

welsh division memorial

This stunning Welsh dragon memorial overlooks the area where the 38th (Welsh) Division attacked Mametz Wood between 7th and 14th July 1916. The wood was eventually cleared by 14th July but at a cost of over 4,000 British casualties.



PHILIPPE HUGUEN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The memorial by Welsh sculptor David Petersen was erected in 1987 - a Welsh red dragon on a three-metre stone plinth facing the wood and tearing at barbed wire

The 38th (Welsh) Division had been raised in late 1914 as part of Kitchener's New Army - an army for the long war that he was the first to recognise.

Ultimately successful in their mission to take **Mametz**, the Welsh volunteers paid a heavy price. One fifth were killed, missing or wounded by the end of the battle. It was a sign of much worse to come. One of the bloodiest battles in history, the Battle of the Somme was to claim one million lives over four desperate months.

One reason we know so much about the Battle of Mametz lies in the literary tradition of The Royal Welch Fusiliers. Serving at Mametz, at various times, were the poets **Siegfried Sassoon** and **Robert Graves**.

The memorial is reached by a single-track metalled road. There is a designated car parking place and turning circle close to the memorial.