

Norman Smith (1894–1952)

Born 10 January 1894, Norman worked as a joiner before the war. Enlisting in the Royal Fusiliers he entered France in November 1915. The Derbyshire Times dated 24th August 1918 reported him as a Prisoner of War, which he remained for nine months before repatriation. Sgt Smith was captured in April near Albert, and after six weeks work behind the lines he was moved to the N.C.O.'s camp, Parchim Mechlinberg. The journey made in cattle trucks, with 40 in a truck, took three days, during this time they had neither food nor water.



After the war he became a well-known local businessman and involved himself fully in parish matters. The family of Norman and Henry Victor Smith arranged for the Rood Screen to be returned and replaced in St Mary's Church in memory of their safe return. He married Iva C Paige in 1922 and died in 1952 aged fifty-eight.

Derbyshire Courier, 17 August 1918

Mr and Mrs J R Smith of Ashbourne House, Crich, who had heard nothing from their son, Sgt Norman Smith, for over three months, were greatly relieved to get news of him on Wednesday of last week. Writing from an internment camp at Kriegsfangenin, Nitsche, on 13th April, Sgt Smith says he was taken prisoner during the German push on 5 April.

"I was lucky to get out of it alive," he says. A card and another letter have also been received from him, and he states that he is quite well and has no complaints to make with regard to the treatment is receiving. Sgt Smith, who has seen considerable fighting with the Royal Fusiliers, to which she was attached, crossed to France nearly three years ago. He joined the Public Schools' Battalion on entering the army, being an old Wirksworth Grammar School boy.

Derbyshire Times 1952

Mr. Norman Smith (58) died on Wednesday at his home, "Penfold", Crich. He had never fully recovered from a serious illness in November last year. He leaves a widow and one daughter. The third son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Roe Smith, of Crich, Mr. Smith was well known in Crich and district. Educated at Wirksworth Grammar School, he joined the Public Schools' Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers on the outbreak of the Great War and served on the Western Front. For nine months he was a prisoner-of-war in Germany. On demobilisation he and his eldest brother took over their father's old established business and formed the partnership of Smith Bros., builders and contractors.

For the last 25 years he has been prominent in the public life of Crich, positions he had held at various times including Foundation member, Chairman and Treasurer of Crich Comrades Club up to the time of his death, Chairman of Crich British Legion, People's Warden at Crich Parish Church, Manager of Crich C.E. Schools, Chairman of Crich Conservative Association, member of Finance and General Purposes Committee of Belper Conservative Association, Crich Parish Council, Crich Old People's Welfare Committee and Matlock and District Building Trades Employers Association. For the last three years he had represented the Crich Division on the Derbyshire County Council, but on medical, advice did not seek re-election at the recent elections.

Medal Card Index

He was awarded the British War, Victory and 15-Star Medals.