

**In Memory of  
Private WILLIAM COMLEY  
15855, 2nd Bn., Royal Berkshire Regiment  
Born in Faringdon, who died on 1 July 1916  
Remembered with honour  
THIEPVAL MEMORIAL**



Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
See Rifleman William Carter for description of Thiepval Memorial

### **War Diary**

Battle of Albert: 8th Division 25th Brigade; 2nd RB attacked the German line directly in front of Ovillers la Boisselle with the 2nd Lincolns on their left flank and the 2nd Devonshires on their right. All the attacking battalions on this section of front suffered very heavy casualties.

Attack on Ovillers. The Battalion took up its assembly position in accordance with Brigade Operation Order No. 100. The 2nd Bn Lincolnshire Regt was on the left and the 2Btn Devonshire Regt on right. Our own wire was not sufficiently cut and parties were immediately sent out by Companies to clear it. At 6.25am the intensive bombardment began as scheduled. At about 7.15am the enemy opened rifle and machine gun fire on our line; this fire was probably drawn by the 2nd DEVON REGT which at about this time attempted to line up in front of their parapet. At 7.20am Companies began filing down trenches and getting ready for the assault. At 7.30am the three assaulting Companies advanced to attack the GERMAN line. They were met by intense rifle and machine gun fire which prevented any of the waves reaching the enemy lines. A little group on the left of the Battalion succeeded in getting in, but were eventually bombed out. At about 7.45am the Commanding Officer (LT Col A.M. Holdsworth) and Second in Command (Major G.H. Sawyer DSO) were

wounded in the sap on the left of our front, the Commdg Officer handed over Command of the Battalion to 2nd Lieut C. Mollet (Actg Adjt) by this time the parapet was swept by rifle and machine gun fire which prevented any exit from our trenches. The enemy replied to our intensive bombardment by barraging the front line from about 6.35am onwards. No message was received from other Battalions in immediate vicinity. At about 11am the order came from Bde Headquarters to "stand by" and await further orders. About 200 men of the Battalion were collected on the right of the front line and in the assembly trenches off Ulverston Street. At about 12.30pm news was received that the Brigade would be relieved. At about 3pm Major Hon R. Brand, 2nd Rifle Brigade arranged to take over all the front line and with the sanction of the Brigade the Battalion was withdrawn to Ribble Street. On relief by the 37th Infantry Bde, the Battalion marched back to bivouac in Long Valley.