

Ivan Walter Smith

Private, Royal Marine Light Infantry. Went to the Admiralty School at Plymouth as bugler at the age of fourteen, in 1909. Went into the ranks of the R.M.L.I. in 1912. Served during the war with the Grand Fleet in the North Sea. Washed overboard from *H.M.S. Bellona*, January 7th, 1918. General Service and Victory Medals.



IVAN WALTER SMITH was born in Marylebone in 1895 and registered under the name Walter Woodgate Smith. The first record of him is in 1901 when he was five years old and was boarding with Jacob and Mary Smith in Staverton near Melksham – he is recorded there as Ivan Walter Woodgate, which is the name he used during his military service. It is presumed that Jacob and Mary were his grandparents – they had previously lived in Paul Street in Corsham.

His service record shows that he enlisted for the Royal Marines on 11th June 1909, when he was only 14, and went to the Admiralty School in Plymouth. In 1911 Ivan Walter is recorded as being at Dartmouth as a Bugler in the Royal Marine Light Infantry. His grandmother Mary Smith, now a widow, was living in Plymouth in 1911, close to Stonehouse Barracks where Ivan would have been based.

Sadly, the only later record is of his death on 7th January 1918, when he was lost overboard while serving on *HMS Bellona*. He was only 22. His grandmother Mary is recorded as his next of kin, living at Halfway Firs in Corsham. It is not known if Ivan Walter himself ever lived in Corsham.