Joseph Smith (1883 – 1914)

Although born in Dent in 1883 Joseph Smith lived most of his life in Farnhill – attending Kildwick National School with his elder brother.

When he was 18 he became a professional soldier and served for eight years. He had been married for just over four years, and had become a father twice, when, in August 1914, he returned to the army. His war service was brief – he was killed a month later, the first of the Farnhill WW1 Volunteers to die.

Joseph Smith has no known grave. His name is recorded on the Kildwick War Memorial and was also included on the Kildwick School memorial.



Photograph by kind permission of www.cpgw.org

Pre-war life

Joseph Smith was born in Dent on New Year's Day 1883 and was baptised in St. Andrew's Church, Kildwick, on 28th January. He was the son of Alfred Smith, a stonemason, originally from Glusburn, and his wife Margaret Ann (nee Stephenson) who came from Morton near Bingley.

The 1891 census showed that the Smith family were living in Hanover Street in Farnhill and Joseph had a brother, Willliam, who was two years older. Both boys attended Kildwick National School – Joseph probably left there when he was fourteen years of age and likely went to work in one of the local mills.

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Extract from 1891 census for Hanover Street, Farnhill Used under licence from the National Archive

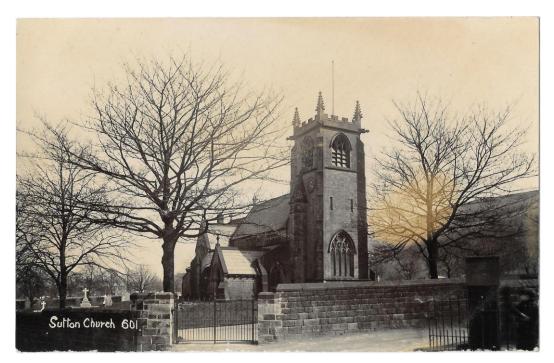
By the time of the 1901 census, Joseph's parents had moved to 9 Bucklar Hill. They were living alone by this time, both sons having left home.

Joseph joined the West Riding Regiment on 22nd February 1901; signing on for a period of seven years, which he later extended to eight. When he joined up he was aged 18 years and 1 month and gave his occupation as "weaver". His service record state that he was 5 feet 4 inches tall, with brown eyes and light brown hair; he weighed 8 stones and 4 lbs.

He initially served with the army in Ireland and then, from October 1905 until January 1909, in India. Having completed his eight years' service he returned to this country in the middle of January 1909 – leaving the army on 21st February 1909. As was the practice at the time, he was automatically transferred to the army reserve for a four year period. On a form completed on leaving the regular army he was described as a "bandsman" and listed the trade or employment he desired in civil life as "Musician attendant in an asylum". This didn't happen, but about this time he joined the Kildwick and District Brass Band as a solo tenor horn player.

Note: The comment about his future employment may have been a sarcastic jibe about what sort of civilian career eight years as an army bandsman prepared a man to enter. However no less a figure than Edward Elgar – by this time the pre-eminent English composer – had begun his career as the bandmaster at the Worcester City and County Lunatic Asylum, in 1879. Perhaps Joseph knew that ?

Joseph married Mary Elizabeth Grainger, at St. Thomas's Church in Sutton in Craven, on 16th July 1910. She had been born in Ripon but at the time of the marriage her family were living in Sutton. The marriage was witnessed by Joseph's brother William Dixon Smith, and Mary's sister Lily Grainger.



St. Thomas's Church, Sutton (Photograph courtesy of Barry Durham)

The pair may have lived for a time in Sutton after they married (possibly with Mary's parents ?) as it was at Sutton Mill that Mary gave birth to their first child, Cecilia, on 20th October 1910. However, by the time of the 1911 census, the three of them were living back with Joseph's parents, by this time at 15 Bucklar Hill. Joseph gave his employment as a Labourer in an Iron Foundry. Subsequently he found work at Horsfall's Mill in Glusburn.

On 21st January 1913 Joseph Smith signed-up for a further four years in the army reserve, putting his signature against the statement:

I understand that I shall be liable to be called out for permanent service, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, in the case of imminent national danger or of great emergency.

Joseph's father Alfred died on 17th October of the same year, aged 55 years, and was buried at St. Andrew's, Kildwick.

The next year, 1914, on 21st June, Mary gave birth to the couple's second son. Baptised Clarence Alfred at St. Andrew's Church on July 14th, the infant died just one week later.

WW1 service

Joseph Smith's WW1 service was brief.

On the outbreak of war he returned to army service, as a member of the 2nd battalion, West Riding Regiment, on 5th or 10th August 1914 – the documents conflict. He was sent out to France on 13th August and on the 16th wrote home to say that he was quite well.

Joseph Smith was killed in action on 19th September 1914 – the first man from Kildwick parish to be killed in the war. He was aged 31.

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Joseph Smith's WW1 Casualty Form Used under licence from the National Archive

Circumstances of death

During the period of Joseph's service in France, the 2^{nd} battalion West Riding Regiment formed part of the 13^{th} Brigade of the 5^{th} Division of the British Army. As such, he may have seen action at Mons – the first British engagement on European soil since the battle of Waterloo – and the retreat that followed; the battle of the Marne; and the battle of the Aisne – all of which took place in the period between 23^{rd} August and 21^{st} September 1914.

Joseph Smith is commemorated on a panel (no. 16A) forming part of the La Ferté-sous-Jouarre Memorial to the Missing. There is no grave.



La Ferté-sous-Jouarre Memorial to the Missing Photograph by kind permission of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org)

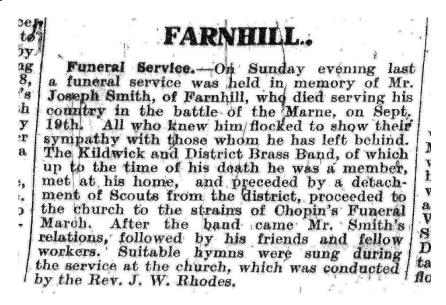
Postscript

On 17th October1914 the following article appeared in the Keighley News:



Reproduced by kind permission of the Keighley News

The following week, a memorial service was held for him at St. Andrew's Church.



Report from Craven Herald, 23rd October 1914; reproduced by kind permission of the Craven Herald

In April 1915 Joseph's widow, Mary, received notification that she had been granted a pension of fifteen shillings a week for herself and her five year old daughter, Cecilia; and in June the War Office returned Joseph's personal possessions to her – she was still living with her mother in law in Bucklar Hill at this time, although they all moved to 9 Starkey Lane at a later date.

Subsequent communications from the War Office concerned the despatch of his medals: a Mons Star, with clasp; a British War Medal; and a Victory Medal. Mary Smith would also have received a bronze plaque (colloquially known as a "death penny") and a scroll, both of which were usual for families of men killed in action.

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Joseph Smith's WW1 medal card Used under licence from the National Archive

A Mons Hero.—Mrs. J. Smith, of Buckler Hill, Farnhill, widow of the late Pte. Joseph Smith, off the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment, who was recalled to the Colours at the commencement of the war and paid the supreme sacrifice in the retreat from Mons, has this week received from the War Office the Mons Star which he earned, and also a letter of appreciation for the services rendered by hinr on that memorable occasion.

Report from Craven Herald, 30th May 1919; reproduced by kind permission of Craven Herald

In February 1920, the following news report appeared throughout the local press:

A beautiful memorial, provided by former scholars of Kildwick National School to commemorate the sacrifices of old scholars in the great war was unveiled in Kildwick National School on Sunday afternoon. The schoolroom was quite filled with old scholars, relatives and friends, the company including Mr. James Bairstow (Springfield), and Mr. W.A. and Mr. J.J. Brigg (Kildwick Hall). The service was in charge of the vicar of Kildwick (the Rev. C.E.V. Hodge), who said they were met to dedicate the tablet to the memory of the sons of that school who had fallen in the war.

The unveiling ceremony was fittingly performed by Mr. Thomas Appleby, who had been in charge of the National School as headmaster during the school days of most of those who had fallen. ...

The memorial is of carved oak with brass panels on which are engraven the names of the fifteen old scholars who have fallen. The centre picture is of St. George kneeling, and is a replica, in colour, of the glass panel by Mr. G.W.P. Hutchinson, exhibited at the Royal Academy. ...

The names inscribed on the memorial are: Tom Allsopp, Willie Barker, A.L. Backhouse, Fred Carlton, Walter Dawson, Fred Dixon, Joseph Green, William Mosley, Fred Scarfe, **Joseph Smith**, J. Allan Smith, Archie Sugden, T.H. Stephens, Frank Thompson, and H. Walmsley.



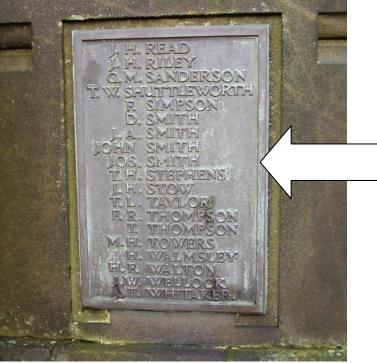
The only known photograph of the Kildwick School WW1 memorial, courtesy of Anne Hweitt. The memorial itself remains missing, presumed destroyed.

An entry in the Kildwick School log book, dated 3rd May 1921 reads:

The elder scholars attended the unveiling of the War Memorial for Kildwick & District this evening. A cross of flowers from the teachers and scholars was placed on the memorial by Emma Booth and Cecilia Smith, two girls whose fathers were killed during the War.

Joseph Smith is commemorated on the Kildwick war memorial:





Photographs provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive

His name was 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.

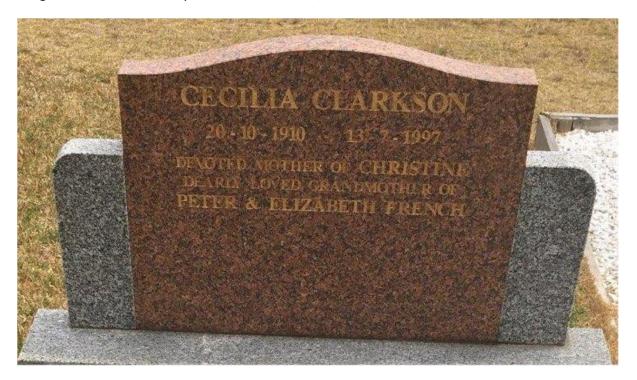
The 1921 census records Mary Elizabeth Smith and her daughter Cecilia living with Joseph's mother, Margaret Ann, at 9 Starkey Lane.

Later that year, Mary Elizabeth remarried. Her second husband was Cyril Edgar Newhouse and the marriage probably took place at Christ Church in Skipton on 11th December. It is thought that she died in 1935, aged 49 years, in the Keighley area.

Joseph's mother, Margaret Ann Smith, died at 9 Starkey Lane Farnhill in January 1928 aged 73 years and was buried in St. Andrew's, Kildwick, on the 19th.

Joseph's nephew Wright Smith, the son of William Dixon Smith, married Mary Ward somewhere in the Skipton area in early 1929. It is thought that they had two children, and it is likely that there are living descendants possibly still living in the area.

Cecilia Smith, Joseph and Mary's daughter, married Hugh Clarkson in 1936. They made their home in Silsden and had at least one child, a daughter, born in 1943. In 1951 the Clarkson family emigrated to Australia. They settled in Melbourne, where Cecilia died in 1997.



Cecilia Clarkson's gravestone from <u>https://billiongraves.com/</u> (Public domain image)

Joseph Smith – a life in summary

Born:	1/1/1883, Dent		
Baptised:	28/1/1883, Kildwick		
Died:	19/9/1914, Seine-et-Marne, France	Aged:	31

Parents

Father:	Alfred; b. 27/2/1857, Glusburn; d. 17/10/1913, Farnhill; buried 21/10/1913, Kildwick
Mother:	Margaret Ann (nee Stephenson); b. 1855, Morton (Bingley);
	d. January 1928, Farnhill; buried 19/1/1928, Kildwick
Married:	1878, Skipton (Registration district)

Siblings

William Dixon Smith; b. 25/3/1881, Farnhill; bapt. 29/6/1881, Kildwick; m. Mary Elizabeth Nelson, 16/7/1904, at St. Mary's Church, Embsay

Marriage

Wife:	Mary Elizabeth Grainger; b. 1886, Ripon (Registration district);
	d. 1935, Keighley (Registration district) – as Mary Elizabeth Newhouse

Date: 16/7/1910; at St. Thomas's Church, Sutton-in-Craven

Children

Cecilia; b. 20/10/1910; bapt. 4/12/1910, Kildwick;

m. Hugh Clarkson, 1936, Keighley (Registration district); d. 13/7/1997, Australia Clarence Alfred; b. 21/6/1914; bapt. 14/7/1914, Kildwick; d. 21/7/1914

WW1 service

Signed-up:	5/8/1914 (recalled from the Reserves)
Regt.:	2 nd battalion, West Riding Regiment; Private, no. 6666
Medals:	1914 Mons Star, with clasp; British War Medal; Victory Medal
Home address:	15 Bucklar Hill





