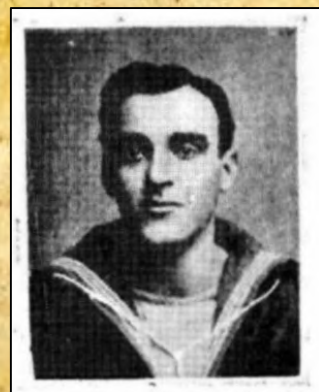


Herts at War

(www.hertsatwar.co.uk)

Name: John Fairclough
Rank: Able Seaman
Service Number: 203995(C)
Date of Death: 22nd September 1914
Age: 30
Regiment/Service: H.M.S Cressy Royal Navy.



Award:

Grave/Memorial Reference: Panel 101-104

Cemetery/Memorial: Helles Memorial, Gallipoli, Turkey

UK Cemetery/Memorial: Hitchin War Cemetery, St Mary's Church
St Mary's Church Memorial Book, Hitchin (*not confirmed*)

Pre War:

He was born on the 19th January 1884 in Holmfield, Aigburth in Liverpool and was educated at Beachwood, Herts. He was the third son of Thomas and Sarah Fairclough nee Rawlinson. His father came from Morsey Hill, Liverpool. His mother, two sisters and three brothers lived at 16 (poss 20), Bearton Road, Hitchin. He had been employed at the Phoenix Motor Engineering Works in Letchworth having previously worked as a chauffeur in London. He joined the Royal Navy in 1899 at the age of 18 serving until 1914 transferring into the Naval Reserve on the 19th January 1914. He was unmarried.

Wartime Service:

He was recalled to full-time service on the outbreak of war in August 1914 and placed in Mess 10 on board H.M.S. 'Cressy'. His Service Number was 203995(C) and he was a Gunner.

Three old cruisers, 'Aboukir', 'Hogue' and 'Cressy' were about twenty miles north-west of the Hook of Holland. They were without destroyer escorts and were protecting Belgium and the cross-Channel route from attack. Lieutenant Otto Weddigen in the German Submarine U-9 sank them in turn by torpedo. After the other two had been attacked, the 'Cressy' made a zigzag course in the hope of avoiding being sunk while helping sailors in the water and trying to locate the enemy submarine. At 7.30am the 'Cressy' was struck and in five minutes turned over and sank. The 'Cressy' lost was 25 officers and 536 men, partly because her boats were away helping survivors from the other two ships. The U-Boat Captain said "*All the while the men stayed by their guns looking for their invisible foe. They were brave and true to their country's sea tradition*". In three quarters of an hour three large cruisers and 1,400 officers and men had been lost.

Additional Information:

Acknowledgments:

Adrian Dunne,

David C Baines

www.hitchinatwar.org.uk



John Fairclough.

FAIRCLOUGH, JOHN, A.B. (R.F.R., Ch. B. 10324), 203995, 3rd s. of the late Thomas Fairclough, of Morsley Hill, Liverpool, by his wife, Sarah (20, Bearton Road, Hitchin, co. Herts), dau. of William Rawlinson; b. Holmfield, Aigburth, Liverpool, 19 Jan. 1884; educ. Beachwood, co. Herts; joined the Navy at the age of 18 in 1899, and served his full time, passing into the R.N.R. 19 Jan. 1914. On the outbreak of war he joined H.M.S. Cressy, and was lost when that ship was torpedoed in the North Sea, 22 Sept. 1914; *unm.*

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