



BAINES, William

Nationality: United Kingdom

Rank: Private

Regiment: Essex Regiment 1st Battalion.

88th Brigade, 29th Division



Age: 22

Killed in action: 14/04/1917

Service No: 16346

Additional information: Son of Joseph and Mary Ann Baines, of The Foul, Blackheath, Colchester. 1901 census shows William Baines aged 5 born & living at Donyland listed as a Scholar. At the time of his death Blackheath was part of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Fingringhoe. His name appeared on a list of men, from the Parish of Fingringhoe who served in World War 1, which was originally held in Saint Andrew's Church. However, his name was not subsequently incorporated on the permanent memorial in the Church.

He went to France on the 30th August 1915. He served in B Company 5 Platoon 1st Battalion (although originally joined the 11th Battalion) Born, Blackheath, Colchester, 19/06/1895. He attended the Canterbury Road School, from 6/06/1903, previously at Old Heath School. He left school 11/06/1909 and joined the British Red Cross (reference Essex Museum records Inquiry List 08/1917). Unconfirmed family report that he perished when the Germans set fire to a cornfield in which he and some of his comrades had taken refuge. However, his death was in April and the corn was presumably un-harvested from the previous year. In fact there are reports of snow & it is possible they were victims of flame throwers.



Entitled to 14/15 Star WO329/2748 as 11th Battalion to France 30/08/1915 (reference BWM/VM WO329/1376)

Name.	Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
BAINES	11/Essex R.	Pte	16346
W.			
Medal.	Roll.	Page.	Remarks.
VICTORY	K/2/102 B6	274	Pres. Dead. 14/4/17
BRITISH	do	do	
15 STAR	K/2/16 B.	613.	
Theatre of War first served in	W France.		
Date of entry therein	30-8-15.		

K. 1380.

The battle field at Monchy-le-Preux taken at the end of May showing corpses of horses.

18 January 1915 : attached to 88th Brigade, 29th Division .The Division were involved in the First Battle of the Scarpe - 9th - 14th April 1917. This was a major action during the Arras Offensive 9th April - 15th May 1917, by the 3rd Army of which 29th Division was part. The day 14/04/1917 is the battle of Monchy-le-Preux, which is very significant to both 1 Battalion the Essex and the Essex



Yeomanry. One of the most important campaigns in which the BEF was engaged, yet in comparison with the Somme of 1916 and Passchendaele of 1917, terribly neglected by historians. The British Army launched a large-scale attack at Arras as part of a master plan by new French Commander in Chief Robert Nivelle. Although initially successful, it soon bogged down and became a terribly costly affair. The British attack was against the formidable Hindenburg Line, to which the enemy had recently made a strategic withdrawal. The battle can be considered to be composed of a number of phases: the Battle of Vimy and the First Battle of the Scarpe were the opening phases; the Second and Third Battle of the Scarpe and the final Battle of Bullecourt and other actions against the Hindenburg Line concluded the fighting.

The 88th Brigade's operation was to be a two-battalion attack launched against Infantry Hill behind a creeping artillery barrage. The Newfoundland Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel James Forbes-Robertson, was on the right and the 1st Essex Battalion on the left.

At 5:30 a.m. on April 14, the British barrage opened and the two battalions began their advance. At the end of 90 minutes the Essex had taken their part of the Infantry Hill objective. But as the Newfoundland companies advanced, they were raked by machine-gun fire. Suffering heavy casualties the Newfoundlanders pressed on to occupy the enemy's forward trenches in front of Infantry Hill.



A Regimental Aid Post on the open Arras battlefield, 1917

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Bay 7.

Cemetery: ARRAS MEMORIAL



Also on the Colchester Town Hall Memorial



THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ABBERTON, EAST DONYPOND, FINGRINGHOE, LANGENHOE