



NICHOLAS, WILLIAM JOHN

Nationality: United Kingdom

Rank: Lance Serjeant

Regiment: 4th (Queen's Own) Hussars

Died of wounds, France. Date of Death: 31/03/1918

Service No: 8112

He was born at St.Botolph's & lived in Colchester. He enlisted at Warley. The family home was Roman Hill Cottages, Berechurch. The 1901 Census shows his family as :-

Mother, Henrietta_Nicholas aged 32 born Thorpe Le Soken living in Essex Colchester. His father as Francis Nicholas aged 36 born Harris living in Essex Colchester working as a Foundry Labourer. His brother, Harold Nicholas aged 4 born & living in Colchester was also killed in the War serving in the Royal Navy. Another brother, Lionel Nicholas aged 9 months born & living in Colchester and William himself aged 6 born & living in Colchester. Lionel served in the Royal Navy on *H. M. S "Emperor of India"*.

4th (Queen's Own) Hussars at the outbreak of war in August 1914 were in Curragh, Ireland. They formed part of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, Cavalry Division. On the 6 September 1914 the Brigade transferred to Gough's Command, which on 13 September became 2nd Cavalry Division. They had four years of intermittent action that was to account for 549 casualties killed or wounded from the regiment and 22 battle honours. During the retreat from Mons, the 4th Hussars acquitted themselves well in the skirmishes and holding engagements, which allowed for an orderly withdrawal. They fought at Mons and nearby Ancre, before they were thrown into the defence of Ypres to prevent the Germans from reaching the Channel ports. In the first battle of Ypres Lieutenant North commanding the machine gun section was recommended for the Victoria Cross. There was some rest over Christmas, before in February 1915, the 4th were bought back into the line for the second battle of Ypres. The Germans used gas for the first time, in conjunction with their massive assault, but the tenacity of the allies prevented them gaining much ground. The 4th Hussars were spied during this encounter by the Brigade Commander. "*The Regiment advanced through the retreating infantry and the gas in the best possible style*". After Ypres, the cavalry were withdrawn to wait for the "Gap" but still had to provide working parties to dig the trenches initially and then form the cavalry dismounted division, which worked as infantry in the front line, taking one infantry company from each cavalry regiment. Between November 1915 and March 1917, the regiment was constantly warned off for the "Gap" but it never appeared. The spring offensive of 1917 provided another opportunity but the cavalry were stood by the river Scarpe inactive again; prior to two months uneventful duty in the trenches opposite the Hindenburg Line. The summer was spent out of the trenches and in the billets. The 4th were bought back to witness Cambrai, the first successful use of the tank in November, standing by for another breakthrough. This did not occur due to over exploitation in this case, rather than failure to punch through the German defences, as had been the case so many times before. In 1918, came the final German offensive launched on the 21st March, which hit the 4th Hussars at Compiegne on the Somme, costing

the regiment 129 casualties in one week. On the 30th March the 4th, as part of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade fought an important action at Moreuil Wood, stopping the advancing Germans from getting through the wood. The Commanding Officer, Lt Col Darley and sixteen others were killed before they were relieved by the infantry. William was one of these casualties. After some months rest the regiment followed the advancing allies, taking it's share of casualties through shelling, until on the 11th November it found itself at Villerot, ten miles north of Ancre, where it had started the War .



Name	Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
NICHOLAS	4/H.M.S.	Pte	8112.
W. J.			
Metal	Roll	Page	Honours
VICTORY			
BRITISH			
14 STAR			
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry thereina			
	15. 8. 14		

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 3 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 Cowlshaw. No. of Identified Casualties: 14650

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



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