



91st Infantry Division

Company D

347th Machine Gun Battalion

Joshua Henry Bates, a son of Joshua and Eliza Peterson Bates, was born April 2, 1895. He completed high school and attended the University of Utah for one year. In addition to farming, he taught school for two years. He was assigned to Company D, 347th Machine Gun Battalion, 91st Infantry Division. While fighting in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, he was killed on October 3, 1918.

At the time of his death, he was survived by his parents, three brothers; Andrew Parley, Roy Richards, Lorenzo John, and two sisters; Effie Lucy and Ruth Margaret. He was preceded in death by a sister, Dorothy Marie. He was buried in the Wanship, Utah cemetery.

The 91st Infantry Division was organized on August 5, 1917, at Camp Lewis, Washington. The Division's patch is the number 91 on a green pine tree and it was nicknamed the "Pine Tree Division" or the "Wild Bill Division". Eventually, it was nicknamed "The Powder River Division". The pine tree symbolizes that most of the troops came from the North West. It participated in its first operation in September 1918 as part of St. Mihiel Offensive and its second engagement was part of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. Twelve days before the end of World War I, the division, drove the Germans east across the Escaut River.

At the beginning of World War I, each British Battalion had two machine guns. It was soon realized that this was not enough and each battalion was issued four guns. The machine gun became the deadliest weapon used in the war because of its rapid rate of fire and many of the battles were fought by sending troops over open terrain with barbed wire obstructions that slowed the advance of troops. When the U.S. infantry divisions (four regiments) entered the war, they had 50 machine guns but by the end of war, they had 250 machine guns and 700 Browning Automatic Rifles. Future wars were forever changed by fully automatic guns.