

**Gunner Harry Farrar**<sup>©</sup>  
**Regimental number: 776842**  
**“C” Company, 245th Brigade,<sup>1</sup> Royal Field Artillery**

**born: 1893–died: 28 July 1917**

Gunner Harry Farrar was born in 1893,<sup>2</sup> the son of George and Jane Elizabeth Farrar. He was baptized at St Cross Church, the parish church of Middleton, near Leeds, Yorkshire, on 19 October 1893.<sup>3</sup> George and Jane (née Clayton) were married on 27 December 1886 at St Hilda’s Church in Leeds.<sup>4</sup> They had five children—two died before 1911<sup>5</sup>—of whom four have been identified:

- Annie Elizabeth (born in 1887 and baptized on 10 April 1887 at St Cross)<sup>6</sup>
- Melia (born in 1889 but died at the age of 14 months and was buried in Hunslet Cemetery)<sup>7</sup>
- Emily (born in 1891 and baptized on 17 January 1892 at St Cross)<sup>8</sup>
- Harry

The identity of the fifth child, and the second to die in childhood, was not found.

In 1891, George, a coal miner, and Jane were living with their daughter Annie at 17 Atkinson Street in Stourton, near Leeds. The family would live in that house for nearly 50 years.

George died in 1894,<sup>9</sup> leaving Jane widowed with three children. Harry was just over a year old. In 1901, Jane Elizabeth was working as a domestic sick nurse to support her family. By 1911, two children were still at home with their mother—Emily was a worsted weaver and Harry was a packer in a steel warehouse. Jane Elizabeth’s sister, Alice Cromwell, and Jane’s nephew were living with them on Atkinson Street.

Harry probably enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force at the beginning of the war<sup>10</sup> and served with the 245th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery.<sup>11</sup> He went to France on 13 April 1915<sup>12</sup> and survived for nearly two years. In July 1917, the brigade was stationed near Furnes<sup>13</sup> and Nieuport, close to the Belgian–French border.<sup>14</sup> On 20 July, the brigade relieved the 330th Brigade and faced heavy enemy shelling. On 28 July the enemy artillery was very active and Harry may have been wounded in this attack. It was the day that Harry was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station<sup>15</sup> with shrapnel wounds to his face and a severe fracture of his lower jaw. He died the same day.

In July 1917, the No. 1 CCCS was stationed at Adinkerke, near the France-Belgium border. Harry was one of 248 admissions on 28 July.<sup>16</sup>

Harry was buried in Oosthoek Military Cemetery (Row B. Grave 6) in Adinkerke, about four kilometres southwest of Coxyde in Belgium. After the end of the war, his remains and those of 24 other soldiers were removed from this cemetery and reinterred in Coxyde Military Cemetery (Plot II, Row L, Grave 9).<sup>17</sup> The cemetery is near Coxyde (now known as Koksijde) on the Belgian coast of the North Sea. French troops established the cemetery. When Commonwealth forces relieved the French in June 1917, it became the most important Commonwealth cemetery on the Belgian coast.<sup>18</sup>

Harry was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914–15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).<sup>19</sup>

In 1907, Harry's eldest sister, **Annie**, married Robert Britten in Hunslet.<sup>20</sup> She died in 1938.<sup>21</sup> The following year, her husband was living in Leeds with two of their children—Robert Henry and Harry (possibly named after his uncle).<sup>22</sup>

Harry's second sister, **Emily**, married after the war. She wed Thomas Marshall on 24 December 1921 at St Andrew's Church in the parish of Stourton.<sup>23</sup> In 1939, they were living at 168 Kirkstall Hill in Leeds. Tom was a fish frier and owned a shop, and Emily appears to have worked in the shop with him. They had at least two children—Tom, born on 24 June 1923, and Annie, born on 9 June 1930.<sup>24</sup> Emily died in 1949 in Leeds.<sup>25</sup>

Harry's mother, **Jane Elizabeth**, was still living at 17 Atkinson Street when she died in 1938 at the age of 72.<sup>26</sup> She was buried in the Hunslet Cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> Harry's entry in the chaplains' journal indicates that he was with the "C" Company, 245th Battery, Royal Field Artillery. ("Search Name Index," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 5 September 2024), entry for Farrar, H., No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station) However, it is possible that there was confusion with this entry and that he served with the 245th Brigade. Other military records show him serving with this brigade.

<sup>2</sup> "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 March 2024) entry for Farrar, Harry [*sic*], Registration district: Hunslet, Volume: 09B, Page: 303

<sup>3</sup> "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813–1910," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 February 2024), entry for Harry Farrar

<sup>4</sup> "West Yorkshire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 February 2024), entry for Jane Elizabeth Clayton

<sup>5</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 5 January 2024), entry for Bruno Whittle, Registration district number: 501, Sub-registration district: Rothwell, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 9, Household schedule number: 05, Piece: 27170

<sup>6</sup> "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Farrar, Annie Elizabeth, Registration district: Hunslet, Volume: 09B, Page: 296; "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813–1910," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Ann Elizabeth Farrar [*sic*]

<sup>7</sup> "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Farrar, Melia, Registration district: Hunslet, Volume: 09B, Page: 312; "UK and Ireland Find A Grave Index, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Melia Farrar [*sic*]

<sup>8</sup> "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Farrar, Emily, Registration district: Hunslet, Volume 09B, Page 304; "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813–1910," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Emily Farrar [*sic*]; "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Emily Marshall, Schedule number: 40, Sub-schedule Number: 2, Enumeration district: Kgkl, Registration district: 500/3. The 1939 Register indicates that she was born on 20 November 1892; however, given a baptism date in January 1892, this is likely a mistake.

<sup>9</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 January 2024), entry for George Farrar [*sic*], Death registration place: Hunslet, Yorkshire West Riding, United Kingdom., Volume: 9b, Page: 210

<sup>10</sup> Based on "War Gratuity Calculator" (<https://wargratitude.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/gratuity-calculator/>: accessed 18 May 2017); "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 February 2024), entry for Harry Faitar [*sic*]

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- <sup>11</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Harry Farrar
- <sup>12</sup> "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 10 March 2024), entry for Harry Farrar
- <sup>13</sup> Furnes is the French name for the Belgian town, Veurne. ("Veurne," *Wikipedia* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veurne> : accessed 22 February 2024)
- <sup>14</sup> "245th Brigade R.F.A. War Diaries," *The National Archives* ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/): accessed 22 February 2024), Date: 1915 April–1918 Dec, Reference: WO 95-2781-3
- <sup>15</sup> A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who did not soon die or could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital. (Casualty Clearing Station," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty\\_Clearing\\_Station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station): accessed 2 May 2020)
- <sup>16</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/Pages/war-diaries.aspx>: accessed 26 March 2023)
- <sup>17</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 3 December 2024), entry for Gunner Harry Farrar; *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 29 February 2024), entry for Coxyde Military Cemetery
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 26 November 2024), entry for Harry Farrar
- <sup>20</sup> "England & Wales Marriages 1837–2005," *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Annie Elizabeth Farrer [*sic*], District: Hunslet, County: Yorkshire, Volume: 9B, Page: 645
- <sup>21</sup> "England & Wales Deaths 1837–2007," *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Annie E Britten, District: Leeds South, County: Yorkshire, Volume: 9B, Page: 522
- <sup>22</sup> "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 2 March 2024), entry for Robert Britten, Enumeration district: KGWX, Schedule number: 165, Sub-schedule number: 1, Piece number: 3486I, Item number: 11, Line number: 34
- <sup>23</sup> "West Yorkshire, England, Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 12 February 2024), entry for Emily Farrer [*sic*]
- <sup>24</sup> "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 12 February 2024), entry for Emily Marshall, Schedule number: 70, Sub-schedule number: 2, Enumeration district: Kgkl, Registration district: 500/3
- <sup>25</sup> "UK and Ireland Find A Grave Index, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 12 February 2024), entry for Emily Marshall
- <sup>26</sup> "UK and Ireland Find A Grave Index, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 21 February 2024), entry for Jane Elizabeth Farrer [*sic*]