

Harry Walmsley (1893 – 1916)

Harry Walmsley was the eldest son of a Methodist family well known in Farnhill.

After leaving Kildwick School he worked in local mills and had a busy social life – being a member of many local organisations.

He attested his willingness to serve in the armed forces and after training went to France in June 1916. Wounded in the Somme offensive, he was brought back to England for treatment when his condition deteriorated, Hopes that he would recover proved too optimistic, and he died in December 1916.



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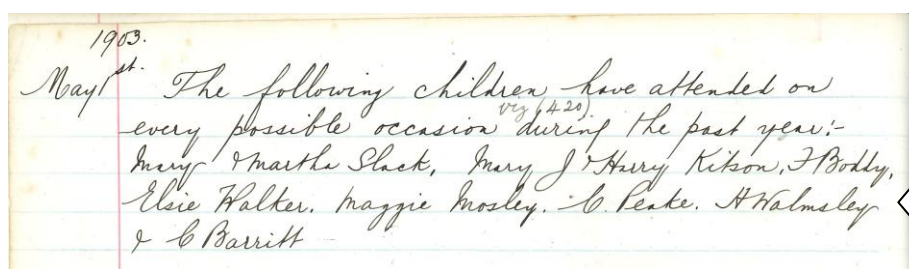
His funeral was at St Andrew's Kildwick with many of his friends and associates taking part in the service. His body was interred in the churchyard and his name recorded on Kildwick War Memorial, and was also included on the Kildwick School memorial.

Pre-war life

Harry was the eldest son and the third of eight children born to Seth and Ida Walmsley of 5 Hanover Street, Farnhill.

The family were Methodists and, as a child, Harry attended both Kildwick School and the Farnhill Primitive Methodist Sunday School.

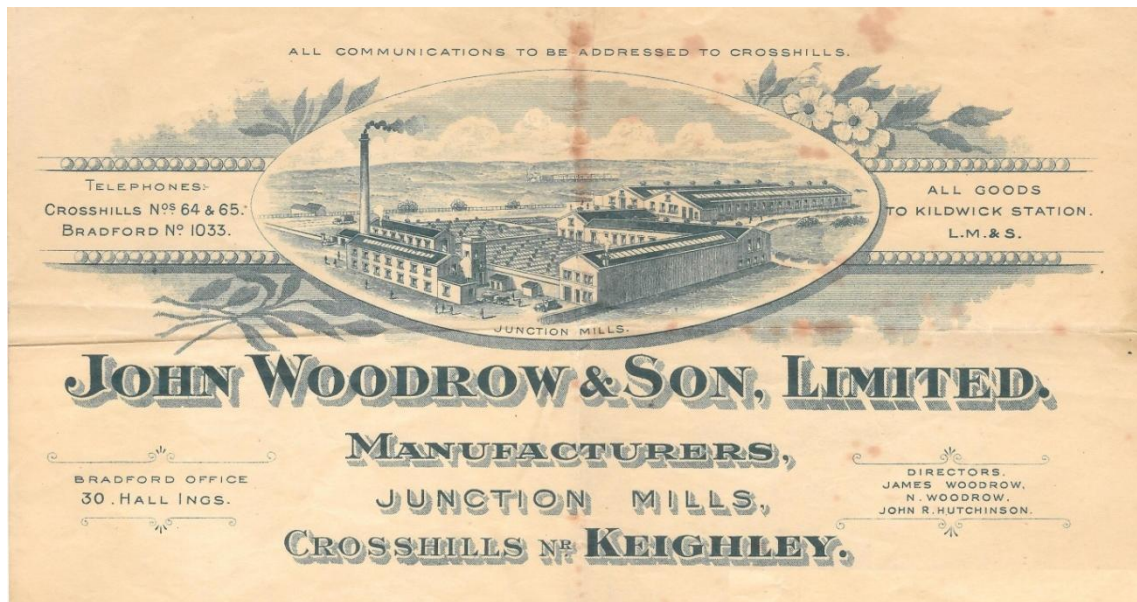
Harry must have enjoyed his time at school as, in May 1903, he was awarded a prize for full attendance (420 half-day sessions) during the previous year. This fact was recorded by the headmaster, Thomas Appleby, in the school's Log Book.



Reproduced by kind permission of Kildwick School

His name also appears in the Log Book in December 1905, when he won third prize in a school painting competition.

It is probable that from the age of 12, like many children of the time, Harry worked part-time in one of the local mills. Certainly by the time of the 1911 census, taken when he was 17, he was working full-time at Woodrow's Mill, Junction.



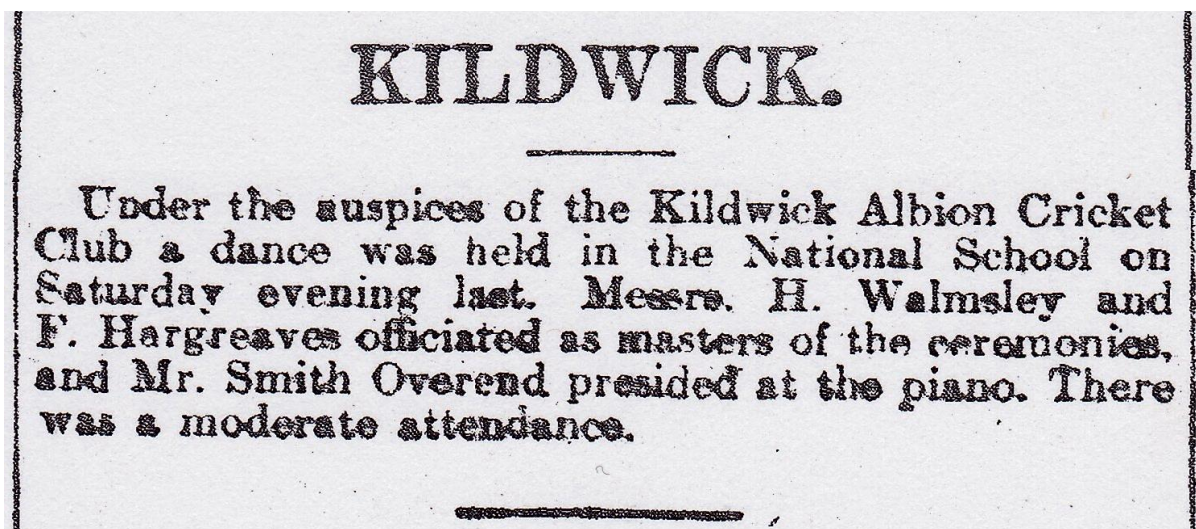
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Harry seems to have been a very sociable young man, and was involved with many local organisations, including:

- Kildwick Old Boys' Football Club – committee member 1914
- Kildwick Albion Cricket Club
- Kildwick Brass Band – committee member 1915
- Kildwick Unionist Club
- Kildwick and Farnhill Institute
- Paxton Society – for allotment and small-holders

Harry's father, Seth, was also a member of the Paxton Society and had been a member of the Kildwick Brass Band when it won the national competition at Crystal Palace in 1905.

A newspaper report (Keighley News, 13/2/1915) provides a small glimpse of Harry's sociability.



With kind permission of Keighley News

WW1 service

Harry attested his willingness to serve in the armed forces on 11th December 1915, swearing his oath in front of local magistrate James Bairstow at Crosshills. He was 22 years of age.

I, <u>Harry Walmsley</u> do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.	
<u>Harry Walmsley</u>	SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.
<u>J. W. Bairstow</u>	Signature of Witness.
OATH TO BE TAKEN BY RECRUIT ON ATTESTATION.	
I, <u>Harry Walmsley</u> swear by Almighty God, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs, and Successors, and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, in Person, Crown, and Dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.	
CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE OR ATTESTING OFFICER.	
The Recruit above named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.	
The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.	
I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered and replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me at <u>Green Hill</u> on this <u>11th</u> day of <u>December</u> 19 <u>15</u> .	
<u>James Bairstow</u> Signature of the Justice of the Peace.	
† Certificate of Approving Officer.	
I certify that this Attestation of the above-named Recruit is correct, and properly filled up, and that the required formalities have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to the <u>11th N. Riding Rgt</u> .	
If enlisted by special authority, Army Form B. 203 (or other authority for the enlistment) will be attached to the original attestation.	
Date <u>22nd Jan 1916</u>	<u>James Bairstow</u> Approving Officer.
Place <u>Halifax</u>	
† The signature of the Approving Officer is to be affixed in the presence of the Recruit. ‡ Here insert the "Corps" for which the Recruit has been enlisted.	

Extract from Harry Walmsley's WW1 service attestation form
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As was usual for men who attested, he was initially accepted into the general army reserve before being assigned to the 11th (Reserves) battalion of the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment on 22nd January 1916.

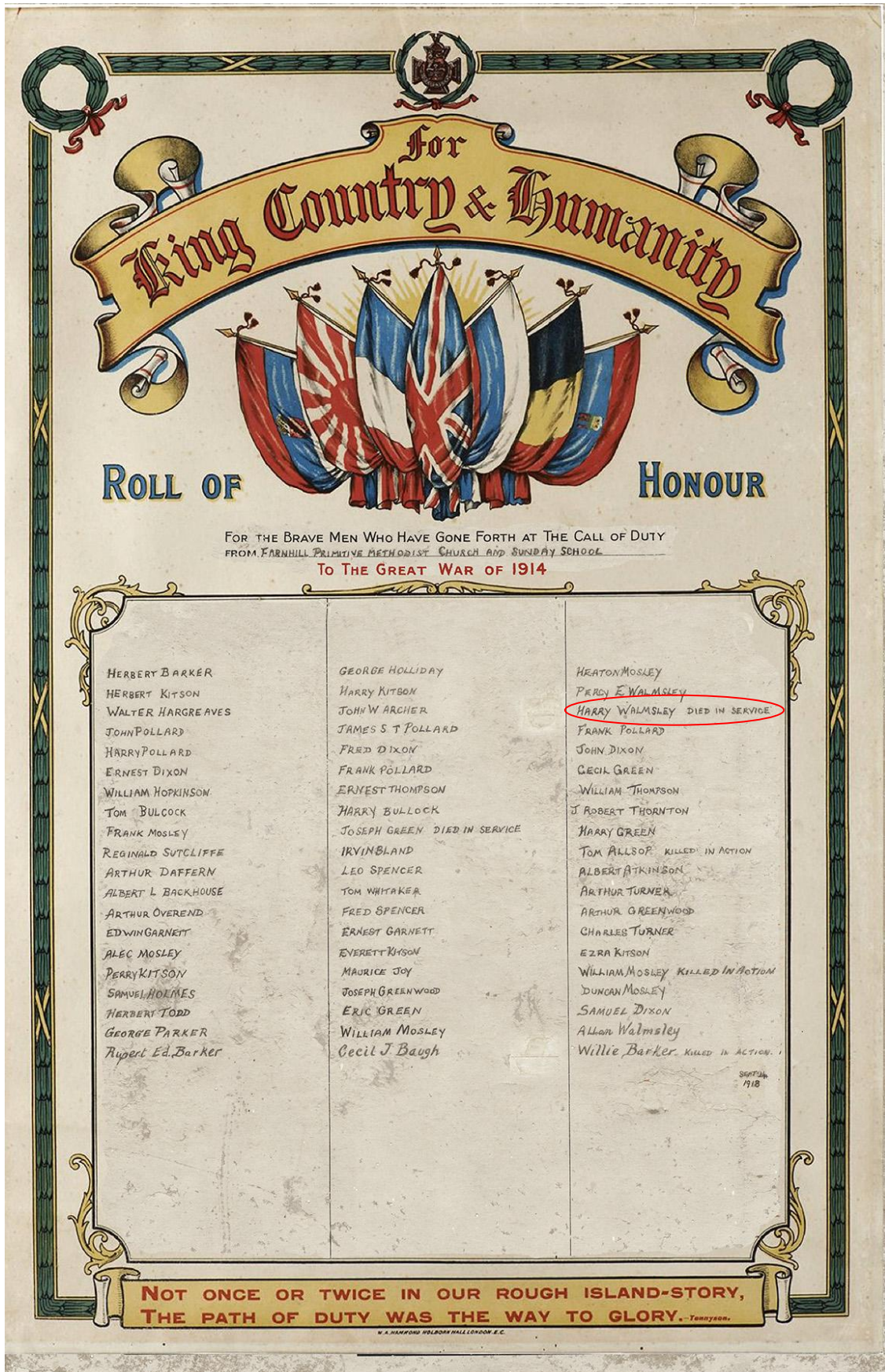
He underwent five months of training on home soil, after which he was transferred to 1/5th battalion which, on 22nd June 1916, was shipped over to France.

The photograph below shows Harry Walmsley – 4th from right, middle row – in a group of soldiers; whether this was taken during his training or after he was shipped to France is not known.



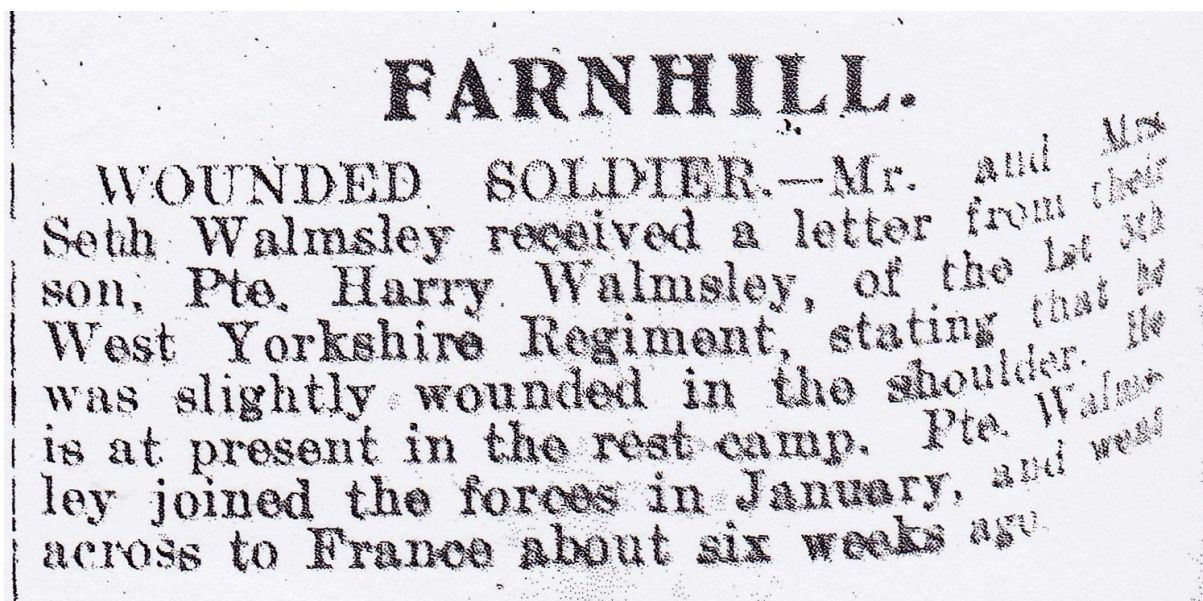
Harry Walmsley with a group of soldiers

Harry's name was recorded on Farnhill Methodist Chapel's Roll of Honour. This was unveiled on 9th July 1916, by which time Harry was already serving in France.



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

The Somme offensive started on 1st July 1916 and it seems very likely that Harry was involved in serious fighting almost immediately. Later that month, news reached home that he had been wounded (West Yorkshire Pioneer, 28/7/1916).



With kind permission of Craven Herald and Pioneer

Circumstances of death

Harry must have returned to duty soon after being wounded, as there is no break in his service record. However, the wound had not fully healed and by the beginning of November 1916 he was re-admitted to hospital in France. On 12th November, he was brought back across the Channel to a hospital in Wandsworth, south-west London.

His mother and father were notified that his condition was serious and they travelled to London to visit him, as reported in the Keighley News (2/12/1916).

FARNHILL.

PRIVATE H. WALMSLEY SERIOUSLY ILL.

About a week ago Mr. and Mrs. Seth Walmsley, of Hanover Street, Farnhill, received a letter from the military authorities requesting them to go to London at once if they wished to see their son, Private Harry Walmsley, who was lying dangerously ill in the 3rd London General Hospital. Shortly afterwards they received a telegram urging them to go at once. Mr. and Mrs. Walmsley at once went to London, and found their son in a critical condition suffering from septic poisoning and pneumonia. Private Walmsley told his parents that he and his comrades were in the front trenches seven weeks on one occasion without a break, and sometimes they were up to the waist in water. Private Walmsley was one of Lord Derby's men, and joined the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry in January last. He went out to the front in June, and was wounded about a month later in the shoulder. He was sent to a base hospital, and on recovery went back into the firing line. About three weeks ago he fell ill, and was in a hospital in France for a week before he was fit to be removed to England, where he has since been. He took part in one charge on the Somme, and came through it without receiving a scratch. He states that the Germans opposite to their lines were big fellows about 6ft. in height. Mr. and Mrs. Walmsley have now returned home. Their son is slightly better, though not yet out of danger.

With kind permission of Keighley News

Hopes that Harry's condition was improving were sadly misplaced and he died on 14th December 1916.

His body was brought back to the village, by train. It arrived in the evening and the coffin was taken to Hanover Street, on a bier, accompanied by eight members of Kildwick and Farnhill Institute.

The following day the coffin, draped with the Union Jack, was carried from his home to St. Andrew's Church, Kildwick, for the funeral. In the procession were members of the local organisations of which Harry was a member. The Brass Band played appropriate music.

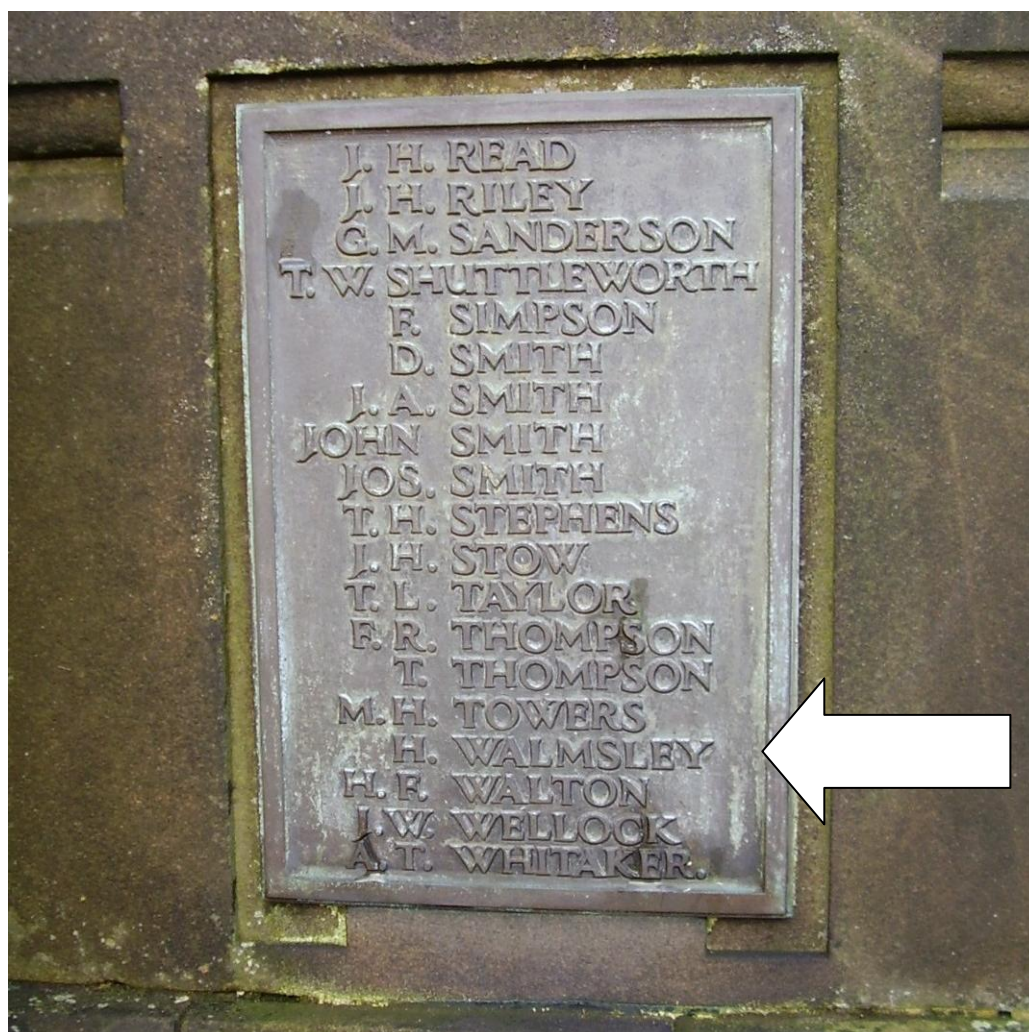
The church was filled to overflowing for the service, which was performed by the vicar, Rev. Richardson, and the minister of Farnhill Primitive Methodist Chapel, Rev. Woodfield. Tom Appleby, the headmaster of Kildwick School, read the lessons.

Following the service, interment took place in St. Andrew's churchyard during which the choir of the Methodist Chapel sang hymns. (Reported in Craven Herald 22/12/1916, and Keighley News 23/12/1916).



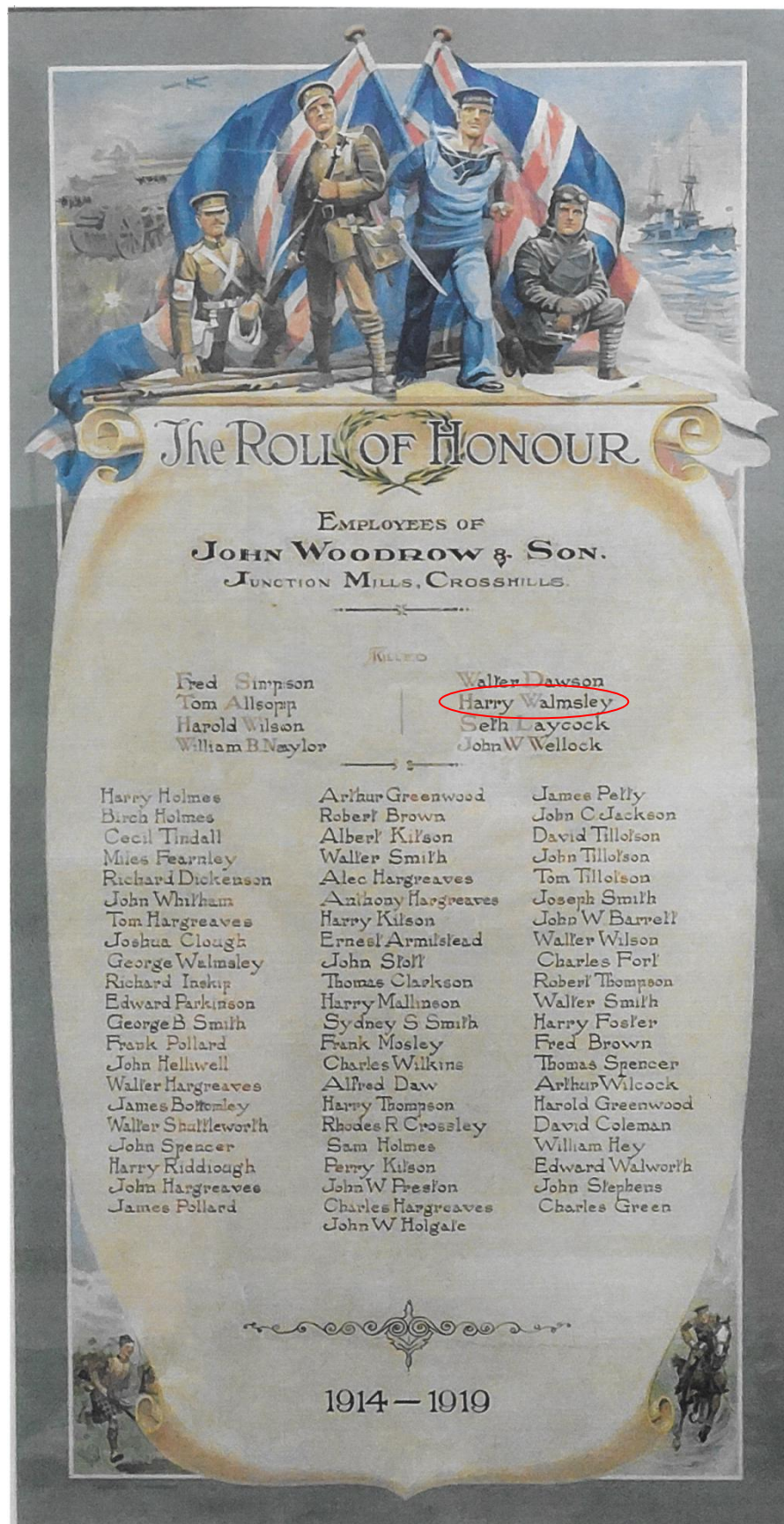
Note: Harry Walmsley's death pre-dated the creation of the standard military gravestone, designed by Max Gill, the brother of the artist Eric Gill, for the Imperial War Graves Commission, which has been in use since 1917.

Harry Walmsley is also commemorated on the Kildwick war memorial, unveiled in 1921.



Photographs provided by Keighley and District Digital Archive

Also on the Roll of Honour of men employed by Woodrow's Mill at Junction.



With thanks to BurberryGroup, PLC

Postscript

In accordance with his soldier's will, made on 1st July 1916 (the first day of the battle of the Somme), Harry's final pay was divided up: £5 was sent to "my friend Miss Norah Whiteoak", of Glusburn; the remainder, 16s 2d, was sent to his mother, Ida, on 12th March 1917.

WILL.

In the event of my death
I give 5 £ to my friend.
Miss. Norah. Whiteoak.
No. 2. Sunny Bank. Villas.
Glusburn. Reighley.
Yorkshire.

And I give the remaining
part to the Family.
Mrs. S. Walmsley
No. 5. Hanger. St. Farnham
Ridchwick. Reighley. Yorks.

Signature 5992. Pte H. Walmsley

Rank & Regiment 1/5 3rd Buffs

Date July 1. 1916

Ida received a further War Gratuity of £3 on 1st April 1920, and a war pension.

Particulars of Man (Men).				Particulars of Claimant(s).			
Name	1	WALMSLEY	Harry	Name	1	Miss Ida Walmsley	13775
Regiment	1	West Ridings	Regtl. No. 1 5992	Address	1	5 Hanover St Sarnhill	
Rank	1	Private	Marital 1	Relationship	1	Mother	
Date and	1	14.12.16	Discharge	New Address	1		
Cause of	2			Age	1	46	
Death.	3				2		
While Serving	1		Case No. 1		3		
After Dis-	2				4		
charge.	3				5		

Extract from Harry Walmsley's WW1 pension ledger (SB 36)
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In 1919, the family received the British War Medal and Victory Medal awarded to Harry for his war service. They 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.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
WALMSLEY	W Rid. R	Pte	5/5992
Harry			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	0/2/101 B/2	131	Died 14-12-16
BRITISH			
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

Harry Walmsley's WW1 Medal Card
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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.

Harry Walmsley's family continued to live in Farnhill and, in April 1939, his parents celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. Ida subsequently died in May 1942 (aged 71); and Seth in April 1950 (aged 81).

Many of Harry's siblings married and settled in the district. At least one niece is still alive and living in Farnhill.

Norah Whiteoak married Norman MacLeod somewhere in the Skipton area in the second quarter of 1920. No further information is known.

Harry Walmsley – a life in summary

Born: 4/8/1893, Farnhill
Baptised: 30/9/1893, Kildwick
Died: 14/12/1916, 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth **Aged:** 23
Home address: 5 Hanover Street, Farnhill

Parents

Father: Seth; b. 7/7/1868, Farnhill; d. 25/4/1950, Farnhill
Mother: Ida (nee Dawson); b. 1871, Shipley; d. 13/5/1942, Farnhill
Married: 20/4/1889, Kildwick

Siblings

Edith Annie, b. 29/7/1889, Farnhill;
 m. Reginald Boocock, 1913, Skipton (Registration district);
 d. 1969, Staincliffe (Registration district)
Ethel, b. 28/4/1891, Farnhill; m. Charles Horsfall, 22/6/1941, Farnhill Methodist Chapel
Bertha Elizabeth, b. 6/2/1896, Farnhill; m. Lionel Arthur Lee, 15/9/1924, Kildwick
 d. 1977, Keighley (Registration district)
Marjorie (Margery), b. 12/3/1900, Farnhill; m. Tom Tempest, 22/5/1926, Kildwick;
 d. 1984, Keighley (Registration district)
Reginald (Reggie), b. 24/9/1903, Farnhill; m. Bertha Atkinson, 1924, Skipton (Registration district);
 d. 1976, Keighley (Registration district)
Clifford, b. 28/9/1906, Farnhill; d. 1988, Keighley (Registration district)
Evelyn Mary, b. 1912, Skipton (Registration district);
 m. Frank Craven Moore, 3/9/1938, Farnhill Methodist Chapel

Relationship to other volunteers

Harry was the nephew of John William Dawson (his mother's brother).

He was also distantly related to Percy Walmsley – they had the same great-grandparents.

WW1 service

Attested: 11/12/1915, Crosshills
Service started: 22/1/1916
Regt.: Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment (Private, nos. 17997, 5992)
Medals: British War Medal, Victory Medal
Home address: 5 Hanover Street, Farnhill

