

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



AMOS WAGSTAFF

ROYAL WARWICKSHIRE REGIMENT

KILLED IN ACTION

3RD DECEMBER 1917

BORN IN 1880 AT BRADFORD, THE SON OF  
HENRY AND CATHERINE WAGSTAFF AND HUSBAND OF  
GERTRUDE WAGSTAFF

# Wagstaff Family History

- **1891 census** shows Henry, his wife Catherine (Kate) and their 6 children living at 9, Skipton Rd, Steeton with Eastburn as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Henry (Head)	39	Cloth weaver	Foleshill, Warwickshire	1852
Catherine (wife)	34	Cloth weaver	Nottingham	1857
Eliza	18	Cloth weaver	Bradford, Yorkshire	1873
Amos	10	Worsted spinner	Bradford, Yorkshire	1881 - 1917
Daniel	7	Scholar	Bradford, Yorkshire	1884
Isaac H	5	Scholar	Bradford, Yorkshire	1886
Willie	2	Scholar	Bradford, Yorkshire	1889
Esther	baby		Eastburn, Yorkshire	1891

- **1901 census** shows Henry, his wife Catherine and 6 of their children living at 25, Gordon Street, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Henry (Head)	50	Weaver worsted mill	Coventry, Warwickshire	1851
Catherine (wife)	46		Nottingham	1855
Amos	21	Weaver worsted mill	Bradford, Yorkshire	1880 - 1917
Daniel	17	Box minder worsted mill	Bradford, Yorkshire	1884
Isaac H	15	Warehouse worsted mill	Bradford, Yorkshire	1886
Willie	12	Doffer worsted mill	Bradford, Yorkshire	1889
Sarah E	8		Eastburn, Yorkshire	1893
Mary E	1		Sutton-in-Craven	1900



Gordon St, Sutton-in-Craven (circa 1900)  
(source: Rachel Simpson & Richard Whiteoak from the Glyn Whiteoak collection)

- **1911 census** shows Amos Wagstaff now married to Gertrude for the past 8 years and that of their 3 children born alive, 1 had since died. It also shows Amos and his family living at 5, Tetley Row, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Amos (head)	30	Warp twister	Bradford, Yorkshire	1881 - 1917
Gertrude (wife)	30		Wakefield, Yorkshire	1881 - 1939
Harry Alwyne	5		Sutton-in-Craven	1906
Ivy	baby		Sutton-in-Craven	1911



Tetley Row (marked with arrow), Sutton-in-Craven  
(source: photo provided by David Smith)

# World War 1



It had been **99 years** since Britain was last involved in a major European conflict following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815

## **August 4<sup>th</sup> 1914** **Britain declares war on Germany**

In the autumn of 1914, the young men of the nation came from town and village to take the King's shilling and to offer him their dedicated services in defence of their homeland. From mills and mines, from shops and farms, from office chairs and civic departments, from loom, lathe, bench, plough and counter they flooded into the recruiting centres in answer to their nation's call for young manhood. These new recruits came to be known as **'Kitchener's Volunteers'**

## **The New Armies: "Kitchener's Volunteers"**





Earl Kitchener recruitment poster 1914



Parliamentary Recruiting Committee  
London, 1915



British volunteers, 1914 (Kitchener's new army)

During the Great War, Amos Wagstaff responded to the call and enlisted into the 2/5th battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment

His regimental number was 29802 and he commenced with the rank of Private.

The 2/5th battalion was formed in October 1914 as a second line battalion. It became part of the 61st (2nd South Midland) Division arriving in France on the 21st May 1916

The Royal Warwickshire Regiment raised 30 battalions during the Great War



WW1 Royal Warwickshire cap badge

Very little information is available about the war time service of Pte Amos Wagstaff. It is known however that he entered the Theatre of War on the Western Front sometime after the 1st January 1916 with the 2/5th battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment.



Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
WAGSTAFF	R. War. R.	Pte	29802
Ainos.			

  

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	L/104 B34	7302	
BRITISH			
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K. 1380

# THE BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

The **Battle of Cambrai** heralded the first time tanks were used in significant force, a little over a year after they had made their tentative debut at Flers on the Somme in September 1916.

So much so that the German high command, having overcome their initial alarm at the sudden appearance of these huge mechanical beasts upon the



battlefield, came to regard the tank with disdain. A device readily destroyed by use of concentrated field artillery.

Nevertheless the British Tank Corps remained convinced that earlier disappointments regarding tank use would be overcome once the new weapon was used in battlefield conditions less ill-suited than the muddy quagmire that characterised the Third Battle of Ypres, where once again the tank had succeeded only in generating cynicism.

The Battle of Cambrai began at dawn on the morning of the 20th November 1917, with all available tanks ready and prepared to advance across a 10 km front upon the dry battlefield sited between the Canal du Nord and the St. Quentin Canal. Notably the attack was not preceded by a preliminary bombardment, helping to ensure complete surprise.

At 6.20 am, 476 tanks suddenly emerged and began advancing in long waves across 'no man's land', crushing their way through the belt of barbed wire defenses and made straight for the German lines.

6 infantry and 2 cavalry divisions closely followed the fleet of tanks and British artillery opened fire in a massive onslaught of shells and smoke.

14 newly formed squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps were simultaneously deployed to bomb the enemy's field guns, as second and third lines of tanks followed through, spreading panic and pandemonium amongst the enemy.



Artist's impression of The Battle of Cambrai, 20th November 1917, by David Pentland

The surprise was total. 9,000 German prisoners were taken. At midday some of the tanks had reached their final objective and the infantry successfully consolidated their positions. However, by the 22nd November, a halt was called for rest and reorganisation, allowing the Germans to reinforce.

After the first day of surprise, the Germans had no doubt of the British intention and quickly reorganised. Special equipment was sent to stop the tanks and their troops were ordered to contain any British attack. During that long resistance, enormous reinforcements were massed on each side.

On the 30th November 1917, with no preliminary artillery barrage, the enemy adopted their new tactic of attacking with elite regiments known as the 'Stormtruppen'. In many places, the British positions were too weak to resist such surprise attacks and were often overwhelmed. Many prisoners were taken and the Germans recaptured a good part of their lost ground.



German storm troopers attacking with flame throwers, WW1

The end result of the Battle of Cambrai was virtually a status quo, but with very heavy casualties on both sides. The British had 44,000 casualties including more than 20,000 wounded and 7,048 missing. They lost to the enemy, 9,000 prisoners, 165 guns, 600 machine guns and more than 90 tanks. The Germans had 41,000 casualties including 11,000 prisoners. 145 guns and 456 machine guns fell into British hands



The Battle of Cambrai, 1917

On the 3rd December 1917, Pte Amos Wagstaff was **Killed in Action** during the **Battle of Cambrai**

He was 37 years of age



Article Date: 04 January 1918

#### SUTTON - Private Amos Wagstaffe Missing

Mrs. Amos Wagstaffe, of Main Street, Sutton Mill, received an official communication from the War Office on Wednesday morning stating that her husband, Private Amos Wagstaffe, of the Royal Warwickshires, had been wounded and missing since the 3rd of December, in France. No further news has been received concerning Private Wagstaffe, and it is about four weeks since the last letter was received from him. It is six months since he went out to France. He is one of three brothers serving with the Forces.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* [www.cpgw.org.uk](http://www.cpgw.org.uk))



## Casualty Details

**Name:** WAGSTAFFE, AMOS

**Initials:** A

**Nationality:** United Kingdom

**Rank:** Private

**Regiment/Service:** Royal Warwickshire Regiment

**Unit Text:** 2nd/5th Bn.

**Date of Death:** 03/12/1917

**Service No:** 29802

**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** Panel 3.

**Memorial:** CAMBRAI MEMORIAL, LOUVERVAL

(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* [www.cwgc.org/](http://www.cwgc.org/))

## CAMBRAI MEMORIAL, LOUVERVAL

The Cambrai memorial in France commemorates more than 7,000 servicemen of the United Kingdom and South Africa who died in the Battle of Cambrai in November and December 1917 and whose graves are not known.

The Cambrai Memorial was designed by Harold Chalton Bradshaw and sculptured by Charles S. Jagger. It was unveiled by Lieut-General Sir Louis Vaughan on the 4th August 1930.





Cambrai Memorial, Louverval

(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* [www.cwgc.org/](http://www.cwgc.org/))

Pte Amos Wagstaff is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial and in the burial ground of St Thomas' Church, Sutton



St Thomas's Church burial ground (source: photo supplied by Josie Walsh)



WAR MEMORIAL, SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN PARK



(source: *South Craven, the official guide, 1950*)



Sutton-in-Craven War Memorial (photo taken by Paul Wilkinson)



Pte Amos Wagstaff was posthumously awarded the  
British War Medal & Victory Medal



Original pair of WW1 medals (source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)



A Memorial Plaque inscribed with the soldiers name was also given to the family of those who were killed during WW1



Original WW1 Memorial Plaque (name digitally altered)  
Also referred to as a Death Plaque or Dead Man's Penny  
(source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)



# FOR THE FALLEN

*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE  
LEFT GROW OLD*

*AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM, NOR THE YEARS  
CONDEMN*

*AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE  
MORNING*

*WE WILL REMEMBER THEM*

**LAURENCE BINYON, 1869-1943**



(Information compiled by Andrew Monkhouse 2011)