

**In Memory of  
Private HENRY WALTER BLAKE  
15835, 2nd Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment  
Who died, age 23, on 1 July 1916  
Remembered with honour  
Faringdon War Memorial and  
THIEPVAL MEMORIAL**



**Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

The Thiepval Memorial is next to the village of Thiepval, off the main Bapaume to Albert road (D929).

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916. On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured.

The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions.

The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter. In the spring of 1917, the German forces fell back to their newly prepared defences, the Hindenburg Line, and there were no further significant engagements in the Somme sector until the Germans mounted their major offensive in March 1918.