

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I

L/17006 GUNNER

WILLIAM / WILLIE SMITH

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

14TH JANUARY, 1916



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Gunner W. Smith is located in
St. Mary's Churchyard, Codford – near south-east corner of Churchyard.*

William / Willie SMITH

William Smith was born in Cowling, Yorkshire in 1890 to parents William & Elizabeth Smith (nee Binns). His birth was registered in the Skipton district in the June quarter of 1890.

The 1891 Census recorded Willie Smith as 1 year old living with his widowed mother – Elizabeth (aged 40, born Cowling, Yorks), at Park Lane Bottom, Cowling, Yorks in a 4 roomed dwelling. Willie's father – William Smith had died in 1890 (possibly). Also included in the household were Willie's two older sisters – Mary (aged 9, born Cowling) & Elizabeth (aged 6, born Cowling). Willie's grandmother – Elizabeth Binns (Widow, aged 75) & Willie's cousin – Dinah Binns (aged 21) were also recorded.

The 1901 Census recorded Willie Smith as an 11 year old living with his mother & sister at 7 Park Lane Bottom, Cowling, Yorks. Willie's mother was recorded as Elizabeth Smith (Widow, aged 50, Cotton Weaver) & Willie's sister – Elizabeth Smith (aged 16, Cotton Weaver).

The 1911 Census recorded Willie as a 21 year old Carter, living with his mother & 2 sisters in a 4 roomed dwelling at 8 Mill Brow, Earby, Yorkshire West Riding. Details from Census of Willie's mother – Elizabeth Smith (aged 60, Widow), & his sisters – Mary Smith (Cotton Weaver, aged 29) & Elizabeth Smith (General Servant (Domestic), aged 26).

Willie Smith enlisted with Royal Field Artillery at Colne, Lancashire. He was given the rank of Gunner & a service number of L/17006. He was attached to 32nd Division, Ammunition Column.

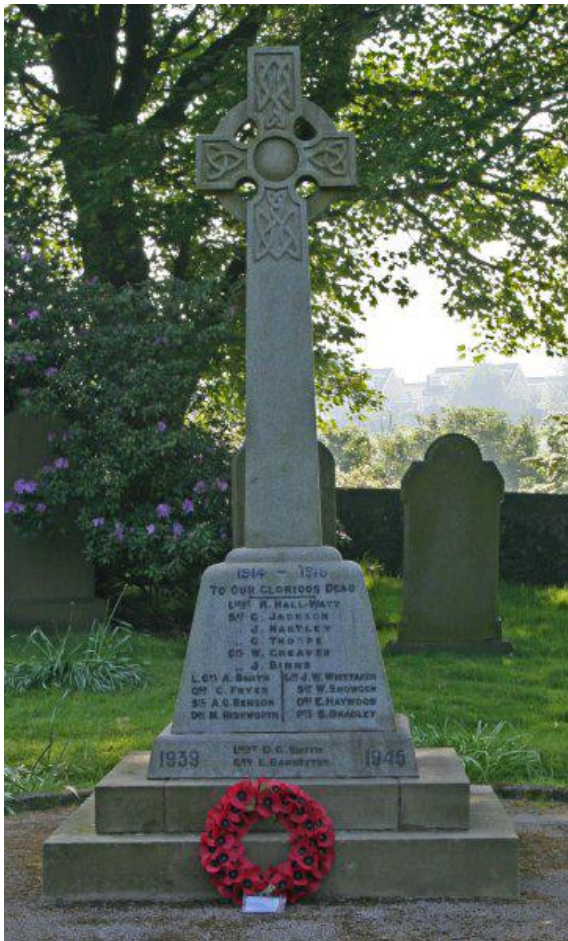
The 32nd Division was part of Kitchener's Fifth New Army. It was a predominantly Northern Division, although locally raised units from Birmingham & Bristol were also in the structure. In August, 1915 the Division was moved from Yorkshire (Wensley & Richmond, with use of the firing ranges at Strenshall) to Codford, Wiltshire on Salisbury Plain for final training and firing practice.

Gunner Willie Smith died on 14th January, 1916.

A death for William Smith, aged 26, was registered in the March quarter, 1916 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Gunner Willie Smith was buried in the Churchyard of St. Mary's, Codford, Wiltshire, near south-east corner of the Churchyard. His death is acknowledged by Commonwealth War Graves Commission & as such he has a CWGC headstone. He is recorded by CWGC as William Smith. UK Soldiers Died in the Great War has him recorded as Willie Smith but as a Driver.

Willie Smith is remembered on the Memorial Cross at Holy Trinity Church, Cowling.



(Photos used with permission from Chris Foster – [Craven's Part in The Great War](#))



Cowling Hill Baptist Chapel – September, 1900.

There are 2 boys named "Willie Smith" in photo (Front Row first on left & 2nd Row (behind front row) 2nd boy from right)

(Photo used with permission from Chris Foster – [Craven's Part in The Great War](#))

Gunner Willie Smith is also remembered on the Cenotaph (Panel 4) at Earby, Yorkshire.



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St Mary's Churchyard, Codford – William Smith's headstone is located 3rd from right (of 5 CWGC headstones) (Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth – 2013)

Photo of Gunner W. Smith's Headstone in St. Mary's Churchyard, Codford.



(Photo by Andrea Charlesworth- 2012)