

We have no Service Record for John Houseman but we know from his Medal Card that he was in the Northumberland Fusiliers, his numbers being 414098 & 201369.

We know from the Commonwealth Graves Commission that he was a Private, his battalion, the date he died & where his memorial is.

In France

The 1/4th bn Northumberland Fusiliers were part of the 149th (Northumberland) Brigade of the 50th (Northumbrian) Division.

The Northumbrian Division was a Territorial Force Division already in existence at the outbreak of the war. The Division and Brigades were not numbered until April 1915 previously just named. Arrived in France in April 1915. In June 1918 the Division was so under manned that the Brigades were reformed into Battalions and designated 149th, 150th and 151st Brigade Battalions. These Battalions formed the 50th Division Composite Brigade. The Division was reduced to Cadre in June 1918 and reconstituted in July 1918. Served in France and Flanders until the Armistice.

The following battles and engagements were undertaken by the 149th Division up to the date that we know that John died. He may have participated in some or all of them.

Battle of St. Julien. 24 Apr-5 May 1915.

Battle of Frezenberg. 8-13 May 1915.

Battle of Bellewaarde. 24-25 May 1915.

Battle of Fleurs-Courcelette. 15-22 Sep 1916, including the capture of Martinpuich.

A subsidiary attack of the Somme Offensive, the Battle of Flers-Courcelette was notable for the introduction of tanks. The attack was launched across a 12 km front from Rawlinson's Fourth Army salient on 15 September. Twelve divisions were employed, along with all the tanks the British army possessed: 49.

John Houseman was killed on the 15 September 1916 so it would seem likely that this was at the Battle of Fleurs-Courcelette.

He has no grave but he is remembered at the Thiepval Memorial Cemetery in France.