

Harry Thompson (1889 – 1926) (aka Harry Jowett)

Harry Thompson was the illegitimate son of Annie Thompson. He was born in the Union Workhouse in Stanley near Wakefield.

His mother married the widower William Jowett, and the family moved to Farnhill from Wilsden.

Harry saw active service in the army – probably serving in the Royal Field Artillery.

Harry married in 1916 and, after the war, he and his wife lived in Silsden where they raised a family of three children.

He died in 1926.



By kind permission of Kathryn Whiteoak

Pre-war life

Harry Thompson was born in the Union Workhouse in Stanley, near Wakefield, on 13th February 1889 and baptised a few weeks later, in St. Mary's Church, along with several other workhouse children. He was the illegitimate son of 18 year-old Annie Thompson and an unknown father.

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		WAKEFIELD								
1889 BIRTH in the Sub-district of Stanley		in the County of York								
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
33	Thirteenth February 1889 Union Workhouse Stanley W. S. D.	Harry	Boy		Annie Thompson, Servant of Normanton		Edwin Casburn Master Union Workhouse Stanley	Twentieth February 1889	Jac Hawden Registrar	/

Harry Thompson's birth certificate
(c) Crown Copyright

In the 1891 census, Annie and Harry were recorded as living with Annie's family in Normanton.

In 1899 Annie, by that time 28 years old, married a 52 year-old widower, William Jowett, in St. Peter's Church Bradford (the building subsequently became Bradford Cathedral).

William Jowett's first wife, Elizabeth, had died (probably) in 1897. They had been married about 30 years and had six grown-up children (two sons and four daughters).

William and Annie set up home, with Harry, in Wilsden; which is where William had lived all his life and is where they were recorded as living as a family on the 1901 census. By 1909 however they must have moved to Farnhill, as William appears in the electoral roll for the village from that year, living at 7 Starkey Lane.

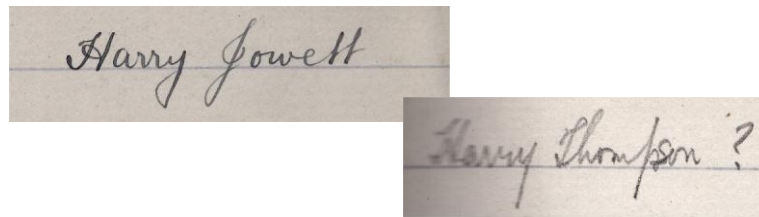
On 23rd March 1911, Annie and William had a daughter, Lillian, a step-sister to the 22-year old Harry. She was baptised a couple of months later in St. Andrew's church, Kildwick.

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.										
<i>Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.</i>										
<i>The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions than the preparation of Statistical Tables.</i>										
NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family	AGE (Last Birthday) and SEX	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.			BIRTHPLACE of every person.
1 William Jowett	Head	67	Married	12	1	1	none	Wearer Cotton Sp. Manufacture	Wether	Wilsden, Yorkshire
2 Annie Jowett	Wife	40	Married	12	2	2	none	Wearer Cotton Sp. Manufacture	Wether	Wilsden, Yorkshire
3 Harry Thompson	Son	22	Single	-	-	-	-	Wearer Cotton Sp. Manufacture	Wether	Wakefield " OH
4 Lillian Jowett	Daughter	Month	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Farnhill "

Extract from the 1911 census return for 7 Starkey Lane, Farnhill
Used under licence from the National Archive

Harry Thompson during WW1

The Farnhill Parish Council Roll of Honour, created in February 1916, does not include the name Harry Thompson. Harry appears on the Roll as Harry Jowett. However the text "Harry Thompson?" appears on its own, written in pencil, on the following page. Whether this indicates that Harry was known as Harry Jowett in the village or simply represents an error by Tom Turner, who compiled the list, is not known.



How Harry appears on the FPC Roll of Honour (left); and on the following page (right).

By kind permission of Farnhill Parish Council

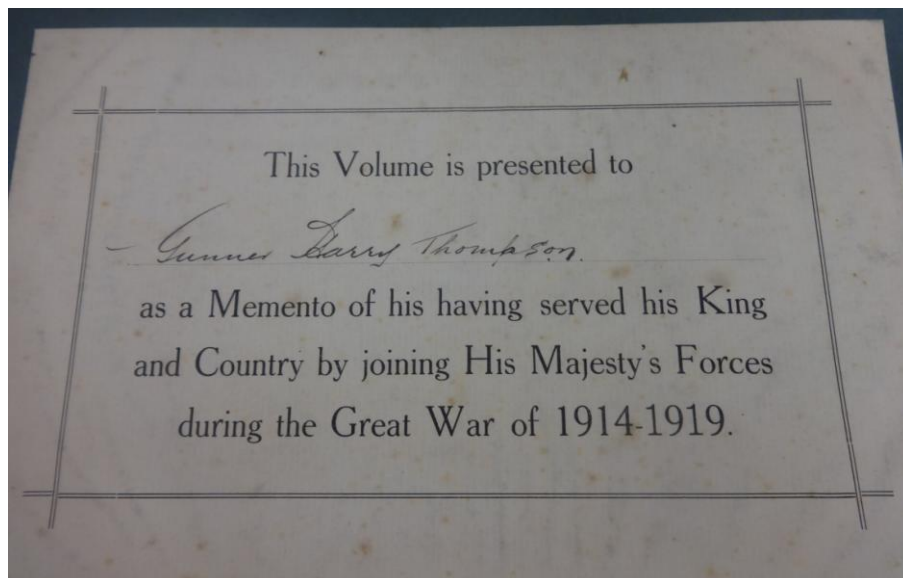
Although it is certain that Harry Thompson saw active service in the Army, it has proved impossible to establish anything with certainty about his WW1 military service.

However information supplied by a relative suggests that he was most likely a Gunner in the Royal Field Artillery. The portrait of him in uniform, below, shows him wearing a bandolier, a characteristic item of Royal Field Artillery equipment.



Portrait of Harry Thompson in uniform characteristic of the Royal Field Artillery
By kind permission of Kathryn Whiteoak

After the end of the war a copy of the book "Craven's Part in the Great War" was presented as a gift to each man, or their next of kin, who had gone to serve from the Skipton Parliamentary Division. The fly-sheet of Harry's copy refers to him as "Gunner Harry Thompson".



Gunner Harry Thompson's copy of the book "Craven's Part in the Great War"
by kind permission of Kathryn Whiteoak

Note: The cost of compiling, publishing and distributing "Craven's Part in the Great War" was borne by Walter Morrison, JP, of Tarn House on Malham Moor.

Finally, a photograph of Harry Thompson suggests very strongly that he was a Gunner.



Harry Thompson, the left of the two men on the gun
 Photograph by kind permission of Kathryn Whiteoak

On September 9th 1916, Harry Thompson married Mary Ann Dolly Smith at Silsden Church. On the marriage certificate Harry gave his profession as Soldier and that, together with the fact that the ceremony was carried out under licence rather than following the reading of banns, perhaps suggests that Harry was about to be shipped abroad.

1916. Marriage solemnized at <u>the Parish Church</u> in the <u>Parish</u> of <u>Silsden</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.
74	Sept. 9 th 1916	Harry Thompson	28	Bachelor	Soldier	Kildwick	—	—
	1916	Mary Ann Dolly Smith	35	Spinster	—	Silsden	William Smith	Mason

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by Licence after ' ' by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Harry Thompson in the Presence of us, George Smith Elizabeth Willis E.S. Pater M.A. Vicar

Thompson – Smith marriage certificate
 (c) Crown Copyright

At some point during the war years, Annie and William Jowett moved from Starkey Lane to Grange Road.

Post-war life

After the war Harry and Mary set up home in Silsden, living at 2 Walker Place for a few years before moving to number 17. They had three children: Edith (b. 1917), Jack (b. 1920) and Mary (b. 1921).

The 1921 census records Harry, Mary and two children still living at 2 Walker Place. Harry was working at Smith and Padgett's Machine Makers, Crown Works, Keighley.

William Jowett died in 1921 and was buried in the graveyard at St. Andrew's Church, Kildwick on 23rd March. Annie, Harry's mother, continued to live at the Grange Road address until after she was remarried in 1926, to Hugh Spencer Robinson.

Harry Thompson died at his home in Silsden, of heart disease, on 10th March 1926 and was buried in St. James' Church graveyard on the 13th. He was aged 37 (although his death certificate says he was 38).

Postscript

Annie, Harry's mother, died in 1936.

Lilian, his step-sister, lived for a while in Starkey Lane before she married Clarence Wroe, in 1935, in St. Andrew's Church Kildwick. They lived in Silsden and had at least one child. Lilian died, in Silsden, on 23rd February 1982.

Mary, Harry's wife, continued to live in Silsden. She moved from 17 Walker Place sometime between 1930 and 1932 and subsequently lived for some years in King Street. She died in 1954.

Of Harry and Mary's three children: Edith died in August 1943, of septicaemia following a burst appendix, while serving with the armed forces during WWII; Mary died in 2002; and Jack died in 2009.

Whether there are any descendants of Harry Thompson living in the local area is not known.

Harry Thompson – a life in summary

Born: 13/2/1889, Stanley near Wakefield (Union Workhouse)

Baptised: 26/2/1889, St. Mary's, Wakefield

Died: 10/3/1926 **Aged:** 37

Home address: 56 Keighley Rd, Silsden

Parents

Father: Not known

Mother: Annie Thompson; b. 1871, Normanton; d. 1936, Skipton (Registration district)

Married: Unmarried

Annie later m. William Jowett, 14/10/1899; at Bradford St. Peter

Also m. Hugh Spencer Robinson, 1926, Skipton (Registration district)

Siblings

Lilian Jowett (half-sister); b. 22/3/1911, Farnhill; bapt. 21/5/1911, Kildwick;

m. Clarence Wroe, 30/11/1935, Kildwick; d. 23/2/1982, Silsden

There were also lots of Jowett step-siblings.

WW1 service

Service details not known. Probably Gunner, Royal Field Artillery.

Marriage

Wife: Mary Ann Dolly Smith; b. 31/5/1881, Crosshills; d. 1954, Worth Valley (Registration district)

Date: 9/9/1916, at Silsden St. James

Children

Edith; b. 4/9/1917; bapt. 21/10/1917, Silsden St. James; d. 15/8/1943

Jack; b. 22/5/1920; bapt. 5/9/1920, Silsden St. James; d. 1/12/2009

Mary; b. 10/10/1921; bapt. 16/12/1923, Silsden St. James;

m. Edwin H Jeeves, 1947, Worth Valley (Registration district); d. 5/11/2002

