

Private George Smart©
Regimental number: 164192
4th Canadian Infantry Battalion
1st Central Ontario Regiment

born: 26 April 1892 – died: 4 March 1918

George Smart was from Leith, Midlothian, Scotland and came to Canada in 1907¹ with his parents Charles (b. 1857) and Isabella (b. 1857) Swanson and one of his siblings, Henry (b.1898).² George was 17 years old when they arrived in Canada that May. The family settled in Hamilton, Ontario, with George's older brother, Joseph (b. 1888),³ who had been living in Canada for a little less than a year.⁴ The older men went to work at a local factory. Father Charles was a foreman, while Joseph worked as a photoengraver and George as a wood worker.⁵

George's parents were⁶ both from Leith, Midlothian, and George had at least two other siblings, Thomas (b. 1877) and James (b. 1878).⁷

By September 1915 George was living and working in Hamilton with his parents when he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). He was 23 years old, 5 feet 5 inches tall, with fair hair and complexion and blue eyes. He was single, employed as a machinist and had experience with the local militia. George enlisted in the 1st Central Ontario Regiment of the 4th Canadian Infantry Battalion.⁸

George's CEF file indicates that he sailed from Montreal on the SS *Corsican* on 25 September 1915, arriving in England on 4 October 1915. On arrival at the West Sandling Camp he was assigned to the 38th Battalion and then transferred to the 3rd Reserve Battalion on 4 January 1916. For the next year and a half George continued to train at West Sandling, with one period in the military hospital for close to a month with a case of venereal disease (gonorrhoea). At that time he was also disciplined with 10 days stoppage of pay for disobedience of a battalion order.⁹

In mid-November 1917 George was transferred to the 3rd Reserve Battalion; then he proceeded to the Canadian Corps Reinforcement Centre in France, where he joined a unit of the 4th Reserve Battalion. He remained in the field until his death four months later.¹⁰

On 4 March 1918 George Smart was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to the abdomen and chest. His wounds were listed as dangerous and he died that same day. He was 26 years of age.¹¹ He was one of 14 soldiers admitted to the clearing station that day.¹²

He was buried the next day at the Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension, 2½ miles southwest of Noeux-les-Mines, France. He is buried in Plot 2, Row E, Grave 7.¹³

Barlin is a village south-west of Bethune between the Bethune-Arras and Bethune-St. Pol roads. The Communal Cemetery and Extension lies to the north of the village on the road to Houchin.

The extension was begun by French troops in October 1914 and when they moved south in March 1916, it was used for burials by the 6th Casualty Clearing Station, largely for Commonwealth casualties. In November 1917, Barlin began to be shelled and the hospital was moved back to Ruitz. The extension was used again in March and April 1918 during the German advance on this front. It was

designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and contains 1095 Commonwealth, 63 French and 13 German burials from the First World War.¹⁴

Little further information could be found on George's parents, apart from the fact that his father died at age 76 in Wentworth, Ontario, in June 1934.¹⁵

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¹ "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), Date of Arrival: 31 May 1907, entry for Charles Smart and family

² "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Charles Smart, Province: Ontario, District: Hamilton East, District number: 77, Sub-district: 10-Ward Six, Sub-district number: 10

³ "1891 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Isabella Smart, Registration district: Leith South, Registration number: 692/2, Enumeration District: 52, Household schedule number: 76, Line: 1, Roll: CSSCT1891_367

⁴ "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), Date of Arrival: 27 Aug 1906, entry for Joseph Smart

⁵ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Charles Smart

⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928, 1928–1934," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Joseph Smart, Marriage county or district: York, Ontario, Canada

⁷ "1891 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Isabella Smart

⁸ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 20 February 2017) entry for George Smart, Regimental Number: 164192

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 25 July 2016), entry for Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension

¹² "War Diaries - 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *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=IM-AGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G: accessed 17 December 2017)

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869–1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 21 February 2017), entry for Charles Smart, Death date: 3 June 1934, Death place: Wentworth, Ontario, Canada