

.The Battle of the Somme, 1916

Fought between July and November 1916, the Battle of the Somme was one of the defining events of the First World War.

The Somme offensive was planned as the major Allied effort on the Western Front for 1916, but the start of a desperate battle between French and German forces at Verdun meant that the British Army assumed the main role.

After an intense, week-long artillery bombardment of German positions, the infantry began their advance at 7.30am on the clear midsummer's morning of 1 July 1916.

While there were some gains to the south, in the north the attacking troops struggled to overcome formidable defences, many of which had survived the artillery barrage. By the end of the first day, some 57,000 Commonwealth and 2,000 French soldiers had become casualties – more than 19,000 of whom had been killed.

The offensive continued over the following months, and men from every part of Britain and across the Empire took part. Both sides committed huge quantities of manpower and munitions to the struggle.

When the offensive was halted in November, more than 1,000,000 Commonwealth, French and German soldiers had been wounded, captured, or killed.

Pontefract lost 16 men on that first day and a further 23 during that battle which lasted until November 1916.

To commemorate that tragic event St Giles held a service conducted by Fr Bob at 7.30 on July 1st.

The clergy and some members of the congregation attended the War Memorial together with the British Legion, Army Associations and Air Cadets. Also taking an active part was The Kings High School Academy, Carleton Community High School Academy with New College who read out the names of the fallen Pomfretians. Wreaths were laid by the participants, local residents and Local Councillors.

The names of those killed on that day were read out and a cross laid on the memorial. Those names are given below.

L/Cpl James Moffit BRIGGS 10 th Bn KOYLI	Thiepval
Company Sgt Major Benjamin BURNLEY, 8 th Bn York and Lancs	Authville Wood
Pte Herbert BURTON 1/5 th KOYLI	Thiepval
Pte Thomas CLEGG 9 th Bn York and Lancs	Thiepval
Pte Thomas William COWLING West Yorkshire Regt	Thiepval
Pte John FOX 8thBn KOYLI	Thiepval
Pte Percy James FOX 9 th Bn York and Lancs	Beaumont Hamel
Pte Jim HIGGINS 9 th Bn York and Lancs	Thiepval
Pte Lawrence George HOWARD 8thBn KOYLI	Authville Wood
Pte Donald LENG 1 st Bn East Yorkshire Regt	Thiepval
Pte Trevor MASON Lincolnshire Regt	Thiepval
Pte Thomas MULLIGAN 8 th KOYLI	Thiepval
Pte John OUTRAM 12 th Bn KOYLI	
L/Cpl Joseph Vickers TAYLOR 2 nd Bn KOYLI	Thiepval
Pte Frank TERRY 9 th KOYLI	Thiepval
Pte George YEAM 1/5 th KOYLI	Thiepval

The others killed during the Battle of the Somme, with dates were

L/Cpl Stanley AUSTWICK 8 th Royal Fusiliers 3/8/16	Thiepval
Pte James CHILDS Irish Guards 27/9/16	Thiepval

Sgt Cyrus Joseph DAVIES	9 th Bn KOYLI	Thiepval
Lt/ Temporary Captain Reginald CALVERT	West Yorkshire Regt	15/7/16
Cpl John CHAMBERS	West Yorkshire Regt	23/7/16
2 nd Lt Christopher Stowell GELL	1 st Bn West Yorkshire Regt	18/9/16
Pte Norman (Norrie) GORDON	10 th Bn KOYLI	17/9/16
Cpl Joseph HARRISON	1/5 th KOYLI	4/9/16
Pte Thomas Harold HARTLEY	Machine Gun Corp	1/8/16
Pte David Holmes HOWITT	1/5 th KOYLI	28/8/16
Rifleman William Stanley KEIGHLEY	Kings Royal Rifle Corp	15/7/16
Pte Thomas MILLS	6 th Bn York and Lincs	29/9/16
Pte Victor MOXON	1/5 th West Yorkshire Regt	10/8/16
Sgt Arthur NEAL	MM 1/5 th KOYLI	5/7/16
Sgt William SHELTON	2 nd Bn KOYLI	18/11/16
Pte Albert SHERBURN	4 th Bn Grenadier Guards	25/9/16
2 nd Lt Arthur Hammond Butler SHIPLEY	6 th Bn Yorkshire Regt	27/9/16
Sgt Walter STEEL	DCM 1/5 th KOYLI	1/8/16
Pte Thomas TAYLOR	Kings Own Scottish Borderers	15/9/16
Major Wilfred Norman TEMPEST	9 th Bn KOYLI	26/9/16
Pte John WILDMAN	12 th Bn West Yorkshire Regt	14/7/16
Pte George Edward WILSON	DCM 1/5 th KOYLI	6/7/16
Pte Arthur THORPE	York and Lincs	10/7/16