

THE FALLEN OF SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN



HARRI WILLIS EDWARDS

EAST LANCASHIRE REGIMENT

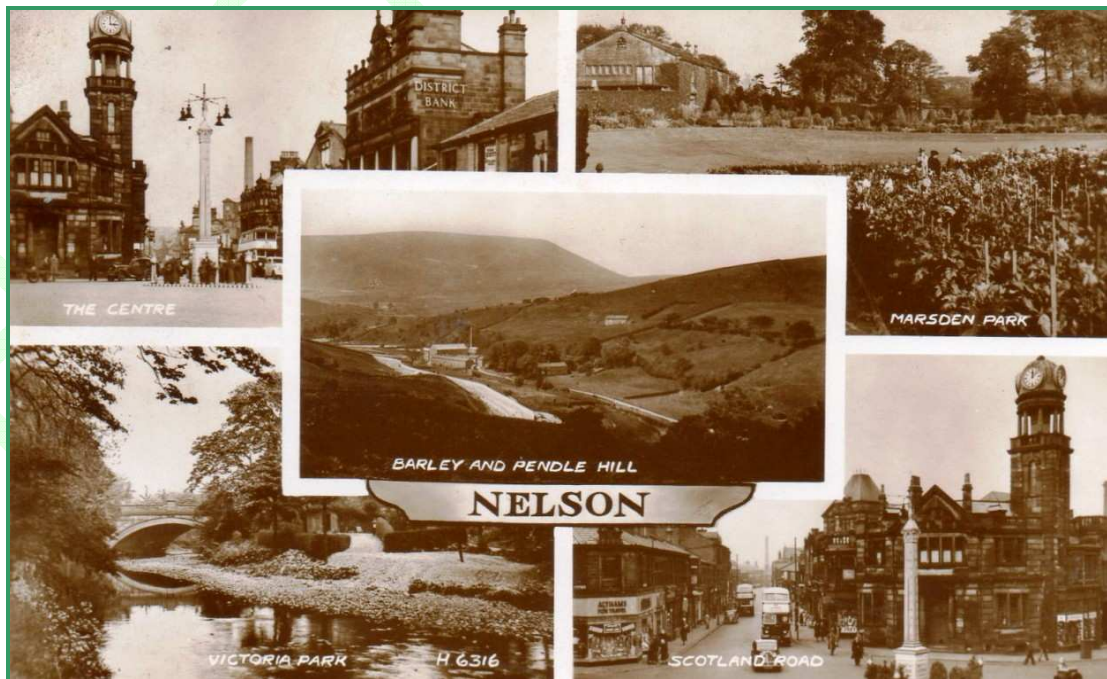
KILLED IN ACTION 28TH APRIL 1917

BORN IN 1876 AT BISHOPTHORPE, THE SON OF HARRI
AND MARIE EDWARDS AND HUSBAND OF ADA EDWARDS
(NEE CRANSWICK)

Edwards Family History

- **1881 census** shows Harri, his wife Marie (nee Willis), their 2 children and 2 servants living at 40, Carr Rd, Little Marsden, Nelson as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Harri (Head)	33	Vicar of Nelson in Marsden	Strabane, Ireland	1848 - 1900
Marie (wife)	32	Clergyman's wife	Whitby, Yorkshire	1849 - 1904
Harri Willis (son)	4	Clergyman's son	Bishophthorpe, Yorks	1876 - 1917
Douglas Gaston (son)	2	Clergyman's son	Nelson, Lancashire	1879
Ellen Hoyle (servant)	30	Nurse	Garstang, Lancashire	1851
Louisa Harvey (servant)	40	General servant	Kensington, London	1841



Marsden and Nelson

- **1891 census** shows Harri, his wife Marie, their 4 children, 3 visitors and 3 servants living at St Mary's Vicarage, Manchester Rd, Little Marsden, Nelson as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Harri (Head)	43	Vicar of Nelson	Strabane, Ireland	1848 - 1900
Marie (wife)	42	Clergyman's wife	Whitby, Yorkshire	1850 - 1904
Harri Willis (son)	14	Scholar	Bishopthorpe, Yorks	1876 - 1917
Douglas Gaston (son)	12	Scholar	Nelson, Lancashire	1879
Basil Brown (son)	8	Scholar	Nelson, Lancashire	1883
Hilda Marie (daughter)	7	Scholar	Nelson, Lancashire	1884 - 1959
Fay Heylin (visitor)	29	Teacher	Kensington	1862
Emma Heylin (visitor)	22	Teacher	Upper Norwood	1869
Edward Clayton (visitor)	23	Banker's clerk	Patterdale, Cumberland	1868
Ellen Hoyles (servant)	49	Nurse	Garstang, Lancashire	1842
Maggie Smith (servant)	16	Housemaid	Dumfries, Scotland	1875
Mary Costello (servant)	34	Cook	Lambeth, London	1857

- **1901 census** shows Marie now widowed, living with 2 of her children Basil & Hilda and 1 servant back in her birth place of Aislaby near Whitby as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Marie (widow)	52	Living on own means	Whitby, Yorkshire	1850 - 1904
Basil Brown (son)	18		Nelson, Lancashire	1883
Hilda Marie (daughter)	17		Nelson, Lancashire	1884 - 1959
Ruan Turner (servant)	22	Cook (Domestic)	Dalry, Scotland	1879

1901 census also shows Harri Willis Edwards and his brother Douglas Gaston Edwards still living in Nelson and both working as bank clerks. They were boarding at 68, Carr Rd, Nelson.

Oct/Nov/Dec quarter of 1905, Harri Willis Edwards married Gertrude Louise Bedingfeld in Burnley, Lancashire.

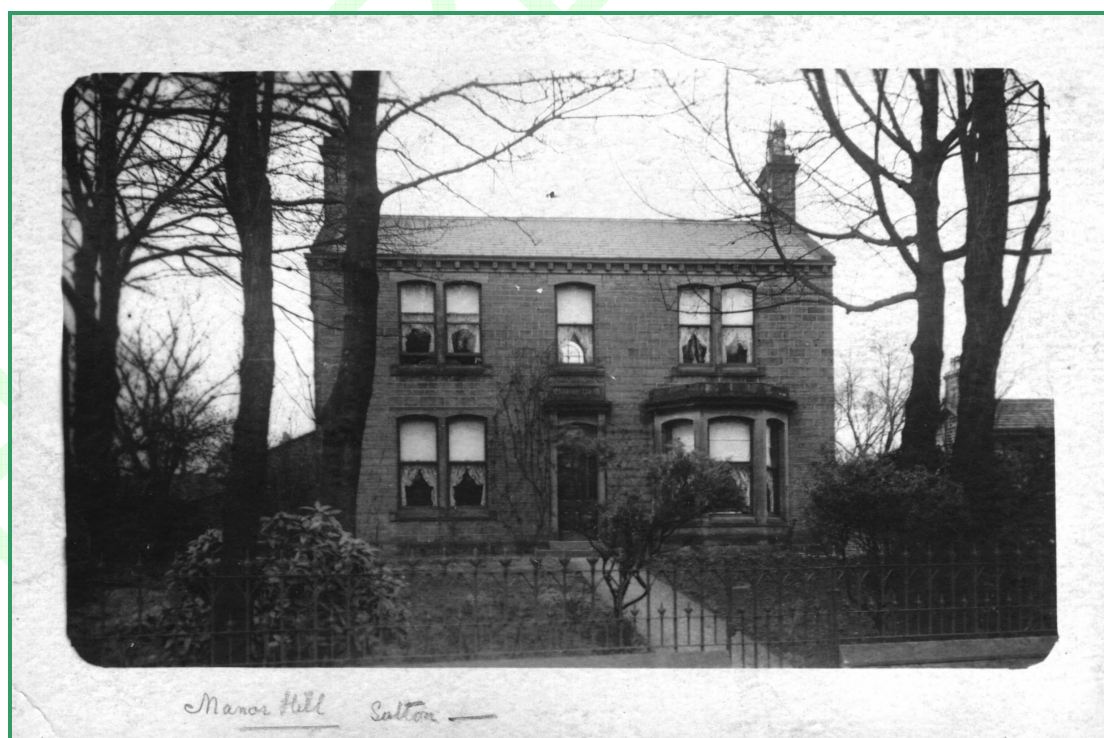
20th March 1907, their son Douglas Bedingfeld Willis Edwards was born in the registration district of Keighley.

Jan/Feb/Mar quarter of 1908, Gertrude died aged 28 years.

12th April 1910, Harri Willis Edwards was remarried to Ada Cranswick at the Priory Church in Bridlington.

- **1911 census** shows Harri, his 2nd wife Ada and his 4 year old son Douglas living at Manor Hill, Sutton-in-Craven as follows:

Name	Age	Work	Birth place	Birth year
Harri Willis (Head)	34	Bank clerk	Bishopthorpe, Yorks	1876 - 1917
Ada (2 nd wife)	32		Reighton, Yorkshire	1879
Douglas Bedingfeld Willis (son)	4		Keighley, Yorkshire	1907 - 1979



Manor Hill, Sutton-in-Craven

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

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 4th 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'**

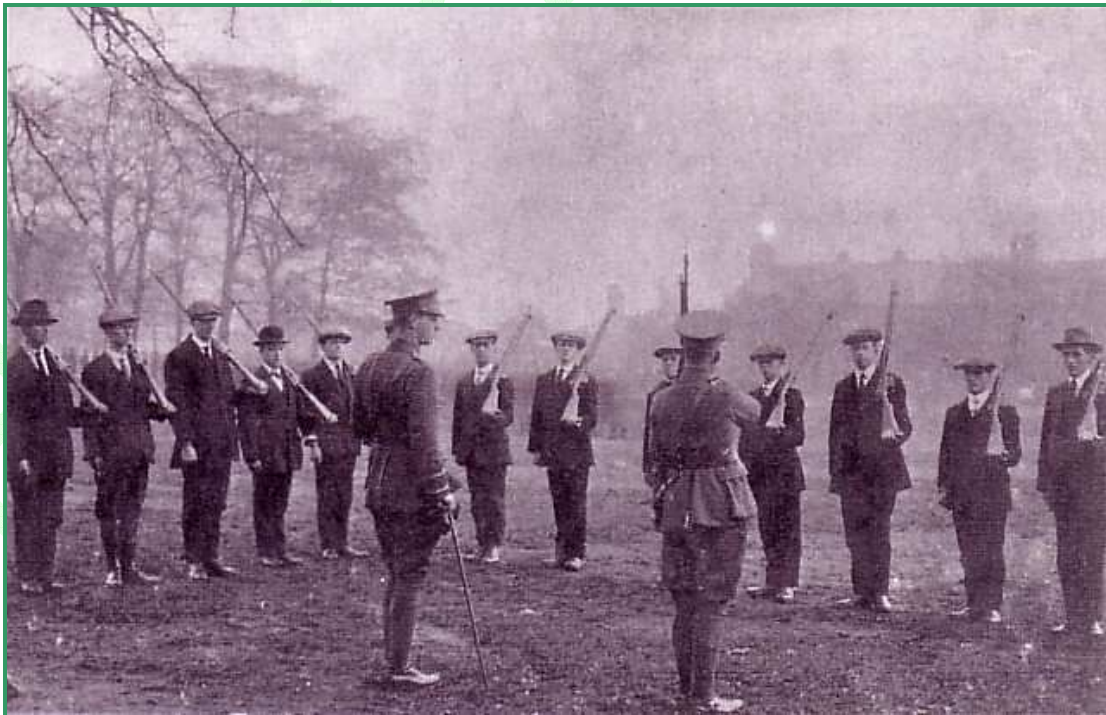
The New Armies: "Kitchener's Volunteers"



Earl Kitchener recruitment poster 1914



Parliamentary Recruiting Poster
(photo taken by Robin Longbottom)



Officers instructing volunteers, Manningham Park, 1914 (Kitchener's New Army)
(source: *The Bradford Pals* Ralph N. Hudson 2nd Ed, 1993)

Prior to the Great War, Harri Willis Edwards was the bank manager of the Crosshills branch of the Bank of Liverpool. Before this he was on the staff of the Bank of Liverpool at Keighley for over ten years.

Harri resided with his family at Manor Hill, Sutton-in-Craven for several years and devoted much of his spare time to furthering the Boy Scouts movement in the district. He formed a troop of Boy Scouts in connection with St Andrew's Church, Kildwick and became District Commissioner of the Boy Scouts movement.

At the outbreak of the Great War, Harri endeavoured to join the army immediately, but found considerable difficulty in doing so due to his age. He was eventually accepted for a West Yorkshire 'Pals' battalion and enlisted into the 16th (service) battalion of the Prince of Wales's Own West Yorkshire Regiment which was formed in Bradford in September 1914.

He commenced with the very low regimental number of 16-85 and rose to the rank of Sergeant.

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
EDWARDS H W	W. York. R.	Sgt	16/85
	E. Lanc. R.	2nd Lt	

Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
6th VICTORY	6th 129	112	1.V. 5120 W d/14.6.1914. 6th Comm. 1914-15 1st. 1.V. 5490. d/12. 2. 10. 11/1/384
BRITISH	do	do	
15th STAR	0/2/13	207	
Theatre of War first served in.	(3) Egypt (4) France		
Date of entry therein	22. 12. 15		

K. 1380.
EF/1/384

MEDAL INDEX CARD for Harri Willis Edwards (source: National Archives)

The 16th and 18th battalions of the West Yorkshire Regiment, or the **1st and 2nd Bradford Pals** as they were known, were recruited locally with the promise that they could stand shoulder to shoulder with their friends, workmates and neighbours rather than be absorbed into the regular army.

There was no shortage of men eager to volunteer to serve King and Country. In November 1914, the Bradford Daily Telegraph listed the first 1,000 men to join the 16th battalion which included Harri Willis Edwards.

After initial training at Manningham Park was completed, the battalion moved to Silkstone in December 1914. The 16th and 18th battalions joined the **31st Division** in June 1915 and moved to South Camp, Ripon.

The 31st Division was the quintessential New Army Division, being made up entirely of **Pals battalions** from Accrington, Leeds, Bradford, Barnsley and Hull.

In December 1915 the **31st Division** moved to Egypt to complete its training before arriving in France in March 1916 in preparation for the **Battle of the Somme**.



WW1 West Yorkshire Regiment Cap Badge

Battle of the Somme

1st July – 18th November 1916

The Battle of the Somme was fought from the 1st July – the 18th November 1916 and claimed more than 1.5 million casualties.

The Battle of the Somme is best remembered for its first day, 1st July 1916 on which the British suffered 57,470 casualties, including **19,240 dead** - the bloodiest day in the history of the British Army.

Ironically, going 'over the top' at the Somme was the first taste of battle many of these men had, as many formed part of "**Kitchener's Volunteer Army**" persuaded to volunteer by posters showing Lord Kitchener himself summoning these men to arms to show their patriotism.

2,000 men of the **1st and 2nd Bradford Pals** left their trenches to advance across "No Man's Land" on the morning of the 1st July 1916. By the end of the first hour **1,770** of these Bradford men had been killed or injured by German machine gun fire and no ground had been gained.

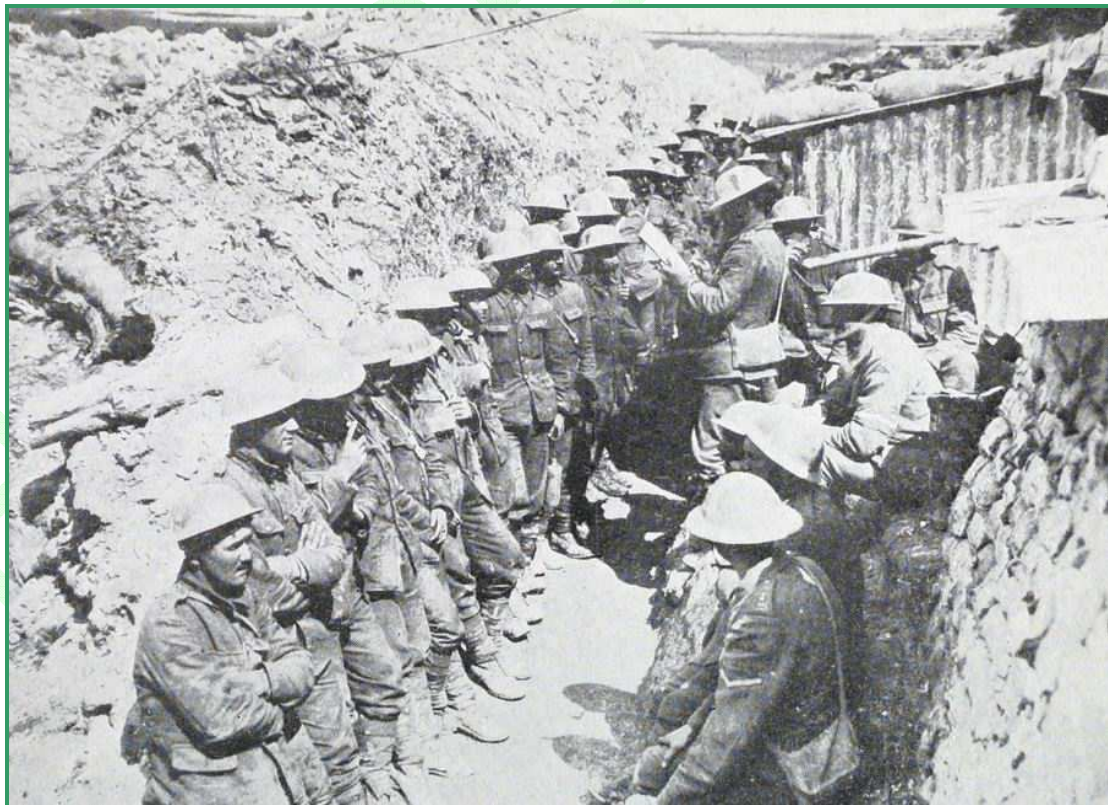
The Bradford Pals were not alone in their losses as other Pals battalions were severely decimated. A whole generation of young men from these towns & cities were wiped out in a single day.



Somme battlefield



Going 'over the top' WW1



Roll call in the British trenches at the Battle of the Somme, afternoon, 1st July 1916
(source: www.gwpda.org/photos)

The Somme campaign finally came to an end on the 18th November 1916 when the British 51st Highland Division took Beaumont Hamel just 5 miles into enemy territory, which had in fact been an objective for the first day.

The Somme became a metaphor for futile and indiscriminate slaughter. Over the course of the entire 142-day Somme campaign, the British Army suffered some 415,000 casualties, which worked out to be around 3,000 per day. The French lost 200,000 men and the German's nearly 500,000.

The East Lancashire Regiment

After the Somme campaign had finally come to an end in November 1916, Sgt Harri Willis Edwards obtained a commission and was transferred to the 1/5th battalion **East Lancashire Regiment** as a **2nd Lieutenant**.

This took place in December 1916 after Harri had completed twelve month's overseas service with the **1st Bradford Pals** in Egypt and France.



WW1 East Lancashire Regiment
OFFICER Cap Badge
(source: badge owned by Steve Bury)

Four months later however, Harri engaged the enemy at Canal Wood close to the Hindenburg Line where the German's had retired to after the Battles of the Somme in 1916. This was to be Harri's final encounter with the enemy.

THE EAST LANCASHIRE REGIMENT

1/5th Bn. East Lancashire Regiment. 1917

On April 27th two platoons of 'A' Company, under Captain Cockshutt, attempted to occupy and consolidate an elongated belt of trees known as Canal Wood [Canal Wood was close to the Hindenburg Line to which the Germans had retired to after the Battles of the Somme in 1916], and this was an occasion of much individual but unavailing gallantry. An unexpected check was occasioned by a party of the enemy who occupied a small quarry at the north-east end of the wood, and these had to be bombed out. Having cleared the wood of Germans, the party, which comprised 3 officers and 98 rank and file, started to dig in and succeeded in constructing a trench to a depth of about four feet. The attacking platoons, however, did not reach their final objective until about 4.30 a.m. [28th April] and after desultory sniping for an hour or so from various directions, a body estimated at two companies attacked and succeeded in driving the Lancashire men on to the road. Here they were heavily enfiladed by machine-gun and rifle fire from the south. One of the party's Lewis guns was put out of action almost immediately and retirement to our own outpost line became essential. Captain Cockshutt was wounded and both his junior officers, 2nd Lieutenants Walkden and Edwards were killed. [Arthur Chamberlain Walkden and Harri Willis Edwards were both employed by the Bank of Liverpool and perhaps knew each other before joining the army] Eleven other ranks were killed and 30 wounded; 15 men were reported missing. Particular gallantry was shown in this affair by one of our sergeants, who brought several wounded men into our outpost line under heavy fire.

“History of The East Lancashire Regiment in the Great War 1914-18. Littlebury Bros Ltd 1936”
(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* www.cpgw.org.uk)

2/Lieutenant Harri Willis Edwards was **Killed in Action** on the 28th April 1917.

He was 40 years of age



Article Date: 11 May 1917

SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN - FORMER RESIDENT KILLED IN ACTION

The village is deeply moved by the news that a former Sutton resident in the person of Lieutenant Harri W. Edwards has been killed in action "somewhere in France". Lieutenant Edwards resided at Manor Hill, Sutton, for a few years and was very well known and popular in the village. He formed an excellent troop of Boy Scouts in connection with St. Andrew's Church, Kildwick, and devoted his spare time to furthering the Boy Scout movement in the district, and was for a time District Commissioner. For over ten years he was on the staff of the Bank of Liverpool at Keighley, and was manager of the Crosshills Branch for a few years. At the outbreak of hostilities, he joined the ranks of the West Yorkshire Regiment (Bradford Pals), ultimately rising to the rank of sergeant. After about twelve months foreign service with the Pals in Egypt and France, he was promoted to commissioned rank. His father was Vicar of Nelson. Shortly before enlistment, Lieutenant Edwards and family removed from Sutton to Oxenhope Old Hall. He leaves a widow and one child.

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



Article Date: 04 July 1919

**PEACE SUPPLEMENT TO THE 'CRAVEN HERALD' -
CRAVEN'S FALLEN OFFICERS: LIEUTENANT H. W.
EDWARDS**

**West Yorks. Regiment (Bradford Pals), a former manager of
Crosshills Branch of the Bank of Liverpool, killed in action in France.**

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

UK, De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914-1924 record for Harri Willis
Edwards



Harri Willis Edwards.

EDWARDS, HARRI I WILLIS, Lieut., 5th (Territorial) Battn. The East Lancashire Regt., eldest s. of the late Rev. Harri Edwards, Clerk in Holy Orders, by his wife, Marie, dau. of the late Capt. George Willis, of Aislaby Hall, Whitby; b. Bishopthorpe, near York, 30 May, 1876; educ. Denstone College, co. Stafford; was for 11 years a member on the staff of the Bank of Liverpool at Keighley, during which time he took a keen interest in the Boy Scout movement; joined the 16th West Yorkshire Regt. on the outbreak of war; served with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Egypt from 6 Dec. 1915, and with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from April, 1916; obtained a commission as 2nd Lieut. in the 5th East Lancashire Regt. in Dec. following, and was killed in action near Peronne 28 April, 1917. He m.—1st, at the Parish Church, Nelson, co. Lancaster, 7 Oct. 1905, Gertrude Louise, dau. of Richard Bedingfield, and had a son, Douglas Bedingfield Willis, b. 20 March, 1907, and—2ndly, at the Priory Church, Bridlington, 12 April, 1910, Ada (Old Oxenhope House, near Keighley), dau. of the late Mathew Cranswick, of Reighton.

(source: De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1924)

FORMER NELSON VICAR'S SON.

Lieut. Harri W. Edwards, East Lancashire Regt., who resided at Old Oxenhope House, Oxenhope, near Keighley, has been killed in action. He was 40 years of age, and was a son of the late Rev. Harri Edwards, formerly Vicar of St. Mary's, Nelson. He was for 11 years on the staff of the Bank of Liverpool at Keighley, and for some time was in charge of the Cross Hills (near Keighley) branch. While he was there, he took a keen interest in the Boy Scout movement, and was a District Commissioner. He leaves a widow and one child.

During the incumbency of his father at Nelson Lieut. Edwards was connected with the Craven Bank in this district. In early life he was for 12 years connected with the Burnley Volunteers. He endeavoured to join the Army immediately war was declared, but found considerable difficulty in doing so owing to his age. He was accepted for a West Yorkshire "Pals" Battalion, and rose to the rank of sergeant. He accepted a commission last year after foreign service with the West Yorkshires.

His brother, Capt. Douglas G. Edwards, with the Territorials, was wounded at the Dardanelles.

The Burnley Express: report dated 09 May 1917
(source: photocopied by Steve Bury)

In Memory of
Second Lieutenant

Harri Willis Edwards

1st/5th Bn., East Lancashire Regiment who died on 28 April 1917

Remembered with Honour
Thiepval Memorial



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

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

THIEPVAL MEMORIAL

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the 'Missing of the Somme', bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces including Lieutenant Harri Willis Edwards, who died in the Somme sector before the 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.

The memorial, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, in the presence of the President of France, on the 31st July 1932.



Thiepval Memorial

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

Harri Willis Edward's name was not recorded on the Sutton-in-Craven war memorial, or the St Thomas' Church Roll of Honour recording the Great War '**Fallen**' of Sutton-in-Craven.

2/Lieutenant Harri Willis Edwards was posthumously awarded the
1914/15 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal



Original trio of WW1 medals, obverse
(source: Andrew Monkhouse war medal collection)



Original trio of WW1 medals, reverse (1914/15 star unnamed original)
(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
Also referred to as a Death Plaque or Dead Man's Penny
(source: plaque owned by Steve Bury)

CRAVEN'S ROLL OF HONOUR



Lieut. Edwards.

LIEUT. H. W. EDWARDS, West Yorkshire Regiment (Bradford Pals), killed in action in France, resided at Manor Hill, Sutton, for a few years, and was very well-known and popular in the village. He formed an excellent troop of Boy Scouts in connection with St. Andrew's Church, Kildwick, devoted his spare time to furthering the Boy Scout movement in the district, and for a time was District Commissioner. For over ten years he was on the staff of the Bank of Liverpool at Keighley, and was also manager of the Crosshills branch for a few years. At the outbreak of hostilities he joined the ranks of the West Yorkshire Regiment, rising to the rank of Sergeant. After about twelve months' foreign service with the "Pals" in Egypt and France, he was promoted to commissioned rank. His father was a Vicar of Nelson.

(source: *Craven's Part in the Great War* original 1919 volume 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 2013)