

# John Francis Smith or Allen

Born in Yarnbrook 1893

Lost at sea 2 December 1914

John was an Able Seaman on board HMS Angler, part of the Portsmouth Local Defence Flotilla, when he was washed overboard with two shipmates in heavy weather. His body was not recovered for burial, but he is remembered on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial, but is not included (under either name) on the North Bradley memorials.

See John Francis Allen's entry on Lives of the First World War at:  
<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.org/lifestory/6291026>

## **Father: John Smith**

Probably born and brought up in Yarnbrook, did various labouring jobs over the years and was a hawker at one time.

## **Mother: Martha Allen**

Born and brought up in Hawkeridge, a charwoman

Although John Francis Smith was recorded in that name in some records, he served as John Francis Allen. Allen was his mother's maiden name; he was born 1<sup>st</sup> June 1893, her marriage to John Smith was the following quarter. The Royal Navy may have encouraged him to use Allen, as there was another John Francis Smith, born the same year, also serving in the Navy, but born in London. John was brought up in Yarnbrook. At 17 years old in 1910, he joined the Navy as a 'Boy' – described as being 5' 4<sup>3/4</sup>" tall, with brown hair, grey eyes, fresh complexion and with a "small cicatrix [scar] on nape of neck". The Navy seems to have fed him better than he would have been at home; by the time he was 18 (only 8 months later) he had grown 2" in height.

### **G/father**

James Smith  
b. N.B., Ag.  
Lab.

Raised a family of 3 in  
Yarnbrook

### **G/mother**

Sarah Hales  
b. N.B.,  
Charwoman

### **G/father**

James Allen  
b. Hawkeridge, Ag  
Lab

Raised a family of 6  
in Hawkeridge

### **G/mother**

Ann Gumm(?)  
b. Hawkeridge,  
Laundress

John had two sisters and a brother, as well as uncles and aunts, so it is highly likely there are living relatives somewhere.