

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



HARLAN SMITH

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

DIED FROM GAS POISONING

15TH OCTOBER 1917

BORN IN 1884 AT SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN, THE SON OF  
CAREY AND MARGARET SMITH

# Smith Family History

- **1891 census** shows Carey, his wife Margaret and their son Harlan living at North Street, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Carey (Head)	41	Warp dresser, worsted	Sutton-in-Craven	1850 - 1912
Margaret (wife)	39		Sutton-in-Craven	1852
Harlan	7	Scholar	Sutton-in-Craven	1884 - 1917

- **1901 census** shows Carey, his wife Margaret and their son Harlan still living at 6, North Street, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Carey (Head)	51	Worsted sizer	Sutton-in-Craven	1850 - 1912
Margaret (wife)	49		Sutton-in-Craven	1852
Harlan	17	Pupil teacher	Sutton-in-Craven	1884 - 1917

- **1911 census** shows Carey and Margaret had been married for 34 years and that of their 2 children born alive, 1 had since died. It also shows the Smith family still living at 6, North Street, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Carey (Head)	61	Worsted sizer	Sutton-in-Craven	1850 - 1912
Margaret (wife)	59		Sutton-in-Craven	1852
Harlan	27	Elementary school teacher	Sutton-in-Craven	1884 - 1917



North St, Sutton-in-Craven  
(source: photo provided by David Smith)

# World War 1

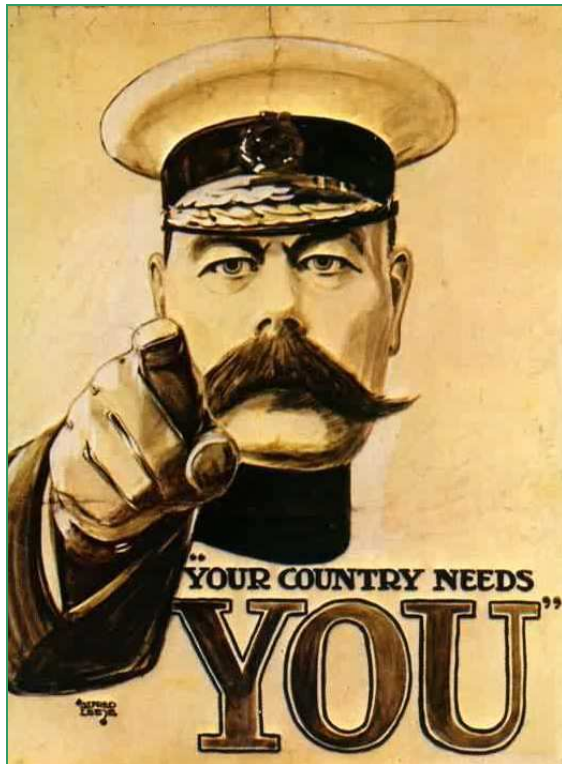


It had been **99 years** since Britain was last involved in a major European conflict following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815

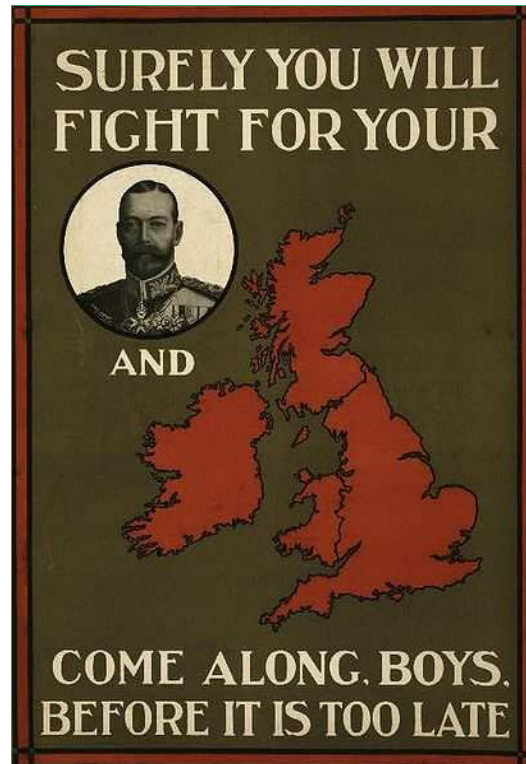
## **August 4<sup>th</sup> 1914** **Britain declares war on Germany**

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)



Prior to enlistment, Harlan Smith had attended the Pupil Teachers' Training classes at Keighley. After working hard in his studies, he gained the King's Scholarship and spent three years at Leeds University.

After completing his studies there, he became a teacher at the Princess Field School at Beeston Hill, Leeds and then at the White Hall Road School, Leeds. He was for some time a teacher at Cleckheaton evening school and later a teacher at the Glusburn Institute evening classes as well as teaching at the Sutton Baptist Sunday school.

During the Great War, Harlan Smith responded to the call and enlisted into the **Royal Army Medical Corps** on the 27th November 1915. His regimental number was 105776 and he commenced with the rank of Private.

W. P. Collich & Sons Ltd., Printers, Old Bailey. [609] W5017/2154 609m 6/15a 127 55 Form 11/12

Army Form B. 120.

### REGIMENTAL CONDUCT SHEET.

Number of sheets (in words) Three  
 Signature of C.O. or Adjutant Intentionally  
 Regiment of R.A.M.C. R.A.M.C. Regiment.

Regimental Number and Name 105776 Smith, Harlan. Attested November 27<sup>th</sup> 1915. Joined December 20 1915.

Place	Date of Offence	Rank	Offence	Names of Witnesses	PUNISHMENT awarded	Date of award, or of order expiring with rate	By whom	Date of Expiration	REMARKS

(source: WW1 army service papers The National Archives)

### DESCRIPTIVE REPORT ON ENLISTMENT.

(To correspond with Entries on the Medical History Sheet.)  
Applicable to all ranks.

Name Harlan Smith

Apparent age 32 years 5 months. Height 5 feet 1 1/2 inches.

Chest Measurement { Girth when fully expanded 38 inches.  
 Range of expansion 3 inches.

Distinctive marks  

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#### INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY RECRUIT.

Name and Address of next-of-kin Margaret Smith  
6 North St Sutton in Cleveland Relationship Mother

(source: WW1 army service papers The National Archives)

The **Royal Army Medical Corps** (RAMC) was formed on the 23rd June 1898. At the outbreak of the Great War, just 16 years after its formation, there were 9,000 Warrant Officers and Men of the RAMC. This grew to

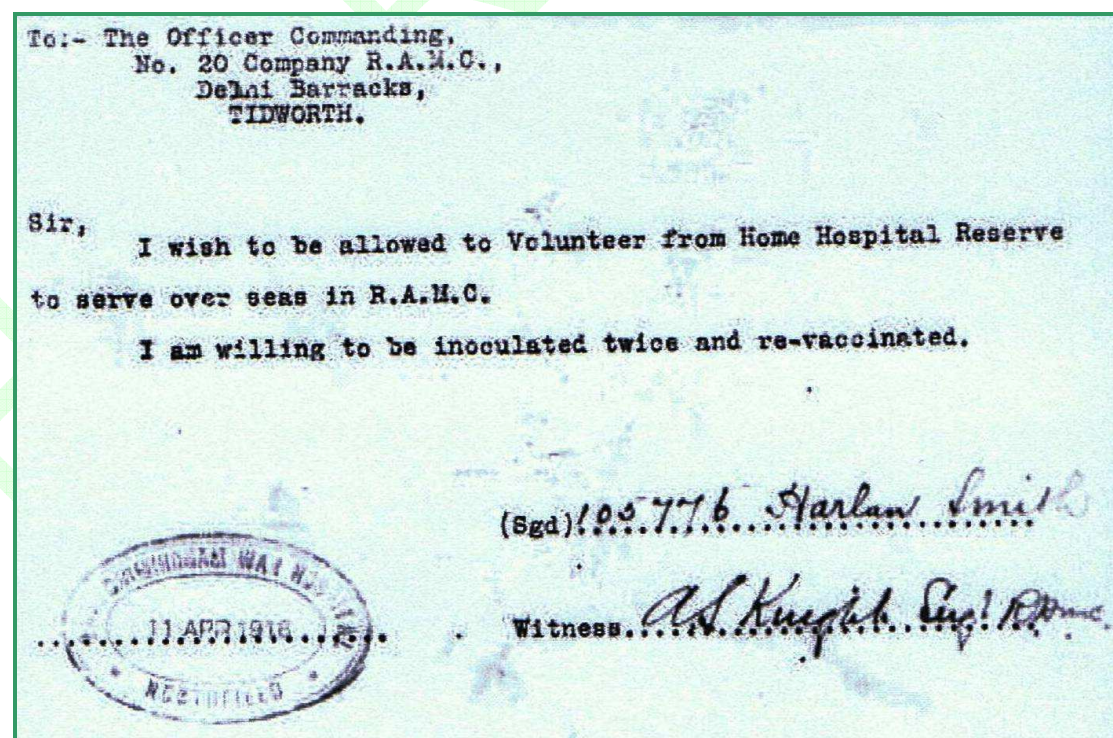
113,000 by 1918. The British Army had never before fielded a field ambulance in conflict.

The RAMC was not a fighting force but its members saw the full horror of the war. It operated the army's medical units and provided medical detachments for the units of infantry, artillery and other arms including Field Hospitals, Casualty Clearing units and Hospitals. The Corps was assisted in its work by voluntary help from the British Red Cross, St John's Ambulance, the Friends Ambulance Unit, the Voluntary Aid Detachments and hundreds of private and charitable ventures.



WW1 Royal Army Medical Corps shoulder title

Pte Harlan Smith initially served with the Home Hospital Reserve unit of the Royal Army Medical Corps. However, in April 1916 he wrote a letter to his Commanding Officer asking to be allowed to serve overseas. It would be another 11 months before this request was granted.



(source: WW1 army service papers The National Archives)



Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
SMITH  Harlan	RAMC	Pte	105776
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	RAMC/1013120	9365	
BRITISH			
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in:			
Date of entry therein:			

R. 1580

**MEDAL INDEX CARD** for Harlan Smith (source: *The National Archives*)

Having served with the RAMC on home soil in Britain since enlisting into the army on the 27th November 1915, Pte Harlan Smith finally embarked Southampton on the 3rd March 1917, disembarking the following day at Rouen in France.

3 weeks after his arrival in France, Pte Smith was posted to the 9th Field Ambulance on the Western Front. Here he would witness the full horror of the Great War over the coming 7 months until his final day on the 15th October 1917.

		Yrs days
Home	27.11.1915 - 3.3.1917	1.96
France	3.3.1917 - 15.10.1917	224
	<u>Total</u>	<u>1.320</u>

(source: *WW1 army service papers* *The National Archives*)



## ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS, WESTERN FRONT



Stretcher bearer party coming through the mud, WW1  
(source: [www.gwpda.org/photos](http://www.gwpda.org/photos))



On the 27th of July 1917, Pte Smith was **Wounded in Action**, however he remained at duty.

On the 14th October 1917, Pte Smith was **Wounded in Action** again, this time a casualty of poisoned gas. He was taken to the No 3 Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne, seriously ill from gas poisoning and subsequent pneumonia. The following day at 10.15am on the 15th October 1917, Pte Harlan Smith **Died from Gas Poisoning**

He was 34 years of age

4. OC. Cycl.	Embarked.....	Sutton...3.3.17.	With "Munich" reinforcements.
3. Base	Disembarked.....	Rouen....4.3.17.	
17. Depot.			
25.3.17.	Posted to No. 9 Field Amb.	In the rd. 25.3.17.	N.R.
	Wounded in action	27.7.17	B.L. off
	Remained at duty		
15.10.17.	Died 10.15 a.m. 15.10.17.	15.10.17	B.L. off
	in No 3 Canadian General Hospital, Boulogne, from wounds received in action (Gas) & Broncho Pneumonia		

(source: WW1 army service papers The National Archives)



Article Date: 26 October 1917

## SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN - PRIVATE HARLAN SMITH FATALLY 'GASSED'

Another well-known Sutton young man, Pte. Harlan Smith, of the Royal Army Medical Corps, has made the supreme sacrifice. His mother, Mrs. Carey Smith of North Street, received a telegram from the War Office on the 17th of October informing her that her son was in hospital in France seriously ill from gas poisoning and pneumonia. Later in the day an official letter was received stating that Pte. Smith had succumbed, having been gassed on Sunday the 14th October. Pte.



Smith, in his letter home, received on the day he was gassed, stated that they had been in camp but they were moving up. He was an only child, and lived with his widowed mother. Before joining up two years ago, he was a teacher in the City of Leeds. He was also on the teaching staff at the Glusburn Technical Institute, was closely associated with the Baptist Church at Sutton, and had been a Sunday School teacher and member of the church for some years. Of a quiet and unassuming disposition, Pte. Smith was loved by everyone with whom he came in contact, and was also a very brilliant teacher. He was 34 years of age. He went out to France in March last.

At the Sunday morning service at the Sutton Baptist Chapel the pastor, Rev. F. W. Pollard, made special reference to the late Private Harlan Smith. The choir gave the anthem 'No shadows yonder', Mr. William Laycock taking the solo.

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



## Casualty Details

**Name:** SMITH, HARLAN

**Initials:** H

**Nationality:** United Kingdom

**Rank:** Private

**Regiment/Service:** Royal Army Medical Corps

**Unit Text:** 9th Field Amb

**Age:** 34

**Date of Death:** 15/10/1917

**Service No:** 105776

**Additional information:** Only son of Carey and Margaret Smith, of Sutton-in-Craven, Yorks.

**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** VIII. I. 59.

**Cemetery:** BOULOGNE EASTERN CEMETERY

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



# BOULOGNE EASTERN CEMETERY



Boulogne Eastern cemetery

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

Boulogne, was one of the three base ports most extensively used by the Commonwealth armies on the Western Front throughout the First World War. It was closed and cleared on the 27 August 1914 when the Allies were forced to fall back ahead of the German advance, but was opened again in October 1914 until the end of the war. Boulogne was one of the chief hospital areas.

Boulogne Eastern Cemetery contains 5,577 Commonwealth burials of the First World War including that of Pte Harlan Smith. The Commonwealth plots were designed by Charles Holden.

Pte Harlan Smith is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial



Boulogne Eastern cemetery

source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* [www.cpgw.org.uk](http://www.cpgw.org.uk)  
(Photograph courtesy of Colin Chadwick of Harrogate)



WAR MEMORIAL, SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN PARK



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



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



Pte Harlan Smith 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)



## Lest we Forget

### CRAVEN'S ROLL OF HONOUR



PRIVATE HASLAM SMITH, R.A.M.C., son of Mrs. C. Smith, North Street, Sutton, died from gas poisoning in France 17th October. 1917. Aged 34 years.

source: *Craven's Part in the Great War*

(original 1919 copy owned by Andrew Monkhouse)



# FOR THE FALLEN

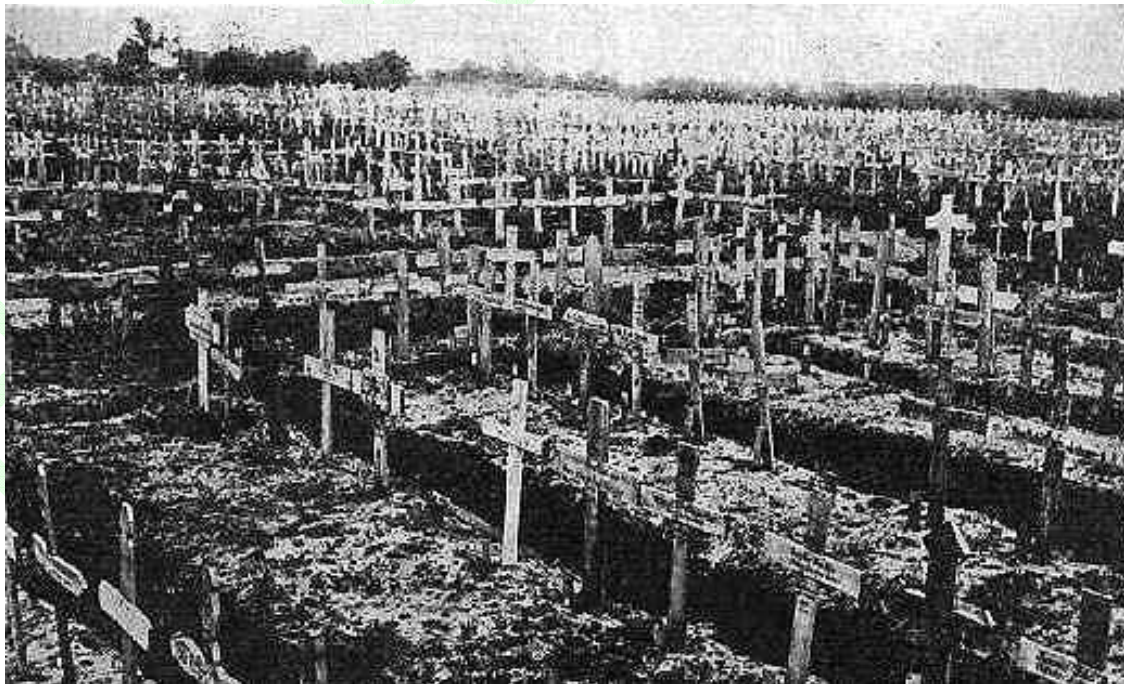
*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE  
LEFT GROW OLD*

*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)