

Sutton Veny

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War I



162981 GUNNER

R. A. HAINES

ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY

20TH SEPTEMBER, 1918 AGE 26

Thy Will Be Done

Reginald Alfred HAINES

Reginald Alfred Haines was born at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire in 1892 to parents Joseph & Lydia Haines (nee Smith). His parents had married in 1883 at St. John the Evangelist Church, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire. Reginald's birth was registered in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire in the June quarter of 1892.

The 1901 England Census recorded Reginald Haines as a 9 year old living with his family at Duck Street, Sutton Veny. His parents were listed as Joseph Haines (Head Carter on a Farm, aged 50, born Sutton Veny) & Lydia Haines (aged 42, born Sutton Veny). Reginald was one of five children listed on this Census, all born at Sutton Veny – Maud (Housemaid, aged 13), Victor (aged 10), Reginald, Alan (aged 3) & Gladys (aged 6). Also listed was Joseph Haines's sister – Emily Stainer (widow, aged 39) & Joseph's mother – Maria Haines (widow, aged 81).

The 1911 England Census recorded Reginald Haines as a 19 year old Horseman on a Farm, living with his family in a 6 roomed dwelling at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire. His parents were listed as Joseph Haines (Carter on a Farm, aged 60, born Sutton Veny) & Lydia Haines (aged 52, born Sutton Veny). Joseph & Lydia had had six children during their marriage, all surviving at the time of the 1911 Census. Reginald was one of three children listed on this Census – Victor (Horseman on a Farm, aged 20, born Sutton Veny), then Reginald & Alan (At School, aged 13, born Sutton Veny). Also listed as a Boarder was Maude Lines (At School, aged 11, born Tytherington).

Reginald Alfred Haines enlisted with the Royal Garrison Artillery at Bristol. He was given the rank of Gunner & a service number of 162981. Gunner Haines' records show that he was attached to 199th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery.

Gunner Reginald Alfred Haines died of wounds on 20th September, 1918, in France, aged 26 years.

199th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery

Siege Batteries of the Royal Garrison Artillery were equipped with heavy howitzers, sending large calibre high explosive shells in high trajectory, plunging fire. The usual armaments were 6 inch, 8 inch and 9.2 inch howitzers, although some had huge railway - or road-mounted 12 inch howitzers. As British artillery tactics developed, the Siege Batteries were most often employed in destroying or neutralising the enemy artillery, as well as putting destructive fire down on strongpoints, dumps, store, roads and railways behind enemy lines.

The 199th Siege Battery was first stationed in France on 25th November, 1916.



(Information on Siege Batteries from [The Long, Long Trail](#))

...The only retaliation against enemy artillery available to the frontline soldier was from his own distant artillery. But whatever they did, he would be pretty certain to disapprove of it. If British guns were active, the retaliation came down on infantry rather than artillery.

...Physical distance also drove the infantryman's sympathy from his gunners. Field artillery was tolerated, since it lived round about the support line, but siege artillery was another species, beings almost as remote as red-tabbed staff officers or official journalists. Their guns came and went like woodcocks in the night, startling infantrymen with their thunderous reports and flashes from ruined buildings and camouflaged sites. The self-contained batteries of eight guns had their own supply and signal system and travelled about with not just telescopes and switchboards, OP maps and the electrics needed to illuminate their sighting posts, but also with armchairs, well-stuffed valises and extra blankets. To watching infantry, all their worldly possessions on their backs, such supernumerary comforts were a source of cynical comment. They were not to know how seldom gunners enjoyed rest so that, when a siege artillery observer appeared in the front line, even so conservative a soldier as Subaltern Feilding welcomed the chance to be rude.

...What no foot soldier knew was the danger, particularly in the last three years when aerial photography, flash spotting and echo location made a distant gun position as vulnerable as a man moving in no-man's-land. Andrews tells us succinctly of No. 199 siege battery during 1918. During the first four days of the German's March offensive the battery lost nine dead, eleven wounded, one shell-shocked and one prisoner. The forward-observation man went into battle with the third wave of the attack. During a gas attack layer and setter could not wear masks. A hit on the position could ignite all the shells, while defective shells could blow up in the breach, or partially engaged breach-blocks would blow back. None of this was visible from the front line.

All men feared artillery. Gas was their other great fear.....

(Extract from *Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War* by Denis Winter)

Gunner R. A. Haines was buried in Thilloy Road Cemetery, Beaulencourt, France – Grave No. B. 6. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner R. A. Haines, 162981, 199th Seige Bty, Royal Garrison Artillery as the son of Joseph and Lydia Haines of 71 St. Luke's Rd, Totterdown, Bristol.

Gunner Reginald Alfred Haines was entitled to the British War & Victory Medals. His Medal Index Card does not show a date that he had entered a Theatre of War but he was engaged in the Western European Theatre.

R. A. Haines is also honoured in the Casualties of World War 1 Diocese of Salisbury Memorial Book.

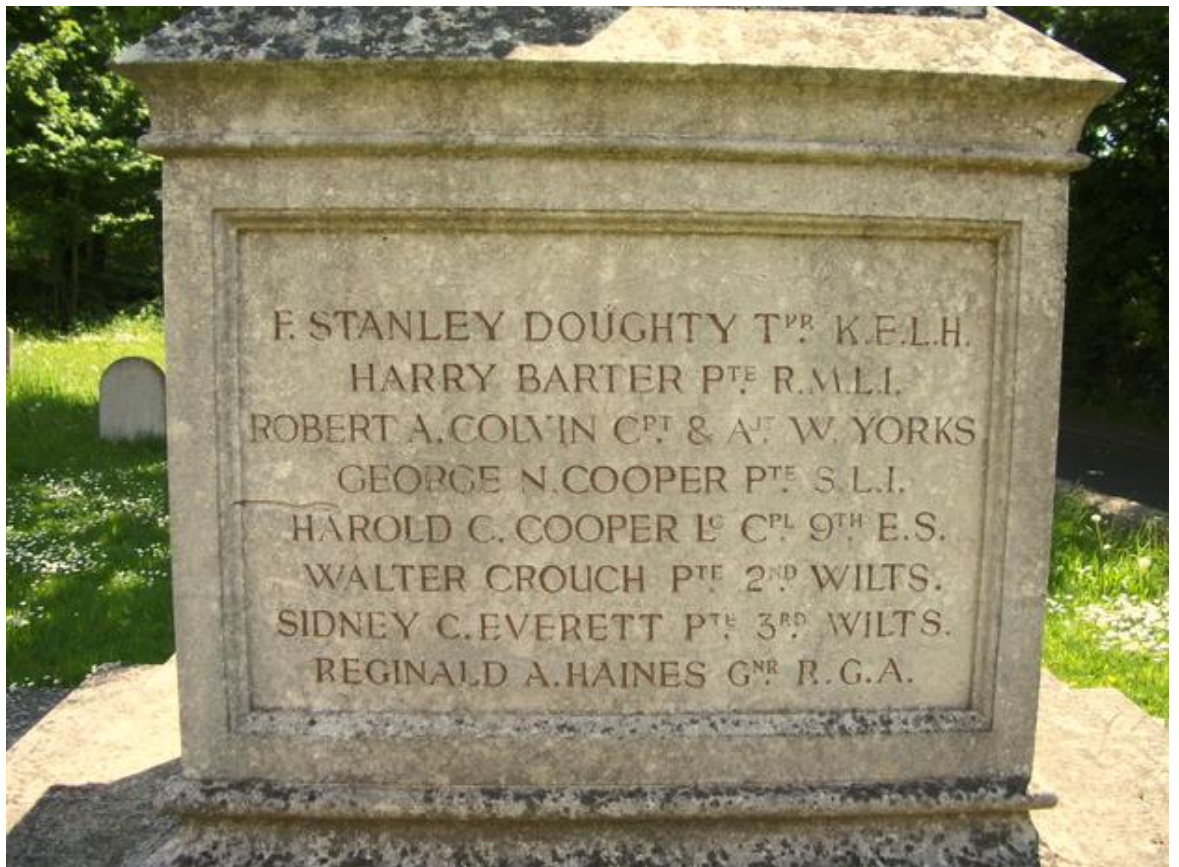
Reginald A. Haines is remembered on the 1914 -1919 Roll of Honour located inside St. John the Evangelist Church at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



Reginald A. Haines is also remembered on the Sutton Veny War Memorial located in the foreground of St. John the Evangelist churchyard.



Sutton Veny War Memorial (Photos courtesy of Andrea Charlesworth)



Thilloy Road Cemetery, Beaulencourt, France

Beaulencourt is a village 3 kilometres south-east of Bapaume on the road to Peronne (N17). Ligny-Thilloy was captured in March 1917 and Beaulencourt was occupied later in the same month. They were both lost on 24-25 March 1918 during the German advance, but recovered after severe fighting at the end of August.

The cemetery was begun by the 53rd Field Ambulance early in September 1918, and used during the latter part of the month and the early part of October by the 3rd, 4th and 43rd Casualty Clearing Stations. It adjoined a German cemetery of March-August 1918, from which 200 German graves have been removed to larger cemeteries and seven Commonwealth to Favreuil British Cemetery.

Thilloy Road Cemetery contains 240 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. There are also ten German graves, nine of which are unidentified. (*Information & photos of Thilloy Road Cemetery - CWGC*)



Photo of Gunner R. A. Haines' CWGC Headstone located in Thilloy Road Cemetery, Beaulencourt, France.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)

