

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



REGINALD SMITH

MACHINE GUN CORPS

DIED OF PNEUMONIA 27TH OCTOBER 1918

BORN IN 1899 AT LEEDS, THE SON OF ALFRED AND  
BERTHA SMITH

# Smith Family History

- **1901 census** shows Alfred, his wife Bertha, their 2 children and a boarder living at 3, Moseley Place, Leeds as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Alfred (Head)	35	Currier	Leeds, Yorkshire	1866
Bertha (wife)	28		Leeds, Yorkshire	1873
Evelyn	4		Leeds, Yorkshire	1897
Reginald	2		Leeds, Yorkshire	1899 - 1918
Edward Cass (boarder)	17	Bookmakers' clerk	Leeds, Yorkshire	1884

- **1911 census** shows that Alfred and Bertha had been married for 15 years and that of their 3 children born alive, all 3 were still living. It also shows the Smith family now living at 4, Walton St, Holme Bridge, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Alfred (Head)	46	Bricklayer's labourer	Leeds, Yorkshire	1866
Bertha (wife)	38		Leeds, Yorkshire	1873
Evelyn	14	Worsted spinner	Leeds, Yorkshire	1897
Reginald	12	School part time/Doffer	Leeds, Yorkshire	1899 - 1918
Maud	9	School	Leeds, Yorkshire	1902



(source: original postcard owned by Andrew Monkhouse)

## World War 1



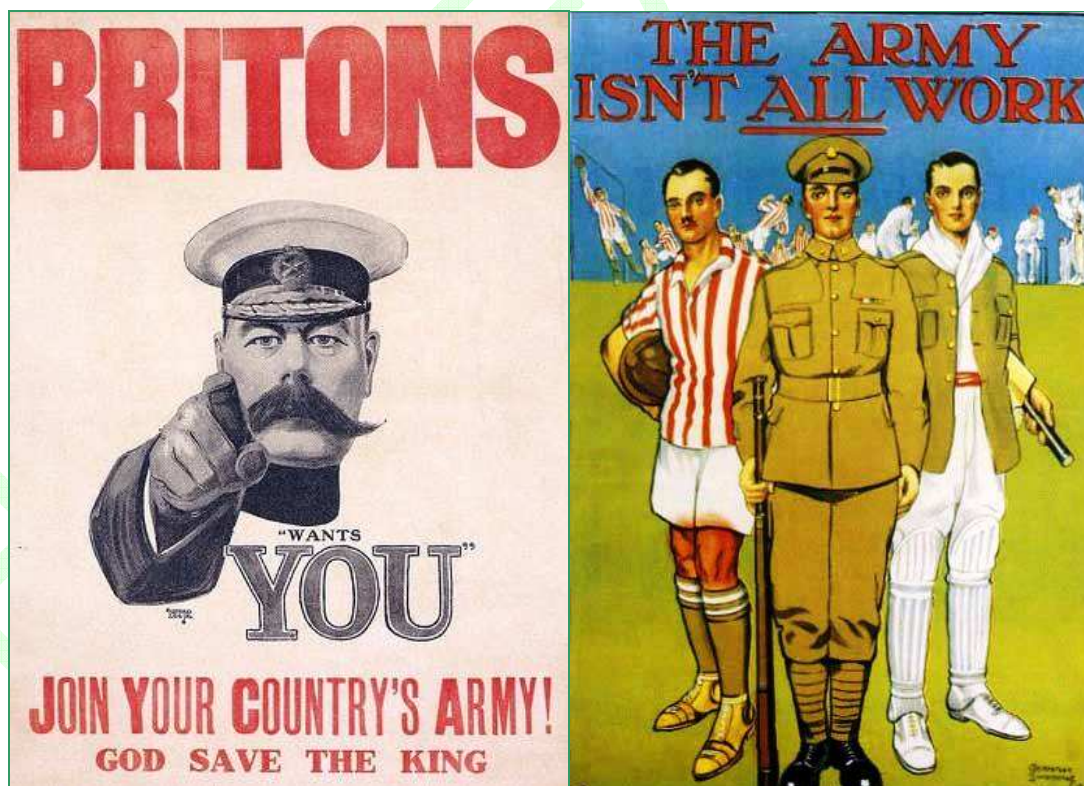
It had been **99 years** since Britain was last involved in a major European conflict following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815

## 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 physical training, Manningham Park, 1914 (Kitchener's new army)  
(source: *The Bradford Pals* Ralph N. Hudson 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, 1993)

Prior to enlistment, Reginald Smith was employed at Messrs. T. and M. Bairstow, Sutton Mills as a twister.

During the Great War, Reginald Smith responded to the call and enlisted into the 18th battalion Machine Gun Corps in February 1917. His regimental number was 129946 and he commenced with the rank of Private.



WW1 Machine Gun Corps cap badge & shoulder title







WW1 British Vickers machine gun crew wearing anti-gas helmets

There were many instances where a single well-placed and protected machine gun cut great swathes in attacking infantry. Nowhere was this demonstrated with more devastating effect than against the British army's attack on the Somme on the 1st July 1916 and against the German attack at Arras on 28 March 1918. It followed that multiple machine guns, with interlocking fields of fire, were an incredibly destructive defensive weapon.



WW1 British Vickers machine gun aiming at aircraft

Having served on the battlefields of France with the Machine Gun Corps for over 18 months, Pte Reginald Smith suffered a severe attack of influenza in October 1918 and was hospitalised in the Australian Red Cross hospital at Rouen.

On the 27th October 1918, Pte Reginald Smith **Died from Pneumonia**

**He was 20 years of age**



**Article Date: 08 November 1918**

### **Sutton Soldier Victim to Influenza**

Mr. and Mrs. Alf. Smith, of Holme Bridge, Sutton, have received information that their only son, Gunner Reg. Smith. had died in the Australian Red Cross Hospital, Rouen, from pneumonia, following a severe attack of influenza, on Oct. 27th. Gunner Smith, who was 20 years of age, joined the army in February, 1917, and went out to France on Easter Saturday. His last letter (written by a friend and signed 'Reg.') states that he was improving and they need not worry about him. This was followed by a letter from the nurse, stating that he had passed away and that there had been little hope of recovery from the first; he had received every comfort they at the hospital could give; he is buried in the St. Lever [Sever] Military Cemetery, Rouen. Prior to joining the forces he was employed at Messrs. Tom Bairstow's as a twister. Deceased's father, Mr. Alf. Smith, joined the Labour Battalion early in the war. He was in the retirement from Gallipoli, and was also in the great push back in March last. He went through some very thrilling and trying experiences. He was invalided home to Warrington (Lord Derby's Hospital). He has since been discharged and is now employed at Spring Field, Sutton.

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





## Casualty Details

**Name:** SMITH, REGINALD

**Initials:** R

**Nationality:** United Kingdom

**Rank:** Private

**Regiment/Service:** Machine Gun Corps (Infantry)

**Unit Text:** 18th Bn.

**Age:** 20

**Date of Death:** 27/10/1918

**Service No:** 129946

**Additional information:** Son of Alfred and Bertha Smith, of 4, Walton St., Sutton-in-Craven, Keighley.

**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** S. III. E. 8.

**Cemetery:** ST. SEVER CEMETERY EXTENSION, ROUEN

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

## ST. SEVER CEMETERY EXTENSION, ROUEN

During the First World War, Commonwealth camps and hospitals were stationed on the southern outskirts of Rouen. Almost all of the hospitals at Rouen remained there for practically the whole of the war. They included eight general, five stationary, one British Red Cross, one labour hospital and No. 2 Convalescent Depot.

A number of the dead from these hospitals were buried in other cemeteries, but the great majority were taken to the city cemetery of St. Sever. The cemetery extension contains 8,346 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, ten of them unidentified.



St. Sever Cemetery Extension in Rouen, France  
(source: *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* [www.cwgc.org/](http://www.cwgc.org/))



St. Sever Cemetery Extension in Rouen, France



WAR MEMORIAL, SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN PARK



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



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



Pte Reginald 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 REGINALD SMITH, son of Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Smith, Holmfield, Sutton, died of pneumonia in France 27th October, 1918.

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

(original 1919 copy owned by Andrew Monkhouse)



# FOR THE FALLEN

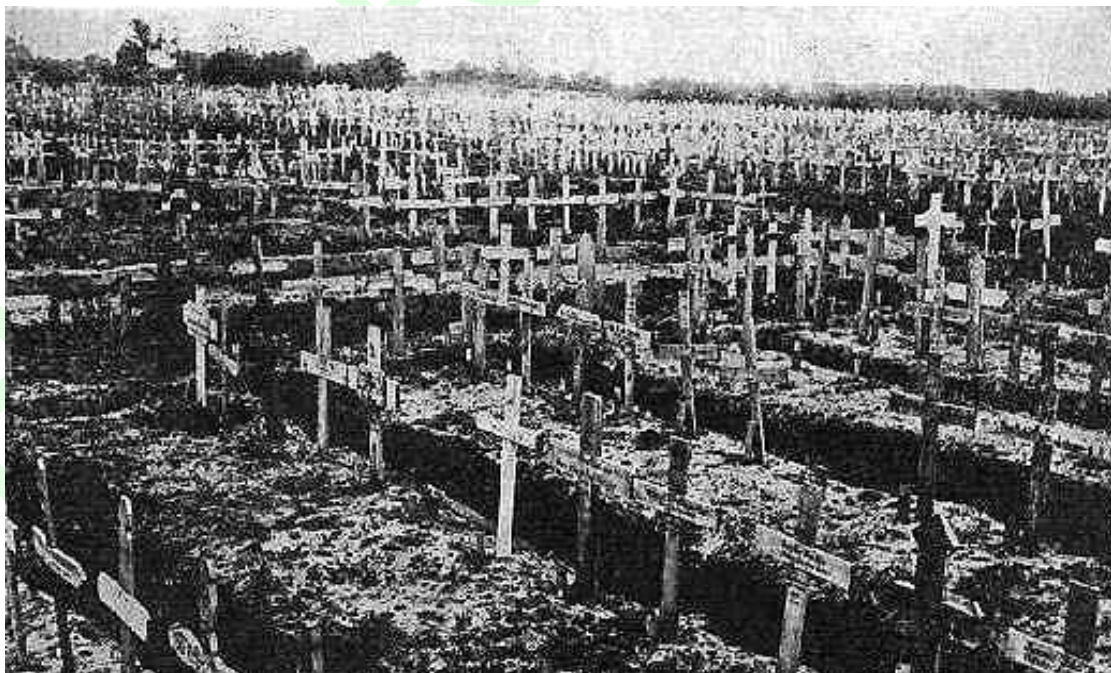
*THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD, AS WE THAT ARE  
LEFT GROW OLD*

*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)