

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



JOHN DAVY

NORTHUMBERLAND FUSILIERS

KILLED IN ACTION 27<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1918

BORN IN 1893 AT EASTBURN, THE SON OF WILSON AND  
PHYLLIS DAVY (NEE OGDEN)

# Davy Family History

- **1901 census** shows Wilson, his wife Phyllis (nee Ogden) and their 4 children living at 2, Daisy Place, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Wilson (Head)	28	Blacksmith	Sutton-in-Craven	1873 - 1944
Phyllis (wife) nee Ogden	27		Eastby, near Embsay	1874 - 1951
John	8		Eastburn	1893 - 1918
Alec	6		Sutton-in-Craven	1895 - 1958
Leonard	4		Sutton-in-Craven	1896 - 1986
Herman	1		Sutton-in-Craven	1899 - 1990



Daisy Place  
(photo taken by Barbara and Allen Chapman)

- **1911 census** shows Wilson and Phyllis had been married for 18 years and that of their 8 children born alive, 1 had since died. It also shows the Davy family still living at 2, Daisy Place, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Wilson (Head)	38	Blacksmith	Sutton-in-Craven	1873 - 1944
Phyllis (wife)	37		Eastby, near Embsay	1874 - 1951
John	18	Wool sorter	Eastburn	1893 - 1918
Alec	16	Mill operative spinning	Sutton-in-Craven	1895 - 1958
Leonard	14	Mill operative spinning	Sutton-in-Craven	1896 - 1986
Herman	11	School	Sutton-in-Craven	1899 - 1990
Arnold Barrett	9	School	Sutton-in-Craven	1902 - 1982
Ellen	5	School	Sutton-in-Craven	1906
Evelyn	3		Sutton-in-Craven	1908 - 1981

# 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, April 1915



British volunteers queuing to enlist, 1914 (Kitchener's New Army)

Prior to his voluntary enlistment under the Derby Scheme, John Davy was employed as a wool sorter at Greenroyd Mills, Sutton-in-Craven.

Between October 1915 and March 1916, John responded to the call and volunteered to enlist into the 1/4th (territorial force) battalion Northumberland Fusiliers. His regimental number was 4/6390 and he commenced with the rank of Private.

At a later date he transferred to the 1/5th (territorial force) battalion Northumberland Fusiliers and was issued with a second regimental number 5/7239

He was later issued with a third regimental number 242419

During the Great War, the Northumberland Fusiliers raised a total of 51 battalions based on the original 2 regular, 1 reserve and 10 territorial force battalions. This made it the second largest regiment after the London Regiment.



WW1 postcard: Northumberland Fusiliers



Pte John Davy entered the Theatre of War sometime after the 1st January 1916

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regtl. No.
DAVY.	North. d. Lm.	Pt.	4/6390
	- 11 -		5/4239.
	- 1. -		242419.
John			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	8/1/105	B/34	4689.
BRITISH	- 11 -	10	
STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein			

K 1380.

MEDAL INDEX CARD for John Davy (source: *The National Archives*)

Three of John's brothers also served in the forces during the Great War; Alec Davy, Herman Davy and Leonard Davy.

In 1917, Pte John Davy was twice **Wounded in Action** resulting in him being hospitalised in England, before returning to the front line in France.

Information has been received by Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Davy, of Sutton, that their eldest son, Private John Davy, has been wounded, and is in hospital in England. They have had no official news as yet, and are not aware of the extent of his wounds. He has two younger brothers in the forces. Private Leonard Davy has recently been in the War Hospital at Glasgow suffering from appendicitis and septic poisoning, and his other brother is out in France.

Keighley News report Nov 1917 (source: photocopied by Josie Walsh)



Article Date: 02 November 1917

## SUTTON

**WOUNDED SOLDIER** - Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Davy, of Sutton, have received a field card stating that their eldest son, Private John Davy, has been received into hospital suffering from wounds. He joined up early in the war and was wounded the first time on May 24th in the left arm and leg. He only returned to France seven weeks ago. Mr. and Mrs. Davy have three sons serving, all having volunteered, viz., Pte. Alec. Davy (now in France) and Pte. Leonard Davy (now in Glasgow). He returned from the front borne months ago suffering from septic poisoning, and he has since undergone five operations.

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

## The Western Front, 1918

The Western Front was marked by a system of trenches and fortifications separated by an area known as No Man's land. These fortifications stretched 475 miles and precipitated a style of fighting known as trench warfare.

However, it was the Russian Revolution in 1917 that finally changed the nature of the deadlock and war of attrition in the west. Once the fighting had halted in the east, it allowed the Germans to transfer many Divisions to the Western Front. They knew that time was running out, for the United States of America had entered the war on the Allied side and it was only a matter of time before vast untapped reserves of manpower swung the balance in the favour of the Allies.

On the 11th November 1917, the German High Command decided to make a decisive attack in the west in the following spring. Their target was the



British Army. They believed that the British were exhausted by the four major efforts in 1917 (Arras, Messines, Passchendaele and Cambrai).

By mid-February 1918, the Germans had moved many Divisions from the now collapsed eastern front to the west in preparation for the major spring offensive



British trench, WW1. The soldier on the right is on guard, the others are resting

By the spring of 1918, the Allies knew that there would be a major German attack; they just did not know when it would come. The British reinforced their positions near the coast while the French strengthened their positions to the south of the British.

The German army struck a number of large-scale, last-ditch offensives from March 1918, until the manpower advantage enjoyed by Germany would be gone as the American forces slowly built up to strength and their exhausted efforts forced the Germans to call for an Armistice in November 1918.

One of these offensives was the **Third Battle of Aisne** fought between the **27th May and 6th June 1918**.

# The Third Battle of Aisne

**27th May - 6th June 1918**

The Third Battle of the Aisne was the third major offensive launched by the Germans on the Western Front in the summer of 1918. Despite being described as a diversion, the Germans assembled a massive army for the attack on the Aisne.

Forty one divisions supported by over 4,000 guns were lined up against sixteen Allied divisions, three of which were British divisions moved south for a rest after heavy fighting further north.

The battle began with one of the most intense artillery bombardments of the war with over 4,000 guns across a 40 km front. The Germans fired some two million shells in four hours on the morning of the 27th May. The bombardment was accompanied by GAS attacks, designed to disable defensive guns crews, after which they launched their attack with seventeen divisions

Owing to the concentration of primarily British troops in front-line trenches, casualties from the bombardment were severe, some units being virtually wiped out.



German attack, WW1

The Allied lines were shattered. The bridges across the Aisne were captured intact and the Germans broke through a further eight Allied divisions, four British and four French, reaching the Aisne in under 6 hours before continuing their advance towards the Marne.

The Germans were able to advance thirteen miles on the first day of the battle, the single biggest advance since the beginning of trench warfare in 1914. By the 30th May the Allies had lost over 100,000 men in the battle with a further 50,000 Allied soldiers captured together with 800 heavy guns.

Pte John Davy was **Killed in Action** on the 27th May 1918, the **First day of the Third Battle of Aisne**. His Medal Index Card states 'Presumed Dead' indicating his remains were never found.

He was 25 years of age



## Casualty Details

**Name:** DAVY, JOHN

**Initials:** J

**Nationality:** United Kingdom

**Rank:** Private

**Regiment/Service:** Northumberland Fusiliers

**Unit Text:** 1st/4th Bn.

**Date of Death:** 27/05/1918

**Service No:** 242419

**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead

**Memorial:** SOISSONS MEMORIAL

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





Article Date: 28 June 1918

## CRAVEN AND THE WAR

### Sutton Soldier Missing

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Davy, of Sutton, have received official information that their eldest son, Pte. John Davy, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, has been missing since May 27th. Pte. John Davy is the eldest of the four sons who are serving in the colours. He has been wounded twice. Prior to joining up under the Derby Scheme he was employed as a woolsorter at the Greenroyd Mills, Sutton. His brother. Pte. Alec Davy, is now in England in hospital. His other brothers serving are Leonard and Herman.

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

## SOISSONS MEMORIAL

The Soissons Memorial commemorates 3,882 officers and men of the United Kingdom forces, including Pte John Davy, who died during the Battles of the Aisne and the Marne in 1918 and who have no known grave.

The memorial was designed by G.H. Holt and V.O. Rees, with sculpture by Eric Kennington. It was unveiled by Sir Alexander Hamilton-Gordon on the 22nd July 1928.

Pte John Davy is also remembered on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial



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



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



WAR MEMORIAL, SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN PARK



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



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



Pte John Davy was posthumously awarded the  
British War Medal & Victory Medal



Original pair of WW1 medals (source: Andrew Monkhouse war medal collection)



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: **Andrew Monkhouse war medal collection**)

## Lest we Forget



Pte John Davy  
(source: image provided by the Davy Family)



# 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 2013)