

serre: sheffield memorial park

recommended
poem to read
here: "the
sentry" by
wilfred owen

overview

Serre was one of the strongly fortified villages held by the Germans at the beginning of the Battle of the Somme. It has come to be linked closely with several of the 'Pals' battalions, which suffered very heavy losses in the attacks made here. The idea was that by



enlisting together in the local Pals battalions they would stay together during their service. The casualty lists that came back after the 1st of July 1916 devastated some of the communities which had sent these Pals battalions. For example, of some 720 "Accrington Pals" who took part in the attack, 584 were killed, wounded or missing. Each brick in the pictured memorial to the Accrington Pals represents one fallen soldier from the batallion.

independent tasks

You will be given the time to visit the cemeteries at your own pace. Note in particular how the land slopes upwards towards the German lines, giving you some idea of the conditions the soldiers faced on 1st July 1916.

It was near this spot that Wilfrid Owen, the famous poet, was inspired to write his poem "The Sentry" after being sent to occupy a half-flooded German dugout here in 1917.