

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



FREDERICK SIMPSON

DUKE OF WELLINGTON REGIMENT

KILLED IN ACTION 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1915

BORN IN 1885 AT BURWOOD NEAR SYDNEY IN  
AUSTRALIA. SON OF JOHN AND NANCY SIMPSON AND  
HUSBAND OF EDITH SIMPSON (NEE RILEY)

# Simpson Family History

- **1891 census** shows John, his wife Nancy and their 4 children living at Stanley Place, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

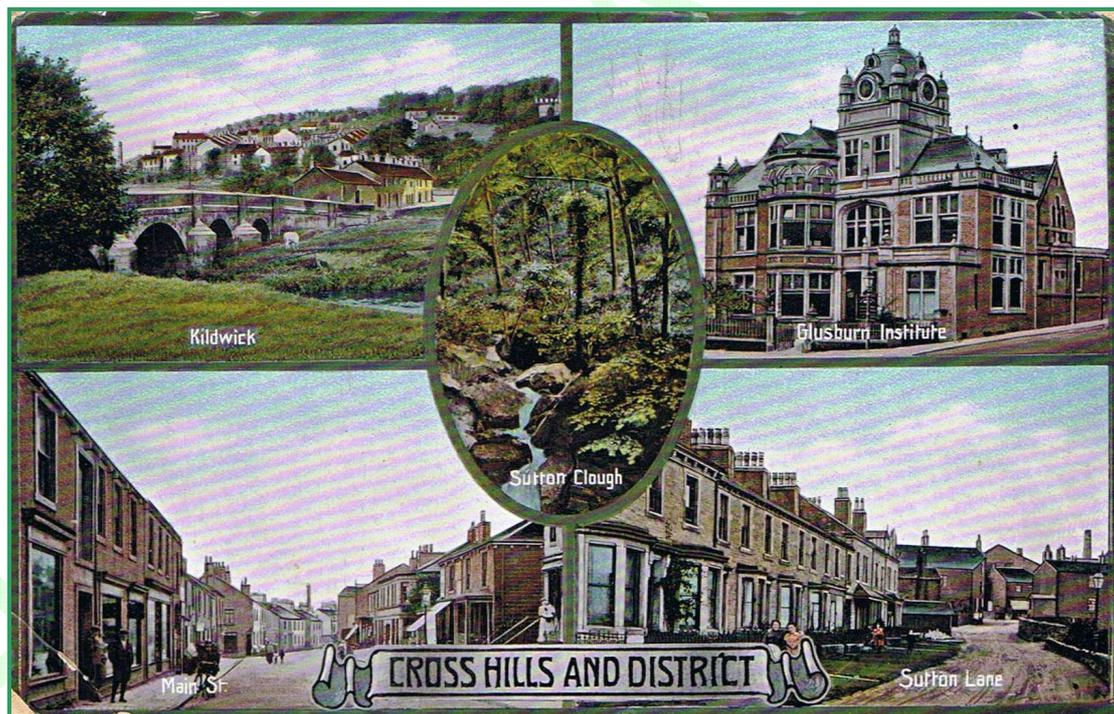
Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
John (Head)	36	Joiner	Sutton-in-Craven	1855
Nancy (wife)	39		Eastburn	1852
Mary Ann	10	Scholar	Sutton-in-Craven	1881
Margaret	9	Scholar	Sutton-in-Craven	1882
Frederick	6	Scholar	Burwood, Sydney NSW Australia	1885 - 1915
George	2		Burwood, Sydney NSW Australia	1889

- **1901 census** shows John, his wife Nancy and 3 of their children living at 14 Albert Rd, Glusburn as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
John (Head)	46	Organ builder	Sutton-in-Craven	1855
Nancy (wife)	49		Eastburn	1852
Mary Ann	20	Draper (at home)	Sutton-in-Craven	1881
Margaret	19	Worsted weaver	Sutton-in-Craven	1882
Frederick	15	Worsted weaver	Burwood, Sydney NSW Australia	1885 - 1915

- **1911 census** shows John and Nancy had been married for 31 years and that of their 5 children born alive, 3 were still living and 2 had since died including George as shown on the 1891 census. It also shows the Simpson family now living at 11, Main Street, Crosshills as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
John (Head)	56	Organ builder	Sutton-in-Craven	1855
Nancy (wife)	59		Eastburn	1852
Mary Ann	30	Draper (at home)	Sutton-in-Craven	1881
Margaret	29	Assistant letter carrier at Sutton Mill Post Office	Sutton-in-Craven	1882



Main Street, Crosshills bottom left

(source: original postcard (dated 2 Jan 1912) owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

- **1911 census** also shows that Frederick now aged 26 had married Edith Riley aged 25 within the previous 12 months. Edith was born at Sutton Mill and her occupation was not listed. Frederick was working as a cotton warp twister. Their address was listed as 36 Main St, Sutton Mill.



Main Street, Sutton Mill  
(source: Rachel Simpson & Richard Whiteoak from the Glyn Whiteoak collection)



Wedding Day photo of Frederick Simpson and his bride Edith Riley (circa 1910)  
(source: photo provided by Nancy Wadsworth)



Wedding Day photo of Frederick Simpson and his bride Edith Riley (circa 1910)  
(source: photo provided by Nancy Wadsworth)



Pre-WW1 photo of Frederick Simpson  
(source: photo provided by Nancy Wadsworth)



Pre-WW1 photo of Frederick Simpson  
(source: photo provided by Nancy Wadsworth)

Prior to WW1, Frederick Simpson had served as a professional soldier with the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment). He joined the army at the age of 18 in 1903 and served for 3 years until 1906, following which he served for 9 years in the army reserve.

SOLDIER'S NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF  
ATTESTATION.

Name Frederick Simpson  
Enlisted at Keighley  
in the County of Yorkshire  
on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 1903  
at the age of 18 years 4 months  
for the West Riding Regt.  
for 3 years in the Army and 9 years in the Reserve.  
Born in the Parish of Sidney. S. W.  
in or near the Town of Sidney. S. W.  
in the County of New South Wales  
Trade or calling Black-Smith  
Last permanent residence Main St - Crosslins  
Height 5 feet 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches  
Complexion Fresh  
Eyes Brown Hair Dark Brown  
Marks Nil  
\* Religion Church of England  
† Signature of Soldier F. Simpson

\* This should be described under one of the following headings, viz. :—" Church of England," " Presbyterian " " Other Protestants," " Roman Catholic," or " Jew."  
† Whenever a Soldier who cannot write makes his mark in acknowledgement of having received pay or allowances, &c., such mark is to be witnessed by the signature of a witness (other than the pay-serjeant).

Pre-WW1 (1903) army attestation paper for Frederick Simpson  
(source: provided by Nancy Wadsworth)

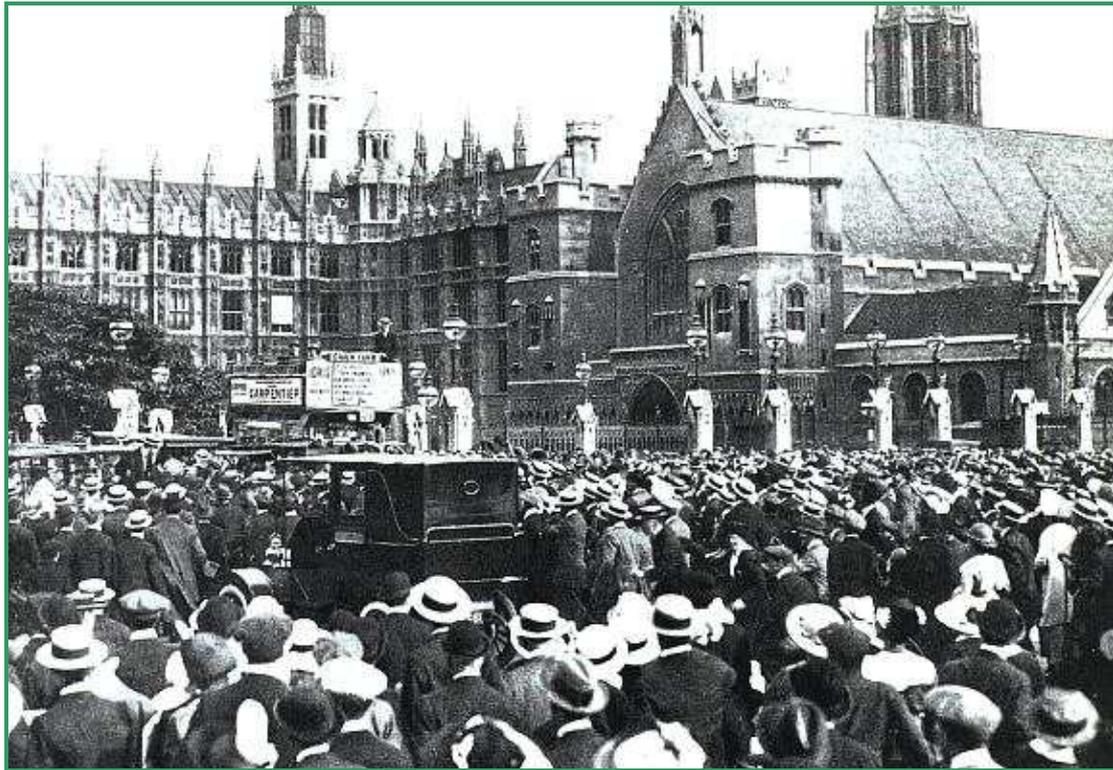
# World War 1



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



The official announcement by Germany of the war (Berlin, August 2nd 1914)



People waiting for news on Parliament Square in London on August 3rd 1914, the day before war was declared



'Jubilant' scenes outside Buckingham Palace on August 4th 1914, the day that war was declared

# August 4<sup>th</sup> 1914

## Britain declares war on Germany

As an army reservist, Frederick Simpson was immediately called up for active service with the 2nd battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) at the outbreak of the Great War. His rank was Private and his regimental number was 7452

10 days after Britain declared war on Germany, Frederick Simpson entered the theatre of war arriving in France on the 14th August 1914 with the 2nd battalion of the West Riding Regiment.

The battalions of the regular army were naturally the first to go to war and they formed the bedrock for the later expansion of Kitchener's 'volunteer' army

Before WW1 however, the British army was very small in comparison with those of its European neighbours. The army's main role since the South African Boer War (1899-1902) was the policing of the British Empire. Britain's traditional armed strength lay in the Royal Navy and there was no pre-conceived intention to commit a large army to a Continental war

However, army planning in the crisis years leading up to 1914 had provided for a small **Expeditionary Force** of 6 Infantry Divisions, equipped as a mobile force that could be deployed anywhere.



British pre-war regular army soldiers 'The Old Contemptibles'

In the last days of peace, the Government committed 4 Infantry Divisions consisting of pre-war regulars and reservists to the **British Expeditionary Force** going to France.

These soldiers were known as the **'Old Contemptibles'**, a phrase used by the German Kaiser to describe this small but efficient fighting force of the British army. These pre-war regulars and reservists were professional soldiers trained to fight, obey orders and not ask questions.

Pte Frederick Simpson was part of the **British Expeditionary Force** with the 2nd battalion of the West Riding Regiment. They landed at Le Havre in France on 14th August 1914; just 10 days after Britain had declared war on Germany and prepared for the Battle of the Mons.



British Expeditionary Force troops lined up for inspection at Le Havre in France, 1914  
(source: [www.gwpda.org/photos](http://www.gwpda.org/photos))

Mobilisation and embarkation for France proceeded faultlessly with all men and equipment moved across the Channel as planned. They moved swiftly into position before encountering the enemy for the first time at Mons on 23rd August 1914, thus signifying the first engagement between British and German forces on the Western Front.

The **British Expeditionary Force** of 1914 is remembered because of its battle honours and the suffering it endured. This culminated in the bloody attritional fighting around Ypres in Oct and Nov 1914.

33

Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
SIMPSON	2 Bn W. Riding Regt.	Private	7452
	— — —	— — —	— — —
Frederick			

Metal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	0/2/10 B.2	169	Pres Dead 18/4/15
BRITISH	do	do	
14 STAR	0/2/5	116	
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein	14/8/14		

K. 1390

MEDAL INDEX CARD for Frederick Simpson (source: *The National Archives*)



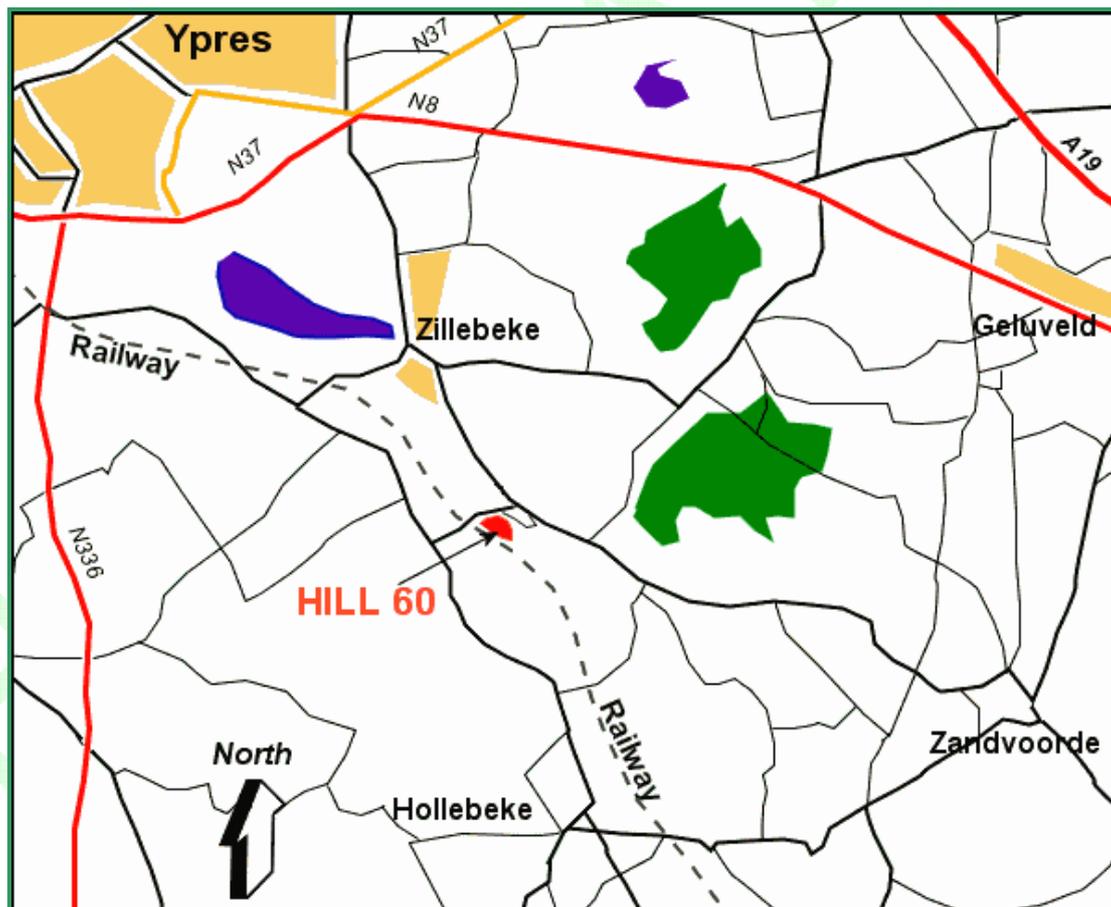
WW1 Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) Cap Badge

# Capture of Hill 60

17th – 21st April 1915

Hill 60, located around three miles south-east of Ypres, was not a natural feature, but was made from the spoil removed during the construction of a railway line nearby. Because it was a small area of elevated land in a flat landscape, it obviously had strategic importance in the battles in the Salient.

The hill had been captured by the Germans on the 10th December 1914 from the French forces and it was therefore decided the Hill had to be re-taken.



Hill 60 location

The British upon arriving began digging tunnels under the hill and thus under the German positions. This was one of the first tasks of the newly created 171st Tunnelling Company under the command of Major John Norton-Griffiths who was also a Member of Parliament and millionaire engineer. He had previously constructed small cable tunnels under the streets of London using men called 'clay kickers' who used steel spades to dig out clay while laying on a wood cross.

Norton-Griffiths immediately recruited all 'clay kickers' from mines in the north of England and began his tunnelling in Ypres in Feb 1915 sinking a shaft down 16 ft, then tunnelling toward Hill 60. The soil under Ypres was similar clay and the clay kickers could dig a tunnel at a rate of 10 ft. per day.



Sounds were heard by the tunnelling "clay kickers" indicating that the German's were busy at the same game, driving a mine underneath the British trenches. Both sides developed listening devices to locate tunnels and it became a race between the German and British sappers; a race that the British won by a few hours, placing several hundred weights of dynamite under the hill.

Zero hour was set for 19:00 hour on the evening of Saturday the 17th April 1915. Seven underground mines were simultaneously detonated by electrical wires running from the British trenches.

The result was a volcano, in which all of the enemy's defences disappeared in a dense cloud of smoke and mist. The resulting explosions ripped the heart out of the hill over a period of some 10 seconds. It flung debris almost 300 feet into the air and scattered it for a further 300 yards in all directions. Concrete pillboxes and occupying soldiers came down for hundreds of yards in all directions. The hill was reduced to a 70 ft deep crater, with surrounded trenches sandwiched shut so fast soldiers were crushed still in the standing positions.



Hill 60 crater

The British followed up with an artillery barrage and bayonet charge, taking Hill 60 and suffering only 7 casualties in capturing the hill.

A German counter-attack on Sunday, April 18th succeeded in recapturing the hill but the British regained possession. Fighting continued with the British fight against counterattacks resulting in 4 Victoria Crosses.

For three more days attack after attack was broken, but the German's, fed from their large reserve, pressed onward throughout the day and throughout

the night, mixing it up with the British in hand-to-hand fighting. It was bayonet work varied by grenade throwing and point-blank magazine fire, but the British somehow won through.

When daybreak came on Wednesday April 21st, only one point on the hill was held by the Germans. From this they were dislodged in the afternoon by a fierce infantry attack.



Artist's impression of the fighting at Hill 60, 1915

Having survived the battlefields of France since August 1914, Pte Frederick Simpson was **Killed in Action** on the 18th April 1915 on the second day of the Capture of Hill 60. He was initially reported as wounded and missing.

**He was 29 years of age**


Army Form B. 104—83.

No. 8184  
(If replying, please quote above No.)

Infantry Record Office,  
York Station.

20th June, 1915.

Madam,  
 Sir,

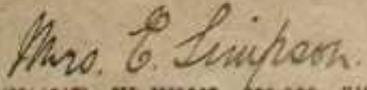
I regret to have to inform you that a report has this day been received from the War Office to the effect that (No.) 7452  
 (Rank) Private (Name) Frederick Simpson  
 (Regiment) 2nd Batt. WEST RIDING REGT. was  
wounded  
 [\*posted as "missing" after] the engagement at (place not stated)  
 [\*taken prisoner during]  
 on the 18th June 1915

Should he subsequently rejoin, or any other information be received concerning him, such information will be at once communicated to you.

I am,  
 Madam,  
 Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

  
 Officer in charge of Records,  
No 3 Section

  
 Mrs. E. Simpson.  
 (K11219) Wt W2537—200,000—8/14. W. & Co., Ltd.  
 Forms B. 104-83  
 2

War Office letter informing Edith Simpson that her husband Frederick was listed as wounded and missing on the 18th April 1915 (mistakenly written 18th June 1915) (source: provided by Nancy Wadsworth)

WAR OFFICE,

LONDON, S.W.,

28<sup>th</sup> June 1916.

Any further communication on this  
The Secretary,  
WAR OFFICE,  
Park Buildings,  
St. James's Park,  
LONDON, S.W.,  
and the following number quoted.

No. E 199039/ 1 (Accounts 4)

MADAM,

\* SCIENCE MUSEUM,  
Exhibition Road,  
S. Kensington,  
London, S.W.

I am directed to inform you that the Command Paymaster,  
Eastern Command, ~~at York Street Westminster~~ London, S.W.,

has been authorised to issue to you the sum of three pounds  
fifteen shillings and five pence

being your share of the amount due on the settlement of the accounts  
of the late No. 4452 Private Frederick Simpson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, West Riding Regiment

Should no communication on this subject be received  
from the Paymaster within the next few days, application for  
payment should be made to him by letter.

The remainder of the estate amounting to  
seven pounds eleven shillings

is the property of the late soldier's child, and in order that it may  
be issued to you, the enclosed undertaking should be signed by you  
and returned to this Department with the subjoined certificate,  
signed by a clergyman, magistrate, or other responsible person  
showing that the child ~~is~~ being properly maintained by you.

I am,

MADAM,

Your obedient Servant,

Assistant Financial Secretary.

Mr. E. Simpson  
11 Gessamine Terrace  
Junction Crosshills  
Keighley.

War Office letter authorising the issue of a sum of money to Frederick's widow Edith Simpson, now living at Junction, Crosshills, plus a sum of money to their child.  
(source: provided by Nancy Wadsworth)



Article Date: 16 July 1915

## MISSING

Private Fred Simpson, Crosshills, of the 2nd Duke of Wellington's, who was officially reported among the wounded during the engagement at Hill 60, is now officially reported as wounded and missing. No knowledge of his whereabouts can be ascertained by the family.

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



## Casualty Details

**Name:** SIMPSON, FREDERICK

**Initials:** F

**Nationality:** United Kingdom

**Rank:** Private

**Regiment/Service:** Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment)

**Unit Text:** 2nd Bn.

**Date of Death:** 18/04/1915

**Service No:** 7452

**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** Panel 20.

**Memorial:** YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

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

# YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL



YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

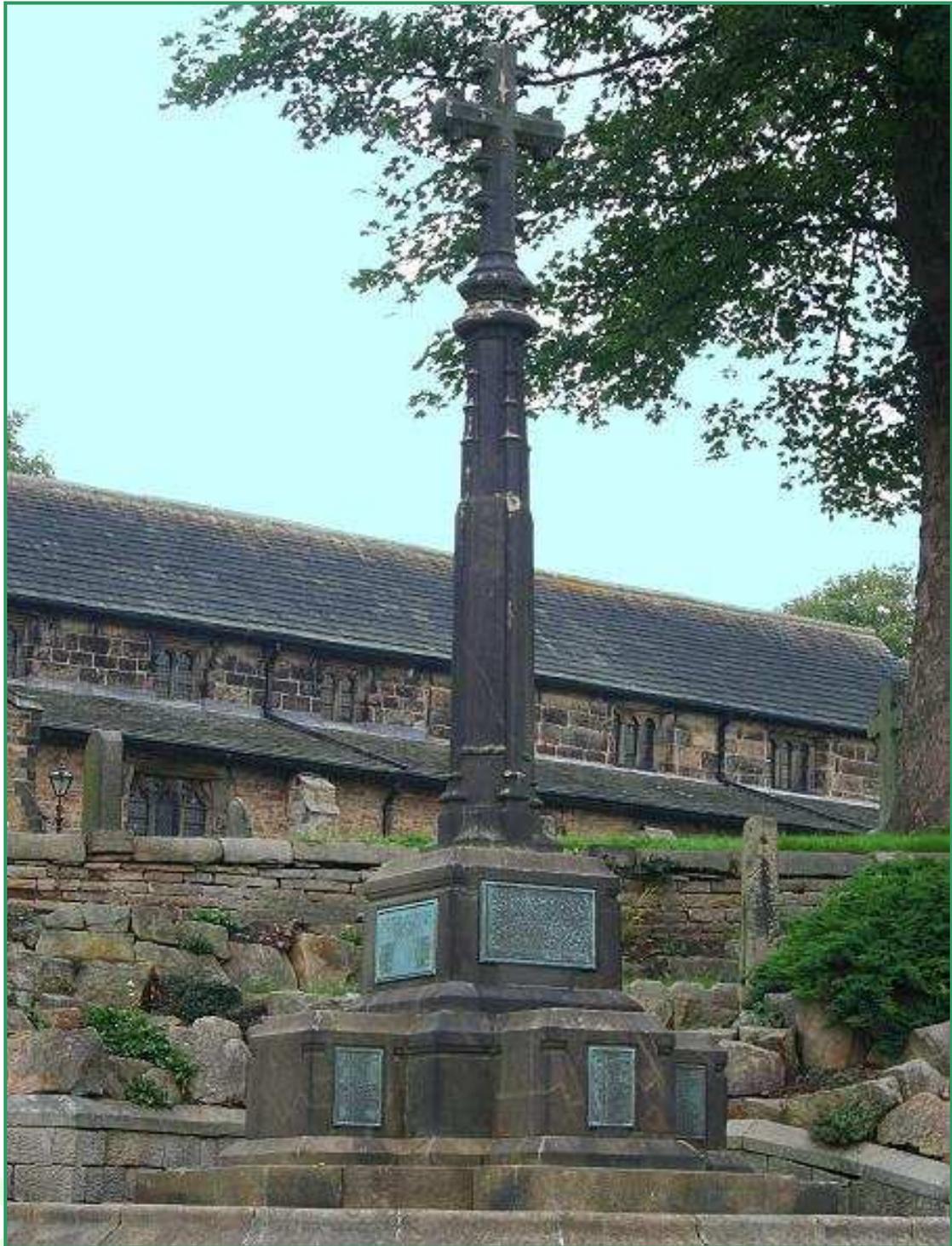
(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* [www.cwgc.org/](http://www.cwgc.org/))

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient.

The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge.

The Ypres (Menin Gate) memorial bears the names of 54,322 officers and men, including Pte Frederick Simpson whose graves are not known.

Pte Frederick Simpson is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial and on the Kildwick village war memorial.



Kildwick war memorial  
(source: [www.cpgw.org.uk](http://www.cpgw.org.uk))



Kildwick war memorial  
(source: [www.cpgw.org.uk](http://www.cpgw.org.uk))



Sutton-in-Craven War Memorial

(source: Rachel Simpson & Richard Whiteoak from the Glyn Whiteoak collection)



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

Pte Frederick Simpson was posthumously awarded the  
 1914 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal





Original WW1 medals posthumously awarded to Pte Frederick Simpson (source: medals owned & photos provided by Nancy Wadsworth)

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 named to Frederick Simpson  
Also referred to as a Death Plaque or Dead Man's Penny  
(source: owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

## FOR THE FALLEN

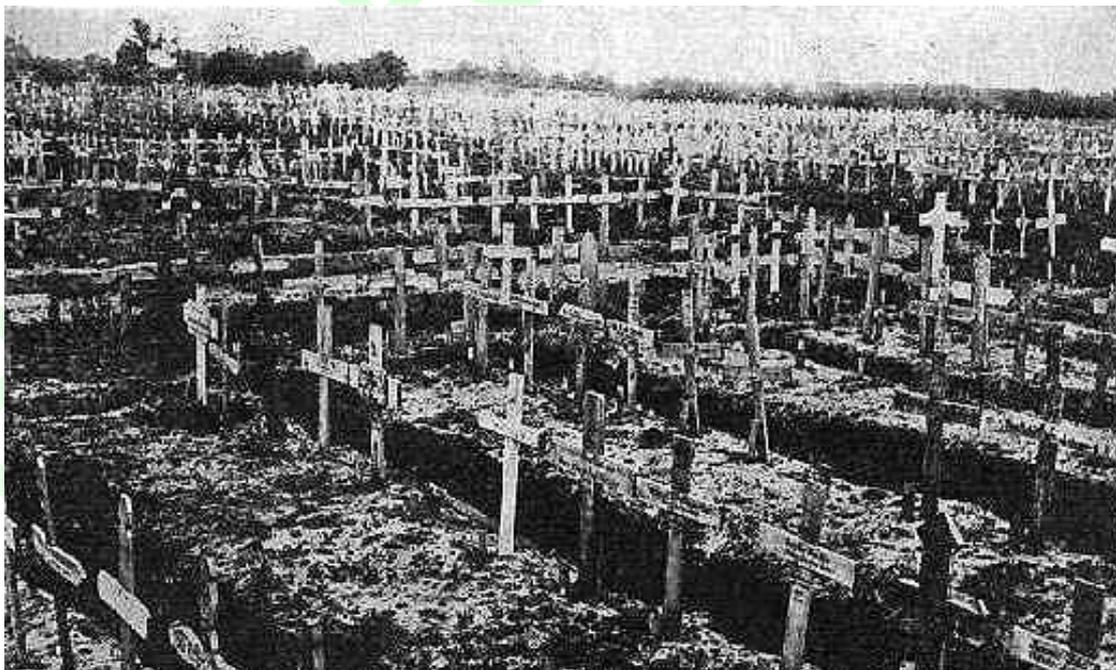
*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE  
LEFT GROW OLD*

*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)