

Private Joseph Woodacre
Regimental number: 636326
21st Battalion, Canadian Infantry

born: about 25 August 1898 - died: 20 September 1918

Private Joseph Woodacre was born on 25 August 1898 in Hartlepool, Durham.¹ He was the son of James and Emily Woodacre.² His father, James Henry, was born on 13 November 1866³ in Glossop, Derbyshire⁴ and his mother, Emily (formerly Emily Harrison), in about 1875 in West Hartlepool.

James' first marriage was to Annie Cooper, who was probably born in about 1867 in Hathersage, Derbyshire, the daughter of David and Elizabeth Cooper.⁵ They married on 24 April 1887⁶ in Stalybridge, Lancashire.⁷ They had a daughter, Annie, born in 1886⁸ and the family was living in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, in 1891.⁹ James married Joseph's mother, Emily, in 1893 in Hartlepool.¹⁰ They had four children: Harry (born in about 1895),¹¹ Joseph, Walter (born in about 1902)¹² and Emily (born in about 1904).¹³

In 1901, the family was living at 25 Uppingham Street in West Hartlepool, where James was a labourer in a paper mill.¹⁴ Ten years later the family was living at 8 Stanley Road, in Hartlepool.¹⁵ James was still a labourer, but now in a steelworks.

Soon thereafter, the family immigrated to Canada. It appears that James came ahead of this wife and children.¹⁶ Emily and their four children appear to have sailed on the *Megantic* of the White Star Dominion Line, leaving Liverpool on 30 March 1912 and arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia.¹⁷

On 12 January 1916, Joseph, who was then 18 years old and a labourer living in Trenton, Ontario, enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Trenton.¹⁸ He was 5' 6" tall, had fair complexion, blue eyes and brown hair and was a member of the Church of England.

On 20 September 1918, the 21st Battalion, with which Joseph was serving, was on the Front Line, probably between Arras and Cambrai in northern France.¹⁹ The unit had been on the Front Line for four days and had seen some heavy shelling. On the 20th, Joseph was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with gunshot wounds penetrating his back.²⁰ He died and was buried the same day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Grave 19, Plot 6, Row H) with the chaplain W. Fisher presiding. His mother was his next-of-kin and was notified of his death. He was just 20 years old.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²¹ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²² A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September 1918.

Joseph's older brother, Harry, also served in the Great War. A labourer, he enlisted on 26 February 1915 in Belleville, showing his birthdate as 19 May 1894, which would have made him nearly 21.²³ He was, in fact, probably 19 – but still eligible to serve in the Expeditionary Force. He served originally overseas the 39th Canadian Infantry Battalion, but joined the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in the field in August 1918. He was wounded in November 1918 – just two months after Joseph's death – and was struck off strength in January 1919. He was awarded the Military Medal on 10 December 1918²⁴ – a medal awarded to Warrant Officers, non-commissioned officers and men for individual or associated acts of bravery.²⁵ Harry married Laura A. Helyer near

Wandsworth, Surrey in 1918.²⁶ They moved back to Canada and, in 1921, were living in Murray, Ontario.²⁷

Joseph's younger brother, Walter, married Eva Chouinard in 1922²⁸ and, by 1935, was a labourer living in Hastings, Ontario.²⁹

Joseph's sister, Mary Emily, married John Joseph Jeffrey in October 1920.³⁰ John had also served in the Great War. He enlisted in December 1917, at the age of 29. In 1921, Mary Emily was living with her parents, James and Emily on Shuter Street in Trenton. Emily died in Kingston General Hospital in 1927 and James died at the house on Shuter Street in 1935.³¹

Joseph's half-sister, Annie Elizabeth, probably married Charles Wiggett in 1906 in Emmanuel, Yorkshire (West Riding).³² In 1911, they were living in Hathersage with Charles' family.³³

Joseph's mother, Emily, died in the Kingston General Hospital in 1927, when the family was living in Trenton, Ontario.³⁴ His father, James Henry, died in 1935 in Trenton and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery.³⁵ His gravestone notes the death of his son, Joseph, in France in the Great War.³⁶

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¹ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for Joseph Woodacre

² "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for Joseph Woodacre, Registration district: Hartlepool, Sub-registration district: Hartlepool, ED, institution, or vessel: 61, Piece: 4641, Folio: 134, Page Number: 42, Household schedule number: 251

³ Family source

⁴ "1901 England Census," entry for Joseph Woodacre

⁵ "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 January 2016), entry for Annie Cooper, Registration district: Bakewell, Sub-registration district: Tideswell, ED, institution, or vessel: 5, Household schedule number: 75, Piece: 3632, Folio: 57, Page Number: 15

⁶ Family source

⁷ "England Marriages," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 4 January 2016), entry for James Henry Woodacre, Place: Stalybridge

⁸ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 January 2016), entry for Annie Woodacre, Registration district: Preston, Inferred County: Lancashire, Volume: 8e, Page: 654

⁹ JH 1891 census "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 January 2016), entry for James H. Woodacre, Registration district: Barrow In Furness, ED, institution, or vessel: 29, Piece: 3488, Folio: 80, Page Number: 23

¹⁰ "England & Wales marriages 1837-2008," *findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 3 January 2016), entry for James Woodacre, District: Hartlepool, County: Durham, Volume: 10A, Page: 211

¹¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Henry Woodacre, Registration district: Hartlepool, Inferred County: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 182

¹² "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Walter Woodacre, Registration district: Hartlepool, Inferred County: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 128

¹³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Emily Woodacre, Registration district: Hartlepool, Inferred County: Durham, Volume: 10a, Page: 182

¹⁴ "1901 England Census," entry for Joseph Woodacre

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- ¹⁵ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2015), entry for Joseph Woodacre, Registration district: Hartlepool, Registration District Number: 545, Sub-registration district: Hartlepool, ED, institution, or vessel: 28, Household schedule number: 78, Piece: 29628
- ¹⁶ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for James Woodacre, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: Hastings West, District Number: 9, Sub-District: Point Trenton (Town), Sub-District Number: 43, City, Town or Village: Trenton Town
- ¹⁷ "UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Joseph Woodacre. There is an alternative record that suggests that Emily and the children travelled on the Scotian, arriving in Portland, Maine in April 1912. They were destined to Marmora, Ontario. ("Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for Harry Woodacre)
- ¹⁸ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," entry for Joseph Woodacre
- ¹⁹ "MIKAN 2034180: War diaries – 21st Canadian Infantry Battalion," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>; accessed 6 December 2015)
- ²⁰ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 662
- ²¹ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ²² "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIN&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ²³ "Private Harry Woodacre," Canadian Great War Project, (<http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/searches/soldierDetail.asp?ID=74317>; accessed 3 December 2015)
- ²⁴ "Canada, Military Honours and Awards Citation Cards, 1900-1961," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for H Woodacre
- ²⁵ "Military Medal," *Veteran's Affairs Canada* (<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/orders-decorations/mm>; accessed 3 December 2015)
- ²⁶ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Henry Woodacre, Registration district: Surrey, Inferred County: Middlesex, Volume: 1d, Page: 1074
- ²⁷ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Laura Woodacre, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: Northumberland, District Number: 107, Sub-District: Point Murray (Township), Sub-District Number: 33, City, Town or Village: Murray
- ²⁸ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for Walter Woodacre, Marriage County or District: Hastings
- ²⁹ "Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Walter Woodacre
- ³⁰ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for Mary Emily Woodacre, Marriage County or District: Hastings
- ³¹ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869-1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939-1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for James Woodacre
- ³² "Yorkshire Marriages," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2016), entry for Annie Elizabeth Woodacre, County: Yorkshire (West Riding), Archive: Sheffield Archives & Local Studies, Page: 16
- ³³ "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 January 2016), entry for Charles Wiggett, Registration district: Bakewell, Registration District Number: 439, Sub-registration district: Tideswell, ED, institution, or vessel: 9, Piece: 21224
- ³⁴ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869-1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939-1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 December 2015), entry for Emily Woodacre
- ³⁵ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869-1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939-1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 2 December 2015), entry for James Henry Woodacre
- ³⁶ Family source