

Connected to Codford



Lest we Forget

World War I



9167 L/CORPORAL

G. SMITH

WILTSHIRE REGIMENT

25TH SEPTEMBER, 1915

George SMITH

George Smith was born at Odstock, Wiltshire (according to UK Soldiers died in Great War) around 1896 to parents Fred & Mary Smith. However, the 1901 & 1911 Census both recorded George Smith as being born at Codford St. Peter. A birth was registered in December quarter, 1895 to a George Smith in the district of Warminster.

The 1901 Census recorded George Smith as a 5 year old, living with his family at Gurston, Broad Chalke in a 4 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Fred Smith (Shepherd, aged 46, born Codford St. Mary) & Mary Smith (aged 44, born Sherrington). George was one of six children listed on this Census – John (Carter on a farm, aged 18, born Codford St. Mary), Eli (Shepherd, aged 14, born Stapleford), Selina (aged 12, born Stapleford), William (aged 9, born Stapleford) then George (born Codford St. Peter) & Lillian M. (aged 1, born Fifield Bavant).

The 1911 Census recorded George Smith as a 15 year old Shepherd, living with his family at Odstock, near Salisbury in a 5 roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as Fred Smith (Shepherd, aged 56) & Mary Smith (aged 54). Fred & Mary Smith had been married for 37 years, having had a total of 12 children, 2 of them having since died. George was one of three children listed on this Census – William (Shepherd, aged 19) then George (Listed as born Codford St. Peter) & Lillian (At School, aged 11).

George Smith enlisted at Westleigh, Wiltshire. His address at the time of enlistment was listed as Codford. He was given the service number of 9167 & the rank of Private.

The Medal Index Card for Lance Corporal George Smith shows that he first entered a Theatre of War on 27th July, 1915 in France.

Lance Corporal George Smith was killed in action on 25th September, 1915. He was attached to 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment at the time of his death.

Lance Corporal George Smith is remembered on the Loos Memorial, France – Panel 102 as he has no known grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal George Smith, 9167, 2nd Bn., Wiltshire Regiment. No family details are listed.

The UK Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects shows that the next of kin for Lance Corporal George Smith was his father – Fred Smith.

2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment

The 2nd Battalion mobilized on the 29th July 1914 when the 'Alarm in Fortress' was sounded in Gibraltar, sailing for England a month later. They landed at Zeebrugge as part of the 7th Division in October. Their initial deployment to defend Antwerp was abandoned after it was captured by the Germans. They redeployed to a position East of Ypres and very soon were in action at Reutel near Ypres. This first action for many was also their last as the battalion lost 450 men and 18 officers captured, 76 men and 7 officers were killed and 229 wounded after being assaulted by two complete German Regiments. After many other actions they ended 1914 in the line at Fleurbaix.

1915

The 2nd Battalion started 1915 in the Fleurbaix area remaining in the waterlogged trenches when they were relieved by the Canadians in March. They were removed from the line to prepare for a major assault at Neuve Chapelle which started on the 9th of March. By the 14th March the battalion had suffered nearly 400 casualties. After a few days rest they returned to the line at Laventie where they resumed trench warfare. In May the battalion took part in the battle of Festubert where they suffered 158 casualties for one mile of ground taken. This was followed by a rest period in the Bethune area where they were reinforced. In June they were one of the leading battalions in the attack at Givenchy where after taking significant casualties the operation was cancelled. This was followed by many months of trench warfare in different sectors leading up to the Battle of Loos in September where their casualty figure was

400. Rest and reorganisation followed and in early December they were again redeployed to another Division, the 30th ending the year at Autheux.

War Diary – 2nd Battalion

25th September, 1915

Location – Verquin, France

Battn moved at 12.30am marched via LA BOURSE and SAILLY, arriving at a reserve line of trenches SE of NOYELLES at point L12 o 6.6 at about 3am. Bombardment becomes intense. At about 6am the attack was launched. Battn ordered to advance through VERMELLES up communication trench (CHAPEL ALLEY) to occupy front line at point G11 o 9.8. Capt King wounded. 2/Lt FH Friend assumed command of 'A' Coy. Following the advance of the 20th Brigade the Battalion occupies the front and support German lines. Lt Col BH Leatham DSO then gave orders for the Battn to advance in open order in direction of CITE ST ELIE keeping to the north of HULLUCH ROAD, our right flank connecting with the 2nd Bedfordshires left. The Battn advanced in the following order, 'B' Coy on the left Capt WM GEDDES in command, 'A' Coy on right 2/Lt FH Friend in command, two platoons of each comp leading, two platoons immediately behind, 'C' Coy in support, 'D' Coy in reserve, Major RMP Gillson in command of 'C' Coy, Capt EC Mudge in command of 'D' Coy, the whole were led by Major CG Forsyth, and experiencing extremely heavy rifle and machine gun fire from the front came to a line held very weakly by a mixture of 8th Devon & 2nd Borders. The trench contained 4 German field guns and ammunition. Our losses were heavy and included the following Officers casualties Capt GMU Wilson, 2/Lts CFB Hodgins JH Clarke WHG Durrant killed. Major RMP Gillson, 2nd Lt FH Friend wounded the latter seriously. At dusk the Battn was relieved by the 9/Devonshire Regt and took up a new front at BRESLAU AVENUE our right resting on the latter Regiment

(Information on 2nd Battalion & War Diary from [The Wardrobe](#) – Home of the Infantry Regiments of Berkshire & Wiltshire)

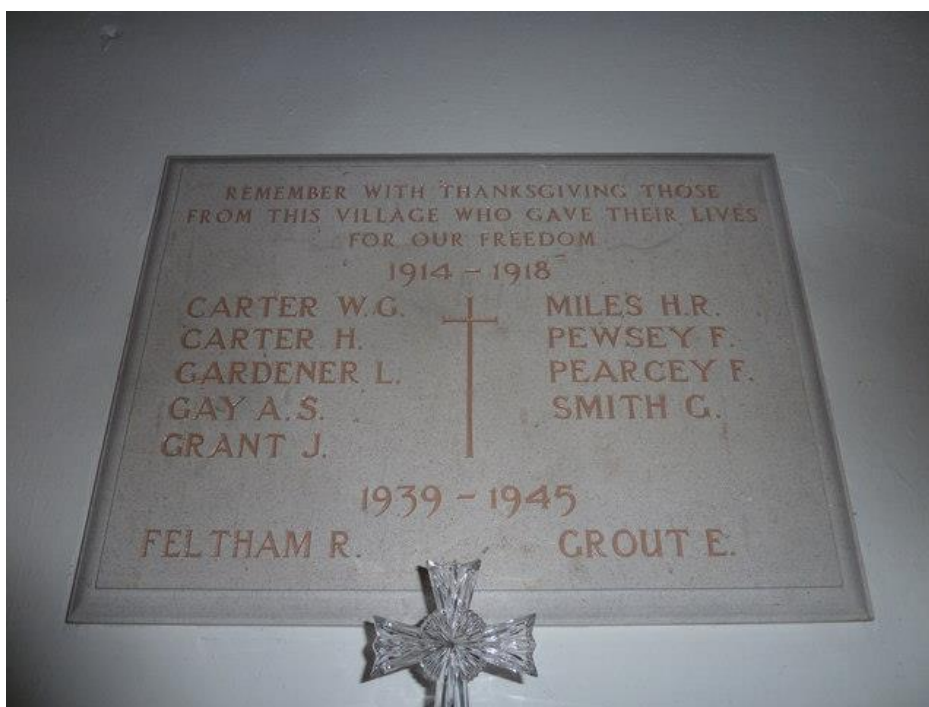
Lance Corporal George Smith was entitled to 1915 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal.



1915 Star, British War Medal & Victory Medal

G. Smith is remembered in Casualties of WW1 from the Diocese of Salisbury Memorial book for the parish of Odstock, Wiltshire

G. Smith is remembered on the Roll of Honour Plaque located in the Church of St. Mary, Odstock, Wiltshire.



(Photo by Basher Eyre 2013)

Loos Memorial, France

The Loos Memorial forms the sides and back of Dud Corner Cemetery. Loos-en-Gohelle is a village 5 kilometres north-west of Lens, and Dud Corner Cemetery is located about 1 kilometre west of the village, to the north-east of the D943, the main Lens to Bethune Road.

Dud Corner Cemetery stands almost on the site of a German strong point, the Lens Road Redoubt, captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division on the first day of the battle.

The name "Dud Corner" is believed to be due to the large number of unexploded enemy shells found in the neighbourhood after the Armistice.

The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay. On either side of the cemetery is a wall 15 feet high, to which are fixed tablets on which are carved the names of those commemorated. At the back are four small circular courts, open to the sky, in which the lines of tablets are continued, and between these courts are three semicircular walls or apses, two of which carry tablets, while on the centre apse is erected the Cross of Sacrifice.

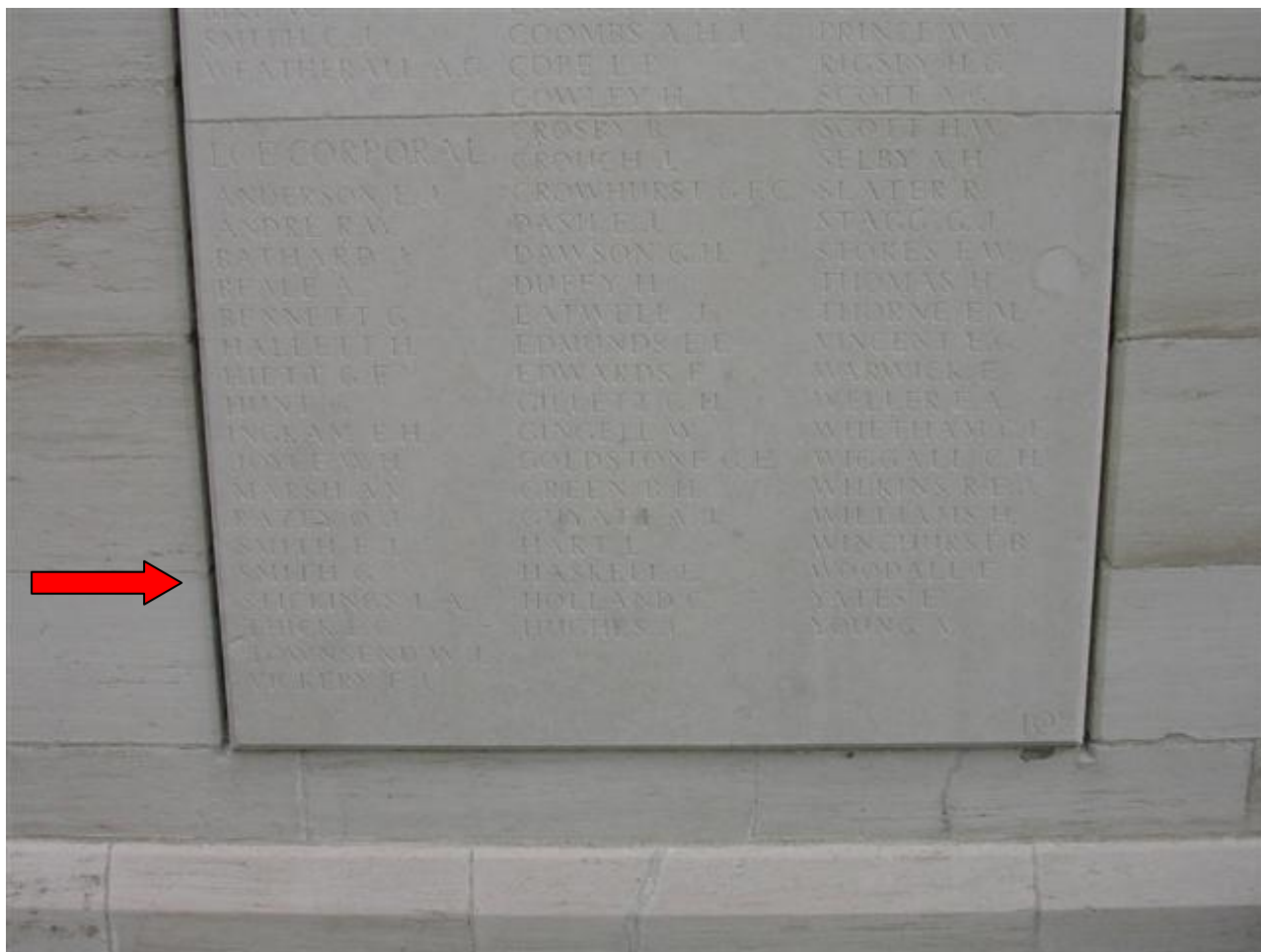
(Information & photos from CWGC)



Dud Corner Cemetery (above) & the Loos Memorial (below)

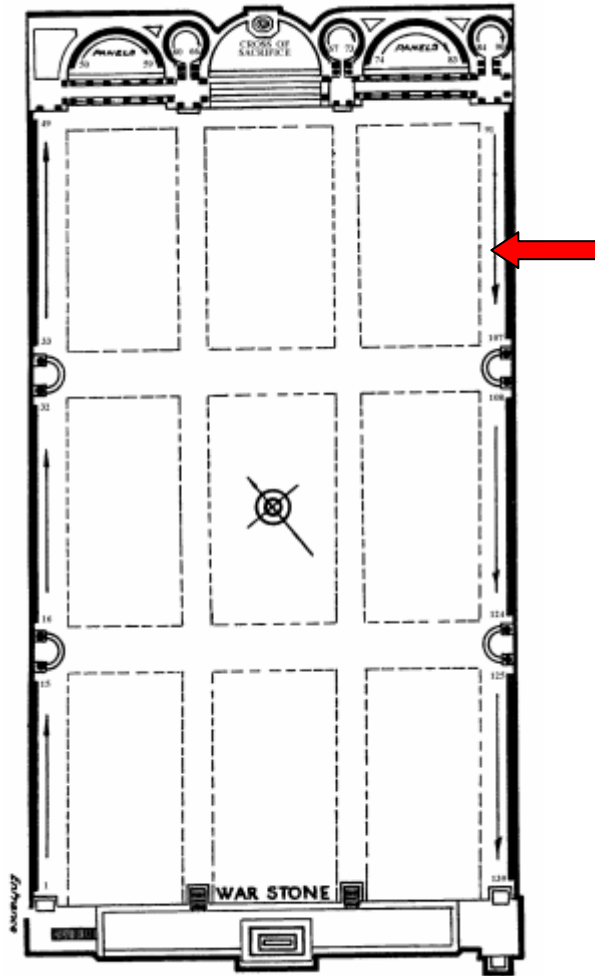


Lance Corporal G. Smith's name on Panel 102 of The Loos Memorial, France.



(Photo by International War Graves Photography Project)

MEMORIAL



LAYOUT OF THE PANELS, LOOS MEMORIAL