

DISCLAIMER

This biography is a rough draft and a work-in-progress.
The research has not been completed, so there may be errors and omissions.
Please return to Tuscania1918.org in the future to see if a revised and
finalized version is available.

Abbreviations:

b = born

d = died

F: = Find A Grave (www.findagrave.org)

NOK = next-of-kin

TUSCANIA

Smith, Joseph Lawrence
1890 NY – 1931 NY

Services Tonight For Joseph L. Smith

Funeral services for Joseph Lawrence Smith, one of the eight Flushing men aboard the troop transport *Tuscania* bound from France when it was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland in 1919, will be held this evening at his home, 33-25 200th St., Bay-side West.

Interment will be Wednesday morning in Flushing Cemetery, with military honors by the William A. Leonard Post, American Legion.

Smith, who was 42, died suddenly at his home Sunday.

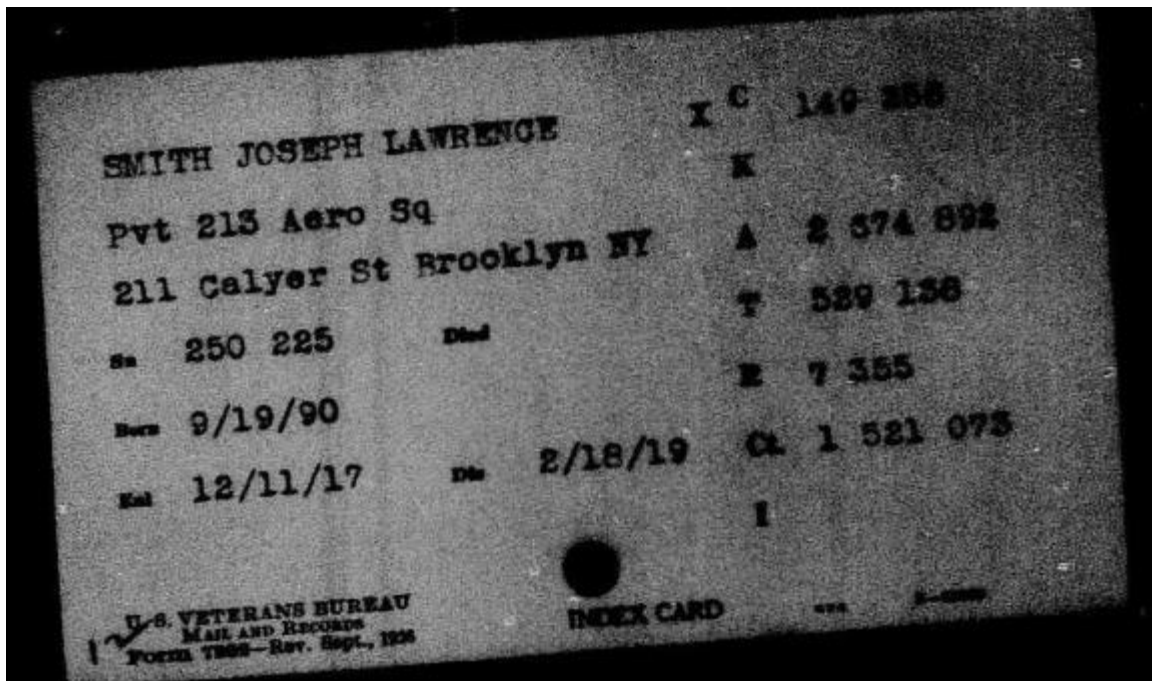
He had resided in Flushing all his life and was a member of the 218th Airplane Squadron. At the time of his death he was associated with the Bureau of Sewers.

The deceased is survived by his widow, Margaret Smith; his mother, Mrs. Isabella Smith; a sister, Mrs. Clara Roberts, and one brother, George Smith.

Obituary of Joseph Lawrence Smith – “Brooklyn Daily Eagle” Tuesday 10 Nov 1931 p 28

New York, U.S., New York Guard Service Cards, 1906-1918, 1940-1948 for Joseph Lawrence Smith		
Simpson, Howard A. - Strauss, Harry		
NAME	Smith, Joseph Lawrence	
DATE OF ENLISTMENT	Feb. 23, 1915	Age 21
GRADE	Pvt.	
ORGANIZATION	Co. I, 10th Inf.	

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/6081/images/41764_319669-01530?pId=247948



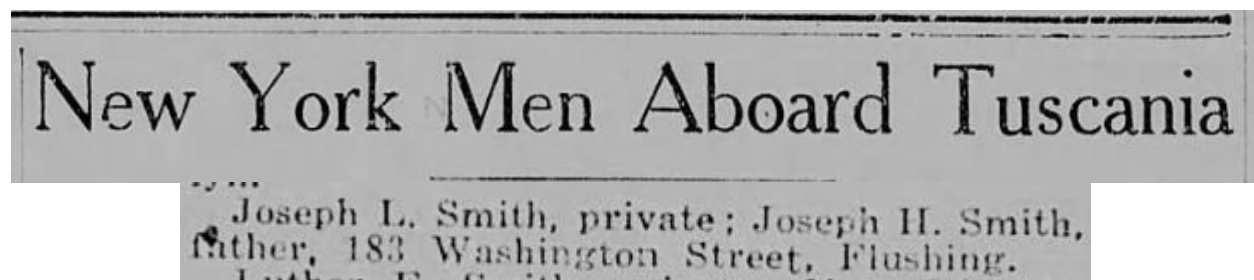
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MW-C7L6-2?cc=2968245&personUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AWQZQ-QNPZ>

Name	Joseph L. Smith
Sex	Male
Christening Place	Queens, New York, United States
Christening Place (Original)	Queens Co., New York, United States
Birth Date	19 Sep 1890
Birthplace	Flushing
Race	w
Ethnicity	American
Father's Name	Joseph H.v. Smith
Father's Sex	Male
Father's Age	32
Mother's Name	Isabel L. Bennett Smith
Mother's Sex	Female
Mother's Age	30
Event Type	Christening
Note	, QUEENS CO., NEW YORK

NY birth record - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FDLR-B5W>

Name **Joseph L. Smith**
 Sex **Male**
 Age **41**
 Death Date **8 Nov 1931**
 Death Place **Queens, New York City, New York, United States**
 Death Place (Original) **New York City, Queens, New York, United States**
 Birth Year (Estimated) **1890**
 Father's Name **Joseph H V. Smith**
 Father's Sex **Male**
 Mother's Name **Isabella Bennett**
 Mother's Sex **Female**
 Spouse's Name **Margaret K. Smith**
 Spouse's Sex **Female**
 Event Type **Death**
 Record Type **death**
 Certificate Number **item 1 p 7116**

NY death record - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2W2B-S9S>



"New York Tribune" Friday 8 Feb 1918 p 2

MORE TUSCANIA MEN WIRE HOME

Many Brooklyn and Long Isl- and Victims Heard From.

The list of Brooklyn and Long Island men on the Tuscania who have been heard from since the disaster, grew longer today. Some of the men cabled briefly of their safety; others were reported safe in cablegrams sent by comrades.

The names of those whose arrival in Ireland has been made certain of, are as follows:

[list continues]

S.
Andrew D. Siclen, Seminole avenue,
Holts.
Alvin J. Samuels, 227 Ridgewood
avenue.
Corporal Henry L. Shaw, Mineola.
Harold R. Stevenson, Sea Cliff.
Ernest G. Sander, Roosevelt.
Henry P. Senior, jr., 148 Hancock
street.
Joseph L. Smith, Flushing.
Luther E. Smith, Port Jefferson.
Arthur L. Stranbrough, Huntington.

T.
[list continues]

"Brooklyn Times Union" Saturday 9 Feb 1918 p 2

SERVICE FLAG RAISED.

Washington Street Residents Honor Men in Service.

Flushing, July 16.—Residents of Washington street, between Union street and Bowne avenue, have raised a service flag for the four young men of that block who have entered the service. The flag is suspended across the street in the middle of the block. The flag was purchased by the children of the block, who saved their pennies for two months. On either side of the service flag are American flags. The stars on the flag are for the following men:

Private Joseph Lawrence Smith, of 183 Washington street, who is in London with the 213th Aero Squadron, and who survived the sinking of the *Tuscania*.

Sergeant Leonard E. Pratt, of 186 Washington street, who is with the Fifty-first Pioneer Infantry at Camp Wadsworth, S. C.

Corporal George A. Wilson, 186 Washington street, who is with the U. S. Ambulance Corps at Allentown, Pa.

Private John F. Manning, 190 Washington street, who is with the 803d Infantry in France.

“Brooklyn Times Union” Tuesday 16 Jul 1918 p 9

SOLDIER SHIPWRECKED GOING AND COMING

Pvt. Lawrence Smith, Aviation Corps, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Smith, of 183 Washington st., Flushing, holds the distinction of having been twice shipwrecked, once on his way overseas on the *Tuscania* last February and again on the Northern Pacific at Fire Island, last week.

Both his outgoing ship – “*Tuscania*” – and his incoming ship – “*Northern Pacific*” were shipwrecked – “Brooklyn Daily Eagle” Tuesday 7 Jan 1919 p 12

IN TWO SHIPWRECKS.

Flushing, Jan. 7.—Lawrence Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Smith, of 183 Washington street, holds the distinction of having been twice shipwrecked, once on his way overseas when a German submarine torpedoed the Tuscania last February and again when the Northern Pacific went aground off Fire Island. Smith went to France with the 351st Aero Squadron. Eleven other Flushing boys were rescued with Smith. Smith was landed at Ellis Island Sunday and was given several hours leave in which to visit his home.

"Brooklyn Times Union" Tuesday 7 Jan 1919 p 6

Father:

Joseph H. Smith Dies; Funeral Services Tonight

Joseph H. Smith, 66 years old, a lifelong resident of Flushing, who for many years conducted a laundry business on Main street, died Sunday at his home, 183 Washington street, Flushing, after a brief illness of heart trouble.

He was born in Washington street, Flushing, and had always lived in that street. Twenty-five years ago he was employed as a stationary engineer in Yonkers. Later he started in the laundry business in Flushing. He sold the business and secured a position as a letter carrier in Flushing, believing that the constant walking might reduce his weight. He weighed 317 pounds. Instead of reducing, however, he gained weight. After resigning as a letter carrier he secured employment with the Long Island News Company in Jamaica, where for some time he was in charge of the stockroom and also acted as relief clerk at different newsstands.

Mr. Smith was a member of the Odd Fellows, Foresters of America, and the Flushing Exempt Firemen's Association. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Isabelle Smith, and three children, Lawrence, of Brooklyn; Mrs. R. R. Roberts and Mrs. George W. Smith, of Flushing.

Funeral services will be conducted at 8 o'clock this evening at his late home by the Rev. Benjamin Mottam, of St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel, of College Point. Burial will take place tomorrow morning in the family plot in Flushing Cemetery.

Name	Joseph H. V. Smith
Sex	Male
Age	66
Burial Date	22 Oct 1924
Death Date	19 Oct 1924
Death Place	Queens, New York City, New York, United States
Death Place (Original)	New York City, Queens, New York, United States
Birth Date	20 Jul 1858
Birthplace	NY
Marital Status	Married
Occupation	Stock Clerk
Race	White
Father's Name	Robert Smith
Father's Sex	Male
Father's Birthplace	NY
Mother's Name	Elizabeth Kane
Mother's Sex	Female
Mother's Birthplace	NJ

Spouse's Name **Isabella L. Smith**

Event Type **Death**

Certificate Number **cn 4434**

Additional Relatives **X**

Cemetery **Flushing Cemetery**

Father Joseph Henry Vedder Smith's NY death record -
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2W2L-H2G>

Joseph H Smith

Marriage • New York, New York City Marriage Records, 1829-1938

Name	Joseph H Smith
Sex	Male
Age	27
Birth Year (Estimated)	1858
Father's Name	Robert
Father's Sex	Male
Mother's Name	Mary E Cain
Mother's Sex	Female
Spouse's Name	Isabella Louisa Bennett
Spouse's Sex	Female
Spouse's Age	25
Spouse's Birth Year (Estimated)	1860
Spouse's Father's Name	George Wm
Spouse's Father's Sex	Male
Spouse's Mother's Name	Amilia Raily
Marriage Date	30 Dec 1885
Marriage Place	Kings, New York, United States
Event Type	Marriage
Source Details	4319

NY marriage record of parents - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2CF-LSCF>

Mother:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Borough of Queens		Certificate of Death		Certificate No. 5934
FILED 1944 JUL 29 AM 9 55				
1. NAME OF DECEASED Isabella L. Smith		None		
(Print or Type)		Social Security Number		
PERSONAL PARTICULARS (To be filled in by Funeral Director)		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH (To be filled in by the Physician)		
2 USUAL RESIDENCE: (a) State New York (b) Co. Queens (c) City, Town or Village Flushing (d) No. 142-26 - 37 Avenue Ave. No. Life (e) Length of residence or stay in City of New York immediately prior to death		16 PLACE OF DEATH: (a) NEW YORK CITY: (b) Borough Queens (c) Name of Hospital 142-26 - 37 Avenue or Institution (If not in hospital or institution, give street and number.) (d) Length of stay at place of death immediately prior to death 41 Years		
3 SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED (circle the word) Widow		17 DATE AND HOUR OF DEATH (Month) (Day) (Year) (Hour) July 28 1944 3:20AM		
4 WIFE Joseph H. Smith		18 SEX Female 19 COLOR OR RACE White 20 Approximate Age 83		
5 DATE OF BIRTH OF DECEASED (Month) (Day) (Year) November 9 1860		21 I HEREBY CERTIFY that (I attended the deceased) * (a) staff physician of this institution attended the deceased * from July 9 1944 to July 28 1944 and last saw him alive at 6 PM July 27 1944 Statement of cause of death is based on (autopsy) (operation) (laboratory test) (clinical findings) * (Cross out terms that do not apply.)		
6 AGE 83 yrs. 8 mos. 18 days hrs. or min.		Principal cause of death Cerebral hemorrhage Date of Onset 7/9/44 (non-traumatic)		
7 Occupation A Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinners, Housewife sewer, bookkeeper, etc. B Industry or business in which work was done, as at a mill, sawmill, bank, own business, etc.		Contributory causes and other conditions arteriosclerosis 4/1/43 and hypertension		
8 BIRTHPLACE OF DECEASED: (a) State or Country New York (b) County New York City, Town or Village New York		Autopsy: none Operation: none Date of none (If none, so state) Date of none (If none, so state)		
9 OF WHAT COUNTRY WAS DECEASED A CITIZEN AT TIME OF DEATH? United States		Condition for which performed: Edward Forey M. D. Address 149-26 Northern Blvd. Apt. 2-28-44		
10 WAS DECEASED WAR VETERAN? IF SO, NAME WAR No		Signature Edward Forey M. D.		
11 NAME OF FATHER OF DECEASED George William Bennett		Address 142-26-37 Ave.		
12 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country) England		Relationship to Deceased Daughter		
13 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER OF DECEASED Amelia Riley		Address 142-26-37 Ave.		
14 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country) England		Address 142-26-37 Ave.		
15 SIGNATURE OF INFORMANT Mara Roberts		Address 142-26-37 Ave.		
22 PLACE OF BURIAL OR CREMATION Flushing Cem.		DATE OF BURIAL OR CREMATION July 31 1944		
23 FUNERAL DIRECTOR Fairchild Son Inc.		ADDRESS 151-36 Northern Blvd. PERMIT NUMBER 1654		
BUREAU OF VITAL RECORDS AND STATISTICS		DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH		CITY OF NEW YORK

NY death record of mother Isabella Louise Bennett Smith – Find A Grave 194439221

Name	Isabella L Smith
Sex	Female
Age	83
Death Date	28 Jul 1944
Death Place	Queens, New York City, New York, United States
Death Place (Original)	New York City, Queens, New York, United States
Birth Year (Estimated)	1861
Marital Status	Unknown
Father's Name	George William Bennett
Father's Sex	Male
Mother's Name	Amelia Riley
Mother's Sex	Female
Spouse's Name	Joseph H Smith
Spouse's Sex	Male
Event Type	Death
Record Type	death
Certificate Number	1314

NY death record of mother - <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2WLH-G79>

Siblings:

Sex	Unknown
Death Date	7 Aug 1894
Death Place	Flushing, Queens, New York, United States
Death Place (Original)	Flushing, Queens Co., New York, United States
Birthplace	Flushing
Father's Name	Joseph Smith
Father's Sex	Male
Mother's Name	Isabel Bennett Smith
Mother's Sex	Female
Event Type	Death
Cemetery	Flushing

Sibling who died 7 Aug 1894 in Flushing, Queens NY -
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FD17-YX8>

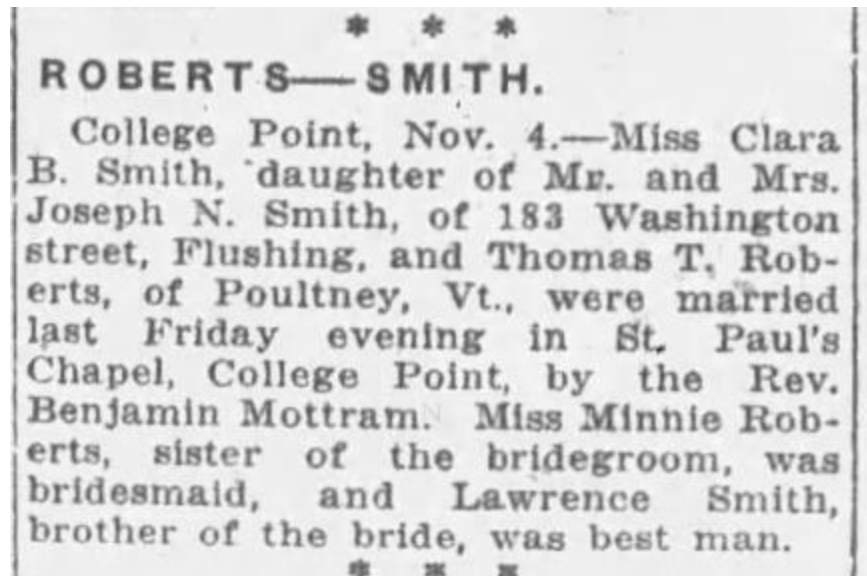
Name	Isabelle Louise Bennett Smith
Sex	Female
Birth Date	26 Mar 1899
Birthplace	New York City, Queens, New York, United States
Birthplace (Original)	Flushing, Queens, New York
Race	White
Father's Name	Joseph H. V. Smith
Father's Age	40
Father's Birthplace	Flushing, N.Y.
Mother's Name	Isabelle Louise Bennett Smith
Mother's Age	38
Mother's Birthplace	N.Y. City, N.Y.
Event Type	Birth

NY birth record of **sister Clara B. Smith** – listed with the same name as her mother Isabella Louise Bennett Smith, born 26 Mar 1899 -
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:27YH-RBK>

QUEENS MARRIAGE LICENSES

Thomas Roberts, 25, 11 Main st.,
 Flushing; Clara B. Smith, 20, 183 Wash-
 ington st., Flushing:

Marriage license of **sister Clara B. Smith** & Thomas Roberts - "Brooklyn Times Union"
 Friday 31 Oct 1919 p 13



Marriage of Clara B. Smith & Thomas T. Roberts of VT – “Brooklyn Times Union” Tuesday 4 Nov 1919 p 7

New York, New York, Index to Birth Certificates, 1866-1909

[View record](#)

Name	George William Smith
Gender	Male
Race	White
Birth Date	16 Aug 1903
Birth Place	Queens, New York City, Queens, New York, USA
Residence Address	Washington Street 183
Certificate Number	2369
Father	Joseph Smith
Mother	Isabella Bennett Smith
Mother Maiden Name	Bennett

NY birth record of **brother George William Smith**, b. 16 Aug 1903 Queens NY, his family residing at 183 Washington St. - <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/157778647/person/252078245690/facts>

Name	George William Smith
Sex	Male
Birth Date	10 Aug 1903
Birthplace	Queens, New York, United States
Race	W
Ethnicity	American
Father's Name	Joseph Smith
Father's Sex	Male
Father's Age	45
Father's Birth Year (Estimated)	1858
Father's Birthplace	U. S.
Mother's Name	Esabella Bennett Smith
Mother's Sex	Female
Mother's Age	43
Mother's Birth Year (Estimated)	1860
Mother's Birthplace	U. S
Event Type	Birth

NY birth record of George William Smith -
<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:HWFY-NTMM>

Name: Joseph Lawrence Smith

Name variations: used Lawrence or J. Lawrence, likely to differentiate from his father, also named Joseph

Military:

On Tuscania: 213th Aero Squadron - private

Serial number: 250,225

Entered service from: Flushing, Queens NY

Sailed on "Tuscania" as: Joseph L. Smith

Next-of-kin on "Tuscania": father Joseph H. Smith, 183 Washington St., Flushing NY

Returned from war on: "Northern Pacific" Dec 1918, "walking cases requiring dressing" to Debarkation Hospital

Sailed on return ship as: Jos. L. Smith

Next-of-kin on return ship & rank: father Joseph H. Smith, 183 Washington St., Flusing [sic/Flushing], Long Island NY (pvt, Aero Sq)

World War I draft registration (1917): as Joseph Lawrence Smith – b. 19 Sep 1890 Flushing, Long Island NY; res: 183 Washington, Flushing, Long Island NY. Single. Lathe operator, Bethlehem Steel Co., South Bethlehem PA. Military experience: private, National Guard, 1 ½ years, NY state. Medium height & build, with red hair. Card is not dated; he registered in Northampton PA.

Veterans Administration Military Index:

Enlisted: 11 Dec 1917

Discharged: 19 Feb 1919

Address: 211 Calyer St., Brooklyn NY

Rank/unit: private, 213th Aero Squadron

Birth & death:

Born: 19 Sep 1890 Flushing, Queens NY

Died: 8 Nov 1931 Queens, New York City NY

Find A Grave record: 131406999 – presence on Tuscania indicated in flower

Burial location: Flushing, Queens NY

Cemetery: Flushing

Tombstone: veteran tombstone: New York Pvt 213th Aero Sq

Father: Joseph Henry Vedder Smith, 20 Jul 1858 Flushing, Queens NY – 19 Oct 1924 Queens Co. NY. Son of Robert Smith (b. NY) & Elizabeth Kane (b. NJ). Operated a laundry in Flushing NY & was a letter carrier, then employed by the Long Island News Co. Weighed 317 pounds while a letter carrier. Buried in Flushing Cemetery, Flushing, Queens NY. Find A Grave: 194439393

Mother: Isabella Louise Bennett Smith, Nov 1860 Kings Co. (Brooklyn) NY – 28 Jul 1944 Queens Co. NY. Daughter of George William Bennett & Amelia Riley. Buried in Flushing Cemetery, Flushing, Queens NY.

Find A Grave: 194439221

Parents' marriage: 30 Dec 1885 Kings Co. NY

Spouse: Margaret C. --- Smith, ca. 1894 NY. Parents b. Ireland. Listed as his surviving widow in Nov 1931.

Spouse Find A Grave:

Marriage: ca. 1920, based on responses in the 1930 census as to Joseph's & Margaret's ages when married.

Children:

Siblings: An additional sibling had died between the 1900 & 1910 censuses. Joseph Lawrence was the oldest child.

- Infant Smith, b. Flushing, Queens NY – d. 7 Aug 1894 Flushing, Queens NY. Buried in Flushing Cemetery, Flushing, Queens NY but not on Find A Grave as of 18 Dec 2022.
- Clara B. Smith Roberts, 26 Mar 1899 NYC, Queens [in 1900 census] - Her NY birth record lists her name as Isabelle Louise Bennett Smith. Listed as Mrs. R.R. Roberts of Flushing NY in her father's Oct 1924 obituary. She is listed with Thomas L. Roberts in the 1930 census. A Clara B. Smith married Thomas S. Roberts on 31 Oct 1919 in Queens NY. The newspaper account calls him Thomas T. Roberts.
- George William Roberts, 16 Aug 1903 NYC, Queens NY - Resident of Flushing NY in Oct 1924 when his father died.

Notes:

Pre-war:

Wartime:

1918 address: 183 Washington St., Flushing NY

Severely wounded 21 Oct 1918

Post-war:

Obituary:

Censuses:

1892 NY state census – Flushing, Queens NY

Joseph H.V. Smith, 34 US, laundry

Isabel L., 32 US

Joseph Laurence [sic], 2 US

[all are citizens]

1900 Queens, Queens NY – 154 Washington St.

Joseph H. Smith, 39 NY, Jul 1860, father b. NY, mother b. NJ, married 12 years, letter carrier [misindexed & misread as "letter passer"]

Isabella, 39 NY, Nov 1860, parents b. England, gave birth to 2 children, 2 are living

J. Lawrence, 9 NY, Sep 1890, at school

Clara B., 1 NY, Mar 1899

1910 Queens, Queens NY – 183 Washington St.

H. Joseph Smith, 51 NY, father b. NY, mother b. PA, in 1st marriage, married 24 years, stable manager, wholesale groceries

Isabella, 49 NY, parents b. England, in 1st marriage, gave birth to 5 children, 3 are living

Laurence [sic], 20 NY, clerk, exporting house

Clara, 11 NY

George, 6 NY

1920 Queens, Queens NY – 183 Washington St. – the census enumerator wrote down the actual city of birth, then crossed it off & added just the state

Joseph L.H. Smith, 61 NY, parents b. NY [born Flushing]

Isabella, 59 NY, parents b. England [b. NYC] [wife]

Joseph, 29 NY, single, mechanic, automobiles [born Flushing] [son]

George W., 16 NY, single, salesman, department store [born Flushing] [son]

Thomas L. Roberts, 25 VT, bookkeeper, insurance [?] company [son-in-law]

Clara B. Roberts, 20 NY, parents b. NY [born Flushing] [listed as wife, Joseph & Isabella's married daughter Clara Smith Roberts]

1930 Queens, Queens NY – 33-24 – 200th St.

Joseph L. Smith, 39 NY, parents b. NY, age 29 at 1st marriage, chauffeur, commercial, WWI veteran

Margaret C., 36 NY, parents b. Ireland, age 26 at 1st marriage [wife]