

Ephraim Sharpe (1876 – 1945)

Ephraim Sharpe, born in Halifax, lived with his widowed mother and siblings in the Sutton Mill area of the village of Sutton in Craven. By the age of 15 he was working in a local woollen mill.

He married in 1902 and he and his wife would have seven children. They lived, firstly, at Kildwick Grange and then in Farnhill, where Ephraim became known as a baker of oatcakes and a member of the chapel choir.



Photograph courtesy of Nic Sharpe

Records show that Ephraim was in the RAF between October 1918 and February 1919 when he was then discharged.

Returning to Farnhill, and his former occupation as a baker, the business seems to have expanded as his younger sons sold muffins and crumpets in the local villages.

Ephraim Sharpe died in 1945 – when four of his sons were serving with the forces. His wife and extended family continued to live in Farnhill.

Pre-war life

Ephraim Sharpe was born on 6th February 1876 in Shibden, Halifax.

He was the fourth child, and third son, of Eli Sharpe, born in Haworth in 1847, and Ann (nee Holdsworth), born in Bingley in 1842. The couple were married at St. Paul's Church in Denholme, on 14th September 1868.

It is unclear when Eli Sharpe died (it has proved impossible to locate a registration of his death) but on the 1891 census, by which time the rest of the family were living in the Sutton Mill area of Sutton in Craven, Ann Sharpe was recorded as being a widow. Ephraim was recorded as being a mill hand in a worsted mill. He was aged 15.

Civil Parish	Municipal Borough	Municipal Ward	Urban Sanitary District	Town or Village or Hamlet	Rural Sanitary District	Parliamentary Constituency	County
Sutton				Sutton Mill	Keighley	Keighley	Yorkshire
ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN
do	1	Ann Sharpe	Head	wid.	48	House-keeper	do Bingley
		Mary A. do	Daughter	S	22	Block-maker	do Bingley
		John do	Son	S	21	Crochet Assistant	do Bingley
		George H. do	Son	S	18	Mechanic	do Bingley
		Ephraim do	Son	S	15	Worsted Mill-hand	do Shibden
		Margaret A. do	Daughter	S	12	do Spinner	do do
		Ernest do	Son	S	9	Scholar	do Halifax

Extract from the 1891 census return for Sutton Mill
Used under licence from the National Archive

Ann Sharpe died on 6th January 1896, at Sutton Mill, and it may have been this that led to the break-up of the family.

On the 1901 census, Ephraim was recorded as living as a boarder, in the home of a widow, in Keighley.

Civil Parish	Ecclesiastical Parish	County Borough, Municipal Borough or Urban District	Ward of Municipal Borough or Urban District	Rural District	Parliamentary Borough or Division	Town or Village
of <i>Keighley</i>	of <i>St Peter's Keighley</i>	of <i>Keighley</i>	of <i>West</i>		of <i>Keighley</i>	
ROAD, STREET, &c. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES	Name and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	Age last Birthday of	PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN
28 <i>do</i>	1	<i>Sarah Smith</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Wid</i>		<i>do Bradford</i>
		<i>Ephraim Sharpe</i>	<i>Boarder</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>West Keighley (Bradford)</i>	<i>do Halifax</i>
		<i>William Wilson</i>	<i>Boarder</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Commercial Street</i>	<i>do Huddersfield</i>

Extract from the 1901 census return for Trinity Street, Keighley
Used under licence from the National Archive

On 28th September 1902 Ephraim Sharpe, of Keighley, married Clara Hartley, of Kildwick Grange, at Sutton Baptist Chapel. The marriage was witnessed by Ephraim's younger sister, Margaret Ann, and by Clara's brother, James.

1902. Marriage solemnized at <i>Sutton Chapel, Sutton</i> in the District of <i>Keighley</i> in the County of <i>York</i> .								
Cohabitation 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.
<i>H</i>	<i>Twenty-eighth September 1902</i>	<i>Ephraim Sharpe</i>	<i>26 years</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Teamster</i>	<i>2 Berry Street Keighley</i>	<i>Eli Sharpe</i>	<i>Farmer</i>
		<i>Clara Hartley</i>	<i>26 years</i>	<i>Spinster</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Kildwick Grange Kildwick</i>	<i>Joseph Hartley</i>	<i>Farmer</i>
Married in the <i>Sutton Chapel</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <i>Baptists</i> by <i>Certificate</i> by me, <i>E. Sharpe</i> This Marriage was solemnized between us, <i>E. Sharpe</i> in the Presence of us, <i>James Hartley</i> <i>M. G. Pollard, Baptist Minister</i> <i>C. Hartley</i> <i>Margaret Ann Sharpe</i> <i>J. L. Mitchell Registrar</i>								

Sharpe – Hartley marriage certificate
(c) Crown Copyright

The Hartley family were originally from Cowling, where Clara's father Joseph had been a baker and a greengrocer. They had moved to Kildwick Grange some time after the 1891 census, and Joseph had established himself there as a farmer.

Children came to the new family at regular intervals: the first three were born at Kildwick Grange, when Ephraim and Clara were presumably living with Clara's family; a further four children followed after they had moved to Farnhill. The children were:

- James Ernest; b. 13/4/1903
- Joseph Clifford; b. 27/7/1906
- Myra; b. 17/11/1908
- Leslie Granville; b. 27/1/1911
- Kenneth Hartley; b. 9/2/1913
- Cecil William; b. 24/7/1914
- Stanley Gordon; b. 21/5/1919

By the time of the 1911 census Ephraim, Clara, Clara's parents, and the couple's three children (James Ernest had died in 1909) were living in Mary Street, Farnhill – probably at number 2. Ephraim was a baker of oatcakes and employed both his wife and his father-in-law as assistants.

Note: The 1911 census was the first when the forms were completed by the head of each household rather than by official enumerators employed for that purpose. This resulted in a number of interesting and/or humorous errors.

When Ephraim completed the form for the Sharpe household he erroneously filled in the section intended only for people born in a foreign country. He reported that he had been born in Halifax but was a "British Subject by parentage".

An error ? Or perhaps Ephraim really thought that Halifax was a foreign country !

Although he was a lifelong Baptist, between 1911 and 1918 Ephraim paid rent for a private pew in Farnhill Methodist Chapel. The reason behind this is not known – certainly none of the children were baptised there. He also became a member of the chapel choir.

The Kildwick School pupil admissions records for 1918 to 1931 (the only years for which records have been found) record the attendance of Ephraim and Clara's son Cecil W. from 27/8/1917 (aged 3 years, 1 month) to 27/7/1928 – when he left having reached the age of 14. (There is no record of Stanley's admission, but a page is missing from the records covering 1922 and 1923, which is most likely when Stanley would have started.)

WW1 service

There can be no doubt that Ephraim Sharpe volunteered to serve in WW1, before February 1916 – otherwise his name would not have been included in the Farnhill Parish Council Roll of Honour. However the only reference that has been found to him on active service relates to a short period, between 23rd October 1918 and 24th February 1919, when he was in the RAF.

A single page document exists, clearly relating to Ephraim Sharpe, aged 42, of Mary Street, Farnhill. This appears to record him joining the services for the first time – sections intended for use when a man was joining the RAF from another branch of the services, or where there had been prior service in the RFC, were left blank. Interestingly, however, Ephraim's rank was recorded as "Private Class 2"; this was a designation known to have been used by the RFC to indicate a Driver, but not used by the Army, Navy or RAF.

Note: The RAF was formed on 1st April 1918: merging the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), previously part of the Army; and the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS), part of the Navy. Personnel transferring to the RAF from either of the older air services retained their original ranks until 15th September 1919.

This document records that Ephraim was discharged from the RAF, at Blandford Forum, on 24th February 1919.

1 **BIRTH** Date 6. 2. 1876

Place { Town Halifax
Parish
Coun Yorks

2 **RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION** Baptist

3 **CURRENT ENGAGEMENT IN H.M. FORCES:—**

(a) State whether in Army, Navy or R.A.F. R A F

(b) Period:—

	Date Current Engagement commenced	Age at that Date	Duration of Period of Engagement
Boy Service			
Man Service	<u>23/10/18.</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>DN.</u>

(c) Date of actual entry into { R.F.C.
R.N.A.S.
R.A.F. 23.10.18

(d) Period engagement extended for

(e) Period re-engaged for

4 **PRIOR ENGAGEMENT IN H.M. FORCES:—**

Unit	Period		Rank on Discharge
	From	To	

5 **CIVILIAN OCCUPATION**

(a) Description Baker

(b) Name and Address of last Employer

(c) Period employed there, from

6 **MARRIAGE**

(a) Date 28.9.1902 Town Sutton Yorks

(b) Whether verified from Marriage Certificate

(c) Whether with permission

7 **PERSON TO BE INFORMED OF CASUALTIES**

Name Blava Sharpe

Address Mary St Farnhill W. Houghton Yorks

Relationship Wife

Post-war life

Ephraim Sharpe returned to the village just in time for the birth of his youngest child, Stanley Gordon, on 21st May 1919.

The 1921 census records the family – Ephraim, Clara and their 6 children – living in Mary Street. Ephraim was a self-employed baker of oatcakes; a return to his pre-war career. The 1931 issue of the Craven Almanac confirms this and notes that he specialised in the making of havercakes.

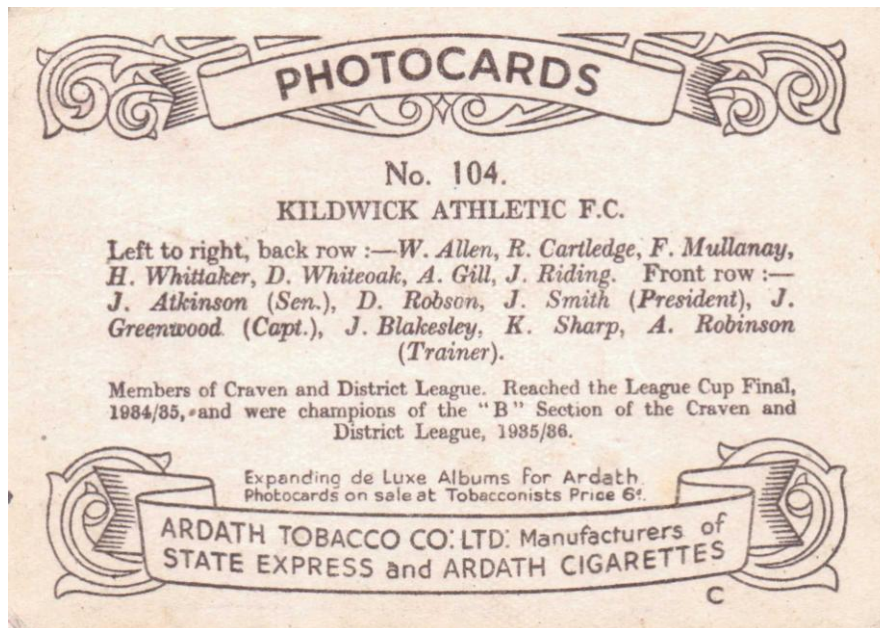
Note: Havercakes were traditional oatcakes – ‘haver’ meaning oat in Old Norse. Interestingly “The Havercake Lads” was the regimental nickname of the 1st Yorkshire West Riding Regiment in the nineteenth century. Haver is possibly the root of the word ‘haversack’, a backpack which was part of a soldier’s equipment and probably used for carrying a ration of oatmeal.

Ephraim’s business must have expanded as, according to a member of the family, his younger sons were often employed to sell muffins and crumpets around the villages – sometimes as far as Bradley.

By this time the family had moved to number 4 Mary Street, where an extension was built to house a kitchen and bathroom. Later, from the mid-1930s, some of the family would also occupy number 12.

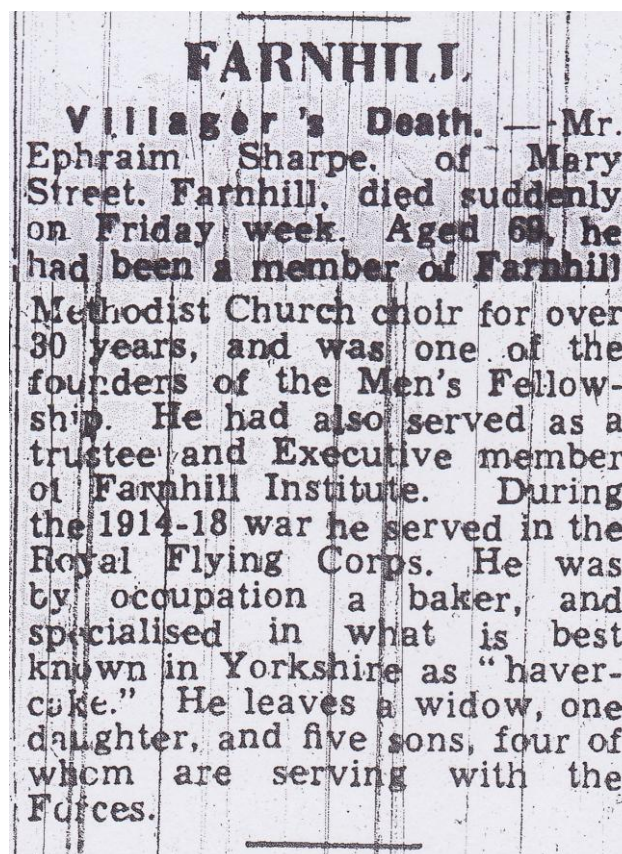
In 1936, Ephraim’s son Kenneth Sharpe appeared in a photograph of Kildwick Athletic football club that was included in a series of photo-cards issued by Ardath Tobacco Company.





Kildwick Athletic FC cigarette card 1936
From the Farnhill & Kildwick History Group archive

Ephraim Sharpe died suddenly on 11th May 1945. He was aged 69.



Ephraim Sharpe's obituary
By kind permission of Keighley News

Postscript

Clara, his wife, and various members of the Sharpe family continued to live in Mary Street and elsewhere in Farnhill for a number of years. Clara died in Sutton-in-Craven, on 1st February 1959.

Most of Ephraim and Clara's children are known to have married and had children.

Three of the weddings took place at Farnhill Methodist Chapel. The last of these was the marriage of Leslie Granville Sharpe to Joan Margaret Lowther on 20th February 1965.

1965. Marriage solemnized at <u>The Methodist Church Farnhill</u> in the								
District of <u>Batcliffe</u> in the County of <u>York (W.R.)</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
30	Twentieth February	Leslie Granville Sharpe	54	Bachelor	Trainer (Light Transport)	14 Mary Street, Farnhill, Nr. Keighley	Ephraim Sharpe (Deceased)	Boiler
	1965	Joan Margaret Lowther	41	Spinster	Clark (Woolen Transport)	Horwale Avenue, Sutton-in-Craven, Nr. Keighley	Alfred Lowther (Deceased)	Commercial Traveller
Married in the <u>Methodist Church Farnhill</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Methodists</u> by <u>Certificate</u>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, { <u>L. G. Sharpe</u> } in the Presence of us, { <u>E. M. Sharpe</u> } And in the Presence of { <u>P. Desmond Parker</u> }			Authorized Person for the said Church.					

Photograph of the marriage register of Farnhill Primitive Methodist Chapel
From the archive of the Farnhill and Kildwick Local History Group

This marriage was witnessed by John Michael Sharpe, Leslie's nephew (son of Cecil William).

Descendants of the Sharpe family are known to be living in various parts of the country.



Ephraim & Clara Sharpe
Photograph courtesy of Nic Sharpe

Ephraim Sharpe – a life in summary

Born: 6/2/1876, Shibden, Halifax

Died: 11/5/1945

Aged: 69

Home address: Mary Street, Farnhill

Parents

Father: Eli; b. 1847, Haworth; d. 7/10/1902, Soyland, Halifax

Mother: Ann (nee Holdsworth); b. 9/10/1842, Bingley; bapt. 3/1/1843, Keighley St Andrew
d. 6/1/1896, Sutton Mill

Married: 14/9/1868, St Paul, Denholme

Siblings

Mary Alice; b. 10/2/1869, Midgley (Halifax); bapt. 24/8/1873, Illingworth St. Mary;
m. William Smith, 1910, Keighley (Registration district); d. 5/3/1951, Sutton

John; b. 17/3/1870, Wheatley (Halifax); bapt. 24/8/1873, Illingworth St. Mary;
m1. Jane Wilcock, 1894, Keighley (Registration district), d. 1901;
m2. Sarah Smith, 1902, Keighley (Registration district);
m3. Mary Astley (nee Holmes), 27/1/1923, Steeton;
d. 1/1/1928, Steeton

George Harry; b. 19/11/1872, Wheatley (Halifax); bapt. 24/8/1873, Illingworth St. Mary;
m. Eliza Ann Wagstaff, 1900, Keighley (Registration district); d. 14/5/1945, Sutton

Margaret Ann; b. 1879, Northowram; d. 1964, Worth Valley (Registration district)

Ernest; b. 1882; d. 1959, Worth Valley (Registration district)

WW1 service

Service period: Uncertain; only 23/10/1918 to 24/2/1919 is documented

Branch: RAF; Private 2nd class, no. 308802 (?)

Medals: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Home address: Mary Street, Farnhill

Marriage

Wife: Clara Hartley; b. 3/7/1876, Cowling; d. 1/2/1959, Sutton-in-Craven

Date: 28/9/1902, Sutton Baptist Chapel

Children

James Ernest; b. 13/4/1903; bapt. 11/9/1909, Kildwick; d. 1909, Skipton (Registration district)
Joseph Clifford; b. 27/7/1906, Kildwick; m. Dorothy E. Lowe, 1935, Keighley (Registration district);
d. 19/1/1987, Sutton
Myra, b. 17/11/1908, Kildwick; d. 13/2/1992, Beanlands Nursing Home, Crosshills
Leslie Granville, b. 27/1/1911, Farnhill;
m. Joan Margaret Lowther, 20/2/1965, Farnhill Methodist Chapel; d. 6/1/2009
Kenneth Hartley, b. 9/2/1913, Skipton (Registration district);
m. Renee Evelyn Tillotson, 16/4/1949, Farnhill Methodist Chapel;
d. 29/11/2004, Keighley (Registration district)
Cecil William, b. 24/7/1914, Skipton (Registration district);
m. Alice Mason, 9/12/1939, Farnhill Methodist Chapel; d. 20/9/2008
Stanley Gordon, b. 21/5/1919, Skipton (Registration district);
m. Muriel Cade, 29/2/1964, York; d. 21/5/2006, Plymouth

