

the ulster tower

overview



The Ulster Tower is a memorial to the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division. On 1st July 1916 they were given the objective of capturing the **Schwaben Redoubt**, a triangle of trenches with a frontage of 300 yards, a fearsome German strongpoint with commanding views.

Unlike many divisions, the Ulstermen successfully secured their objectives. They crossed about 400 yards of No Man's Land under heavy machine-gun fire, and then not only captured the Schwaben Redoubt, but kept on going for more than a mile, though not without heavy losses.

Sadly, as the day wore on it became clear that the British army was failing to

make sufficient progress, so the Germans mounted counterattacks. As their ammunition dwindled the Ulstermen had to start falling back.

The casualties suffered by the 36th Division on the 1st of July were over 5,000 in total - almost half of their strength. The tower erected in 1921 in memory of their bravery is a direct copy of Helen's Tower in County Down, where men of the 36th Division trained.

In March 2004 the Somme Association purchased Thiepval Wood, which is facing the Ulster Memorial Tower and from where the 36th (Ulster) Division made its charge on the 1st July 1916. In July 2006 the Association opened a small area of the Wood which is now available for guided tours.