

## PRIVATE JAMES SIMPSON

5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Yorkshire Regiment (Princess of Wales's Own) Service Number: 62308



Photograph from the Yorkshire Gazette 1915.

James was the son of John and Mary Ann Simpson (nee Trenam). He was born in Gillamoor on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1880 and baptised at the Parish Church in Kirkbymoorside on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1880. John, who was a farmer and came from Harome, and Mary Ann, who was born in Nawton, were married at All Saints Church, Helmsley in 1859. The family lived at Gales Farm, Gillamoor and then moved to farm in the 'Beast Market', Kirkbymoorside. Following his father's death in 1897, James with his brother William continued to work the farm and at the age of 21 years old his occupation on the 1901 census is given as 'teamster with horses'.

James married Beatrice Frank at St Mary's Church, Lastingham, in 1907 following the reading of the banns.

N <sup>o</sup> 304	Banns of Marriage between	
	<i>James Simpson (Gillamoor) of the parish</i>	
	and	
	<i>Beatrice Frank (Lastingham) of the parish of Lastingham</i>	
	Were published, as follows:	
1st, on Sunday	<i>Dec 22</i>	by <i>H. F. Wilton</i>
2d, on Sunday	<i>Jan 10</i>	by <i>H. F. Wilton</i>
3d, on Sunday	<i>Jan 26</i>	by <i>H. F. Wilton</i>

Beatrice was the daughter of Charles and Mary Jane Frank. Her family lived in Hutton le Hole and Charles, who was a well-known preacher in the area, ran the post office and the village stores, in the house now known as the Old Post Office. Following their marriage James was employed as a groom and he and Beatrice came to live in the village and had a son Frank, who was born in 1907.

James was a keen sportsman and played for the village cricket team.



Hutton Le Hole Cricket Festival 21<sup>st</sup> August 1913  
(B L Dorman XI versus Hutton)

At the outbreak of the First World War James enlisted in Malton on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1914. His attestation papers give his occupation as 'grocer' and indicate that he had previously served in the Yorkshire Reserves. His medical report states that he was 5ft 4 inches tall and at the age of 34 years and 6 months old considered fit for service in the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Yorkshire Regiment.

Unfortunately no further papers of his service appear to have survived and it has not been possible to determine where James served or when he was demobilised.

It is known however, that he returned to the village and lived with his wife at the Post Office, where at the time of the 1939 survey he and Beatrice were employed as postman and post mistress. James was one of three Air Raid Wardens in the village during World War Two. Every local council was responsible for organising ARP wardens and from 1 September 1939, ARP Wardens enforced the "blackout". Heavy curtains and shutters were required on all private residences, commercial premises, and factories to prevent light escaping and so making them a possible target for enemy bombers to locate their targets.

A report on the 1937 Village Fair reads that J Simpson won first prize in the most original man section of the Fancy Dress Competition. He was dressed as Steve Donoghue (1884-1945) who was champion flat race jockey ten times.

He attended Parish meetings for many years and was their representative on the Village Hall Management Committee and one of the original members of the Trust for the Hall. He and his wife Beatrice donated a cast iron umbrella stand to the hall when it opened in 1939 and this is still in use today. The Post Office was next door to the Village Hall and they donated a strip of land at the south of their garden to allow access to the rear of the hall and its garden.

James died in 1960 at the age of 79 years old.

