

## Lance Corporal **BAKER**, CLIFFORD WILLIAM

King's Royal Rifle Corps 12th Battalion.

Age: 21

Died of Wounds Date of Death: 02/04/1918

Service No: R/19330(?9)



12th (Service) Battalion was formed at Winchester on 21 September 1914, as part of K2. September 1914: attached to 60th Brigade, 20th (Light) Division. The Division was inspected by HM King George V at Knighton Down on 24th June 1915, by which time all equipment had arrived and the Division was judged ready for war

26th July 1915: completed concentration in the Saint-Omer area, all units having crossed to France during the preceding few days. Early trench familiarisation and training took place in the Fleurbaix area. The Division then remained in the Western Front theatre. The action where Clifford fell started on the 21st March 1918.

Exceptionally heavy German shellfire hit all areas of British front occupied by Fifth Army, most of the front of Third Army, and some of the front of First Army, at 4.40am. The main weight of attack was between Arras and a few miles south of Saint-Quentin. The intense barrage was concentrated not on the infantry holding the forward posts, but on British artillery and machine-gun positions, headquarters, telephone exchanges, railways and other important centres of communications. In other words it was a very deep barrage designed to knock out the British ability to respond. German infantry began to attack between 7.00am and 9.40am. New infiltration tactics meant that infantry continued to probe forward through gaps regardless of what was happening either side, while follow-up units besieged and engaged British posts and defended villages. Many of these held out, and only fell once entirely surrounded and hopeless.

The battle raged on for several days, as the overwhelming numbers of Germans, 50 Divisions in the front against the BEF with a further 31 held as their Reserves. Ultimately, the Germans almost broke through the final line of defence held to a large extent by support rather than frontline troops. The Germans had advanced over the debris of 3 years fighting and re-supply became a problem. Clifford, who was assigned to a service Battalion fell during this final phase.

He was the son of Henry and Ellen Baker, of Ferry Rd., Fingringhoe, Colchester. He was born in Fingringhoe and enlisted at Colchester. In 1901 his father, Henry Baker was aged 43 having been born in Langenhoe & living in Fingringhoe working on a farm as a Horseman . Clifford had a brother Joseph, who was 18 (farmer), a sister Martha , who was 11 (school), a brother Alfred, who was 13 (Yardman on Farm). His sister Jessie was aged 8 and died during the war (1914-18) from natural causes. Clifford in 1901 was 4 , Dorothy was 4 months old and Lewis was not born then, nor Edith or Effie. Alfred worked on the farm & Colchester Trams. He later served as a Lance Corporal in the Royal Sussex Regiment.



1914-1919 Victory Medal; 1914-1920 War Medal

Name.		K. R. Ref. C	Rank Lete.	R/19330
BAKER				//
BAKER	.W.			
Medal,	Roll.	Page.	Hemari	DK.
VICTORY	M/10/8/2	7.3416		
BRITISH	Ldo-	1.3416.		
STAR				
Theatre of War first served in				
Date of entry therein				

Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 61 to 64

Cemetery: POZIERES MEMORIAL

The POZIERES MEMORIAL relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields, and



the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from 21 March to 7 August 1918. The Corps and Regiments most largely represented are The Rifle Brigade with over 600 names, The Durham Light Infantry with approximately 600 names, the Machine Gun Corps with over 500, The Manchester Regiment with approximately 500 and The Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery with over 400 names. The memorial encloses POZIERES BRITISH CEMETERY, Plot II of which contains original burials of 1916, 1917 and 1918, carried out by fighting units and field ambulances. The remaining plots were made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields immediately surrounding the cemetery, the majority of them of soldiers who died in the Autumn of 1916 during the latter stages of the Battle of the Somme, but a few represent the fighting in August 1918. There are now 2,755 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 1,375 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 23 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. The cemetery and memorial were designed by W H Cowlishaw.

## OTHER MEMORIALS Saint Andrew's Fingringhoe & the Methodist Chapel Fingringhoe





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