

**In Memory of
Private THOMAS WILTSHIRE
37634, 2nd Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment
Who was born in Faringdon and died of wounds
on 8 March 1917
Remembered with honour
THIEPVAL MEMORIAL**



Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

War Diary

Delville Wood: 2nd Division 99th Brigade; 1st RB were in support of the 1st KRRC & 23rd R Fusiliers who attacked at 7.10 a.m. following a severe barrage both of the other battalions reached their objective 50 yards in to Delville Wood and the 1st RB mopped up behind but failed to push further to the east of the attack.

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.

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.