

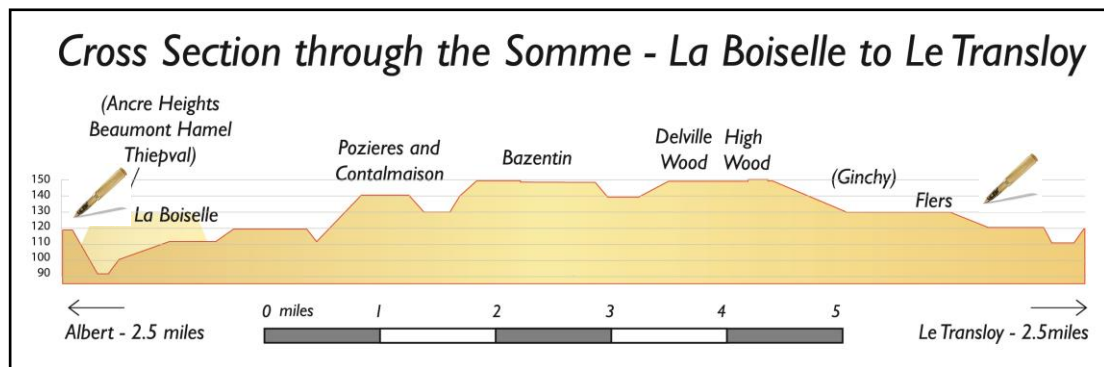
The Battles of the Somme, October 1916



Thiepval Memorial to the
72,195 Missing

The British army was finally making good progress, though still losing so many men. In October 66,000 more men were to die – with 2 from Tewkesbury. The army was once again fighting uphill at the *Ancre Heights* (the scene of July failures) and *Le Transloy*, close to the original objective, after three months relentless fighting.

Progressing ever up the slopes, the **Battle of Le Transloy** actually began in better weather and a strong-point was captured on 7 October. Subsequently, however, rain enforced pauses during 8-11 and 13-18 October but rain followed and the German defences had – yet again – recovered from defeats. British C-in-C Haig reduced the scope of operations by cancelling large attacks, confining the British to limited operations in co-operation with the French (who had been relatively successful in the quieter south of the Somme front).



Cross-Section through Somme Battlefields [P. Finnigan & S. Eedle]

Despite fewer attacks, fatalities continued. On 12 October it was the turn of **Pte. R. F. Peach** [†], serving with the *4th Worcesters*. This battalion had fought valiantly since July but, even in reserve, parties still, struggled with ammunition in the evenings up to the front line. These suffered attacks and Pte. Peach died of his wounds. (Again, his grave was lost in 1918 fighting.) Another pause followed until 23 October when a 44 year old veteran, **Cpl. Arthur G. Amott** [R] died of his wounds – but his body was at least formally buried.

Bad weather descended again – but attacks were delayed, unlike earlier in the campaign. After four months, lessons seemed to have been learned and the weather seemed to signal the end of the traditional fighting season. It turned out, however, that the battle would linger on for another 18 days, consuming 46,238 men - with 3 more from Tewkesbury.

John Dixon. [For more information, see THS Publication 9, “A Noble band of Heroes”]