WW1 service

**Service period:** 9/9/1914 – 17/8/1915; 10/5/1919 (?) – 4/11/1919  
**Regt.:** 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion York and Lancaster Regt. (Private. no. 6801);  
39<sup>th</sup> (Service) battalion Northumberland Fusiliers (Private. no. 89233)  
**Medals:** 1914 Star, Victory Medal, British War Medal  
**Home address:** unknown; possibly Ludlow or Todmorden (previously lived in The Arbour, Farnhill)

### Marriage

**Wife:** Ada Blanche Thomas; b. 2/8/1887, Tenbury (Registration district); d. 5/8/1982, Todmorden  
**Date:** 9/1/1906, at Skipton Registry Office

## Children

Cyril James; b. 1907, Ludlow, Shropshire;

m1. Eva Williams, 13/3/1926, Todmorden (Registration district);

m2. Grace Burney, 1945, S. Liverpool (Registration district);

d. 1965, Farnhill

William Ambrose; b. 1908, Ludlow, Shropshire; d. 26/12/1946, Todmorden

