

Ernest John Smith 1889 – 1916

03.07.1916 missing presumed dead. The action in the Ovillers area was very heavy on 3rd July.

Reburied VII. K. 9.
Ovillers Military Cemetery

Age:27

As a younger child, his immediate relatives may have scattered or died before the War Memorial was completed in Tiptree resulting in his name is not being listed.



James and Sarah



Ernest's brother Stanley David also served and was gassed.

OVILLERS MILITARY CEMETERY



Country: France
Locality: Somme
Identified Casualties: 960

Location Information

Ovillers is a village about 5 kilometres north-east of the town of Albert off the D929 road to Bapaume. The Military Cemetery is approximately 500 metres west of the village on the D20 road to Aveluy. The Cemetery is signposted in the village.

Visiting Information

Wheelchair access to this site is possible with some difficulty. For further information regarding wheelchair access, please contact our Enquiries Section on 01628 507200.

Historical Information

On 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, the 8th Division attacked Ovillers and the 34th Division La Boisselle. The villages were not captured, but ground was won between them and to the south of La Boisselle. On 4 July, the 19th (Western) Division cleared La Boisselle and on 7 July the 12th (Eastern) and 25th Divisions gained part of Ovillers, the village being cleared by the 48th (South Midland) Division on 17 July. The two villages were lost during the German advance in March 1918, but they were retaken on the following 24 August by the 38th (Welsh) Division.

Ovillers Military Cemetery was begun before the capture of Ovillers, as a battle cemetery behind a dressing station. It was used until March 1917, by which time it contained 143 graves, about half the present Plot I. The cemetery was increased after the Armistice when Commonwealth and French graves were brought in, mainly from the battlefields of Pozieres, Ovillers, La Boisselle and Contalmaison, and from the following two cemeteries:-

MASH VALLEY CEMETERY, OVILLERS-LA BOISSELLE, was about 200 metres North of Ovillers Military Cemetery. It was named from one of two valleys (Mash and Sausage) which run from South-West to North-East on either side of La Boisselle. It contained the graves of 76 soldiers from the United Kingdom who fell in July-September 1916.

RED DRAGON CEMETERY, OVILLERS-LA BOISSELLE, was midway between Ovillers and La Boisselle. It was made by the 16th and 17th Royal Welch Fusiliers, and named from their badge. It contained the graves of 25 soldiers who fell in August 1918, all of whom belonged to the 38th (Welsh) Division, and all but three to the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

There are now 3,440 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 2,480 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 24 casualties believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials record the names of 35 casualties, buried in Mash Valley Cemetery, whose graves were destroyed in later fighting. The cemetery also contains 120 French war graves.

The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

The war diary for the regiment mentions that a Pte E Smith was awarded the Military Medal during the month of July. It is uncertain whether it was Ernest John, it doesn't show up on his medal card, but the military medal roll is held separately at Kew.

Born	Parents & Siblings at Home	Locations	Marriage / Other	Jobs / Rank
2nd Q 1889 Inworth Siblings 09.11.1973 George 1975 Ellen 03.11.1878 Agnes 28.11.1880 Harriet A 1884 Lilly 2Q1889 Ernest John 05.05.1892 Stanley David 03.11.1897 Lillie 1905 Ivy Violet (niece)	James & Sarah nee Cottee 1891 1 brother & 3 sisters 1901 1 brother 1911 1 niece (7 of 8 children alive)	1891 The Endway (West End Road) 1901 Tiptree Hale / Hall Lane 1911 parents Barfields Row 1911 India (Ernest born Chelmsford, mistake or another person?) 1 st Essex 1911 George, Anchor Row	Descendant from James Smith's sister Elizabeth died 2006 in Green Lane. By 1911 1 child died Lilly? 1925 Agnes died 1928 father died 1933 mother died 1954 Lillie died 1959 George died Maldon 1962 Stanley died Birmingham 1970 Harriet died	1891 father horseman George stockman 1901 father agricultural labourer 1911 father farm labourer George Platelayer GER 1915 Ernest served in the Balkans (medal record and war diary) 1 st Essex Regiment. Regiments in India were transferred to the Balkans. 1916 Private 9431 Essex Regiment 9 th Battalion