



SIMONS, CHARLES WILLIAM



Private: The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment.) 8th Battalion. 72nd Brigade, 24th Division.

Age: 27

Killed in Action Date of Death: 21/08/1916

Service No: 957855 (also G/15276)

He had formerly served as number 12915 with the 11th Battalion Essex Regiment & had been in France 13 months prior to his death. He went on the 30th August 1915.



Surname	First Name	Rank	Regt. No.
SIMONS	A. Byfield Corps The Queen's R.	Pte	4341 18276
Charles			
Regt.	Unit	Rank	Remarks
18th	6/1/1915/10 420	6	Disch 21-8-16
	5/11/16	6	
theatre of War last entered in	(1) France		
theatre of War last entered in	30-8-16		

8th (Service) Battalion was formed at Guildford, September 1914, as part of K3. September 1914 and attached to 72nd Brigade, 24th Division. On the 25 May 1915 they landed in Boulogne; the Division served with distinction on the Western Front for the remainder of the war, taking part in most of the significant actions. The 24th Division was involved in the Battle of Delville Wood - 15th July - 3rd September 1916 just prior to Charles' death. He was killed in Action.



Communication trench Delville Wood July 1916 (c) Imperial War Museum Q4417

He was the eldest son of Charles and Mary Ann Simons, of "Merrythought", Regent St., Rowhedge, Colchester. He was born 13 June 1889 at East Donyland & baptised there on the 6th October 1889. His father was a renowned yacht captain, who had won the German Emperor's Cup with *Merrythought* in 1898 & another with *Irex* in 1902. Prior to the War, he had worked in the Grocery Department of the Colchester & East Essex Cooperative Society. He enlisted at Colchester.

1901 Census shows There are 2 sets of parents thus some of these children are possibly cousins :- Dorothy Simons aged 2, William aged 4, James & Sidney both aged 7, Claude aged 10, Charles himself aged 11, Emma 14 born & living in Rowhedge. There is Celestia Simons aged 17 working as a Mothers Help Domestic & Ruth Simons aged 19 working as Parlourmaid Domestic both born & living in Rowhedge. Charles Mother Mary Simons aged 47 & his father Charles Simons aged 49. They again are born & living in Rowhedge. His father is listed as a Mariner as shown above.

Charles himself had been a member of a local entertainment group called the "Scarlet Poms" & was noted for his comic songs



Charles is 5th from the right

Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead

Grave/Memorial Reference: Pier and Face 5 D and 6 D

Cemetery: THIEPVAL MEMORIAL



On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter. In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the

Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918. The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. The memorial also serves as an Anglo-French Battle Memorial in recognition of the joint nature of the 1916 offensive and a small cemetery containing equal numbers of Commonwealth and French graves lies at the foot of the memorial. The memorial, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, was built between 1928 and 1932 and unveiled by the Prince of Wales, in the presence of the President of France, on 31 July 1932. The dead of other Commonwealth countries who died on the Somme and have no known graves are commemorated on national memorials elsewhere.

No. of Identified Casualties: 72100

OTHER MEMORIALS Saint Lawrence Memorial Plaque



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