

# Thiepval Memorial, The Somme



<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/westfront/Somme/cemeteries/british/thiepval.htm>

**ON WHICH THE NAMES OF 74,000 SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN ENGRAVED, WHOSE BODIES WERE NEVER FOUND THE THIEPVAL MEMORIAL AND THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME 1916.**

## **THE BATTLE**

In July 1916, 13 British Divisions attacked along a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt in the 'Oteat Push'. Few battles in history have started with the buoyant confidence shown by the British 4th Army and no battle can compare to the catastrophic losses suffered by the end of the first day.

The attack met fierce German resistance from strong defensive fortifications barely touched by the seven day preliminary bombardment, and from Gommecourt to Montauban, with the exception of a few temporary successes, the attack was a failure. Only on the southern flank, at Fricourt and north of Mametz, did the British Army enjoy success. South of the River Somme, the French Army also managed to achieve its objectives on the first day.

## **THE DEAD**

The total number of men serving with British Empire Forces who died during the Battle of the Somme in 1916, was approximately 125,000. This figure includes men from many parts of the Empire - Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa – but by far the greatest number came from the United Kingdom.

Many of those who died are buried in cemeteries in the battle area itself but others who died of wounds are buried in cemeteries that were established next to dressing stations, casualty clearing stations and base hospitals. Some of the 'wounded had been shipped back home before succumbing to their wounds. Thus it is impossible to give a definitive figure for the total number of dead from the Battle of the Somme.