

## WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

### Sergeant John Harold Chattaway Smith

**Sgt. John Harold Chattaway SMITH**, son of **Alfred SMITH** and **Harriet Ann ARCHAMBAULT**, was born on 7 Jan 1895 in Westmeath Township. He was the 9<sup>th</sup> of eleven children, six sisters and four brothers. His mother was born in Westmeath Twp., as well and his father was born in England. His paternal grandmother's maiden name was Chattaway.<sup>1</sup>



*Image 1: Sgt. Smith<sup>3</sup>*

Harold studied at Queen's University in the class of Sc.'17<sup>2</sup> however he enlisted as corporal into the 46<sup>th</sup> (Queen's) Battery, Canadian Expeditionary Force on Dec 7, 1915 at Kingston, Ontario.<sup>3</sup> He was 20 years old and listed his occupation as student. On his Attestation Papers, he was described as 5' 4 1/2" with fair complexion, grey eyes, and light brown hair.<sup>4</sup>

Later promoted to sergeant, Harold Smith served with the 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery and was killed in action on 26 Oct 1917 in Passchendaele, Belgium. It was in October that the Canadian commander, Lieut. Gen. Arthur Currie was ordered to take his four divisions to fight around Passchendaele which was just northeast of Ypres. The attack opened on Oct 26<sup>th</sup> and the conditions were horrible. With continuous rain and shellfire, troops had to fight their way through mud – waist-high in places. That first day, Sgt. Harold Smith was killed. More than 15,600 Canadians died during the battle at Passchendaele.<sup>5</sup>

Sgt. John Harold Chattaway Smith was buried in the Vlamertinghe New Military Cemetery at Ypres, Arrondissement Ieper, West Flanders, Belgium.<sup>6,7</sup>



Photo courtesy of Marg Liessens  
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*Image 2: Newspaper article<sup>2</sup>*



**John Harold Chattaway Smith, Sc. '17.**

Little "Smitty" gone out in the night! Queen's in general and Science Hall in particular have suffered heavy casualties recently, but none more deeply regretted than "Sgt. J. H. C."

"Smitty" came from Westmeath, but received his early education at Pembroke. After "mucking" in Cobalt, he came to Queen's on the mining course in 1913. Here, he was active in both soccer and rugby and well-known in social activities. When war broke out, "Smitty" signed up with the "Fifth" but after spending some time at Valcartier, transferred to the 46th Battery, with which he went overseas in February, 1916. And now, he has done his utmost for the Cause, "even unto the end."

*Image 3: Gravestone<sup>6</sup>*

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### Sources:

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3. Photograph of Sgt. John Harold Chattaway Smith, Queen's University, Queen's Remembers WWI, <https://archives.queensu.ca/wwi-smith-john-harold-chattawa>
4. "Personnel Records of the First World War." Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Digital images. Library and Archives Canada. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx>. <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item/?op=pdf&app=CEF&id=B9074-S040>
5. Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Passchendaele>
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10. A Street Near You, <https://astreetnearyou.org/person/143227/Sergeant-John-Harold-Chattaway-Smith>
11. Photograph of The Beachburg War Memorial, photographed by Fay Bennett
12. Photograph of The Westmeath War Memorial, photographed by Fay Bennett