

SEABROOK Francis McKowen



SEABROOK, FRANCIS MCKOWEN

: Lance Corporal Essex Yeomanry

Age: 29

Date of Death: 13/05/1915

Service No: 1080



Additional information: Francis McKowen Seabrook (Frank) was the son of Robert Carrington Seabrook and Elizabeth Ann (Bessie) Seabrook (nee McKowen) They had 10 children, 6 boys and 4

girls, of whom he was the fifth son and seventh child. He was pre-deceased by one older brother (Freddy) who died of appendicitis in the 1890s aged 13. Frank was uncle to Anthony Driffield Seabrook, who was killed on HMS Rawalpindi in 1939. Frank was born on Dec 30th 1885 at Tolleshunt D'Arcy - at that time his parents were living at Spital Farm (sometimes referred to as Lower Farm) in T D'Arcy but they moved to Marks Farm in Braintree in 1888 when Frank was only a couple of years old. The youngest children in the family (twins) who were born in 1889, were born in Braintree. When he was a young boy he was for a time a chorister at St Michael's church in Braintree



The picture is taken when he was about 13 years old.

Although the family lived in Braintree, there were still connections and the family still owned farms in Tolleshunt D'Arcy, as at least 2 of Frank's brothers farmed there later. It is possible that Frank also was farming in Tolleshunt D'Arcy before joining the army, otherwise he wouldn't have been on the memorial. The family owned the house then called the Laurels (next door to Pond Farm) which had been built by Frank's grandfather Richard Seabrook, who also lived in the village and is buried in the churchyard. As the 1911 census is not yet available, it is not known if Frank was living there then, although it is known that an unmarried brother and sister lived there later on and could have been there during the first World War. Two of Frank's brothers also fought in World War 1, an older brother in the navy on a minesweeper and younger brother in the army. They were discharged in 1919. Frank was killed in

Action on the same day, as his cousin Edmund (Ted) Seabrook, who was serving alongside him. they are buried together in an unmarked grave. Both men were in the Essex Yeomanry. They signed up together, in early August 1914 and did some training in Suffolk They died together on 13th May 1915 and were buried together near Ypres at a place called Thonge? near a pile of red bricks that was a house. reference on Family History is from Alison Hynes. He went to France 30th November 1914

The War Diary of the Essex Yeomanry for the days preceding his death are given below. **14/1/15** L/Cpl Seabrook Pte Barker admitted to hospital

" 1/5/15 As above. Then marched back to billets at 6.30pm. Horse bandoliers issued to all mounted men carrying rifles.

2/5/15 As above. Church parade at 10am. Marched back to billets at 6.30pm.

3/5/15 and 4/5/15 Exercise in morning. At 4pm received orders to Rv. Left Brigade Rv at 6.45pm. Marched to about 1.5 miles SW of Vlamertinghe there leaving horses and all the transport, and 1 man to 4 horses, marched at 11.30pm to about 1 mile W of Ypres arriving there about 2am. Very wet all night. The Brigade stayed in a field near the road. Marched back to horses at 5am and on to billets near Hooterkerque arriving there at 1.30pm.

Hooterkerque 5/5/15 Paraded at Brigade RV 4.15. 335 strong leaving remainder and all transport in billets. Capt Proby took charge of the limbers (one from EY) containing entrenching tools. Marched via Poperinghe and Vlamertinghe to about 0.25 mile W of Brielen. Horses left there in field with 1 man to 2 horses in charge of Maj Buxton. Remainder (about 160) marched across Yser canal by pontoon bridge to dig trenches 9pm-1am both trench digging party and horses under shell fire. No casualties started back with horses about 3am.

6/5/15 Regiment arrived back at Hooterkerque billets 6am. 7/5/15 4pm Regiment paraded with Brigade and marched back to former billets at Le Croquet arriving about 9pm. Pte Reave J N discharged on receiving commission. 16 OR's and horses for MG Section.

Le Croquet 8/5/15 Standing by under 3 hours notice last draft sent to Squadrons.

9/5/15 Warning reduced to 1hr 40mins. Regiment ordered to embus at Sercus 10am. 88 per Sqn plus MG Section and HQ about 300. Southend, Dunmow and Tiptree troops sent back from Sercus owing to lack of bus accommodation. Capt Proby left in charge at Le Croquet. 1 limber from each Sqn 1 from HQ, pack of horses under Lieut Wedd went up to Vlamertinghe. Regiment proceeded to huts and dugouts at Brielen.

Brielen 10/5/15 Rested during day. Night dug trenches by Yperlee Canal. **11/5/15** Rested. Draft of 12 horses arrived to B echelon. **12/5/15** Southend Dunmow and Tiptree troops and a few OR's total 68 joined regiment under 2nd/Lt Holt. Regiment rested by day and at night proceeded on foot to dig connected trenches N of Hooge.

13/5/15 Retired from digging the GHQ line of trenches E of Potijze strength of Regiment in trenches 302 all ranks including 17 officers. Very heavily shelled from dawn to 6am. Part of 7th Brigade holding advanced trenches shelled out during morning 8th Brigade ordered to make a counter attack and retake them. Started 2.15pm. 10th Hussars on left EY centre Blues on right. EY and 10th doubled all the way to enemy trenches about 1000 yards distant. Germans retired before Brigade reached trenches. Regiment could not get into touch with Blues on right. Germans bombarded retaken trench until dark. 10th and EY less B Sqn retired to line of dugouts in front of GHQ line about 6pm thence to GHQ lines after dark. Capt R Brise and Lt Thompson with about 10 men held advanced position by ruined houses lying in shell holes till after dark. They kept back the German infantry the whole afternoon retiring after dark to rejoin rest of Regiment. Regiment held GHQ trenches during night in conjunction with company of Durham Light Infantry. Remainder of A echelon went up from Le Croquet to join Lieut Wedd's command.

14/5/15 Occupied GHQ trenches until relieved at 9pm by 2nd Cav Div to A Huts S of Vlamertinghe arriving about 11.30pm. Casualties May 13th/14th Killed Wounded Wounded & Missing Missing Officers 4 5 1 - Men 29 95 15 11 Total 33 100 16 11"



1914 -1915 Star, 1914-20 War Medal & 1914-1919 Victory Medal

Name		Corps	Rank	Regt. No.
SERBROOK		Essau Yco	L/Cpl *Plt	1080
Francis				
Serial	Regt.	Page	Remarks	
YIPRES	* 00/10701	69	New Ft	
15 th BRAN	Essau Yco	39		
Theatre of War first served in				
1 France				
Date of entry there				
30 11 14				



Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 5. Memorial:
YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL

The Menin Gate is one of four memorials to the missing in Belgian Flanders which cover the area known as the Ypres Salient. Broadly speaking, the Salient stretched from Langemarck in the north to the northern edge in Ploegsteert Wood in the south, but it varied in area and shape throughout the war. The Salient was formed during the First Battle of Ypres in October and November 1914, when a small British Expeditionary Force succeeded in securing the town before the onset of winter, pushing the German forces back to the Passchendaele Ridge.

The Second Battle of Ypres began in April 1915 when the Germans released poison gas into the Allied lines north of Ypres. This was the first time gas had been used by either side and the violence of the attack forced an Allied withdrawal and a shortening of the line of defence. There was little more significant activity on this front until 1917, when in the Third Battle of Ypres an offensive was mounted by Commonwealth forces to divert German attention from a weakened French front further south. The initial attempt in June to dislodge the Germans from the Messines Ridge was a complete success, but the main assault north-eastward, which began at the end of July, quickly became a dogged struggle against determined opposition and the rapidly deteriorating weather. The campaign finally came to a close in November with the capture of Passchendaele. The German offensive of March 1918 met with some initial success, but was eventually checked and repulsed in a combined effort by the Allies in September. The battles of the Ypres Salient claimed many lives on both sides and it quickly became clear that the commemoration of members of the Commonwealth forces with no known grave would have to be divided between several different sites. The site of the Menin Gate was chosen because of the hundreds of thousands of men who passed through it on their way to the battlefields. It commemorates those of all Commonwealth nations (except New Zealand) who died in the Salient, in the case of United Kingdom casualties before 16 August 1917. Those United Kingdom and New Zealand servicemen who died after that date are named on the memorial at Tyne Cot, a site which marks the furthest point reached by Commonwealth forces in Belgium until nearly the end of the war. Other New Zealand casualties are commemorated on memorials at Buttes New British Cemetery and Messines Ridge British Cemetery. The YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL now bears the names of more than 54,000 officers and men whose graves are not known. The memorial, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield with sculpture by Sir William Reid-Dick, was unveiled by Lord Plumer in July 1927. He is recorded on the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Memorial at St. Nicholas Church.

