

E L Arnold
Remembered with Honour
Redan Ridge Cemetery No.1, Beaumont-Hamel

In Memory of
Lance Corporal
4197, 23rd Bn., Royal Fusiliers who died on 13 November 1916 Age 22
Son of Tom and Annie Arnold, of 6, Stamford Square, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Name:	Edward Leslie Arnold
Birth Place:	Ashton-under-lyne
Residence:	Ashton-under-lyne
Death Date:	13 Nov 1916
Death Location:	France & Flanders
Enlistment Location:	Manchester
Rank:	L/Corporal
Regiment:	Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)
Battalion:	23rd Battalion
Number:	SPT/4197
Type of Casualty:	Killed in action
Theatre of War:	Western European Theatre

Phase: the Battle of the Ancre, 13 - 18 November 1916 The Somme

Fourth Army (Rawlinson)

III Corps (Pulteney)

48th (South Midland) Division.

Fifth Army (Gough) (retitled from reserve Army)

II Corps (Jacobs)

18th (Eastern) Division

19th (Western) Division

39th Division

4th Canadian Division.

V Corps (Fanshawe)

2nd Division

3rd Division

32nd Division

37th Division

51st (Highland) Division, which captured Beaumont Hamel

63rd (Royal Naval) Division.

XIII Corps (Congreve)

31st Division

120th Brigade of 40th Division.

By the end of the Somme and believing it could not face another sustained assault such as this, the German Army was preparing to make a strategic withdrawal to the prepared Hindenburg Line many miles east.

23rd (Service) Battalion (1st Sportsman's)

Formed at the Hotel Cecil in the Strand, London, on 25 September 1914 by Mrs E.Cunliffe-Owen. Initially known as the "Hard as Nails Battalion". Moved to Hornchurch in Essex.

June 1915 : came under command of 99th Brigade, 33rd Division.

Landed at Boulogne in November 1915.

25 November 1915 : transferred with Brigade to 2nd Division.

For more information see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Ancre

Edward became a casualty of the first day for the Battle of the Ancre

Fifth Army[\[edit source\]](#) | [edit beta](#)

Main article: [Capture of Beaumont Hamel](#)

13–15 November[\[edit source\]](#) | [edit beta](#)

13 November The seven-day bombardment cut the wire on most of the attack front and destroyed many German defensive positions, except the dugouts built deep below the villages near the front-line. Mist on 13 November helped the British advance by reducing visibility but caused many British units to lose the barrage as they struggled through mud.^[26] II Corps attacked on the right with 19th Division. A battalion from the 58th Brigade made no progress against Stump Road; the 56th Brigade attacked on the right by assembling in no man's land before Stuff Trench, with a machine-gun company attached and followed up by Engineer and Pioneer parties, ready to help consolidate captured ground. The mist helped conceal the British troops, who by 8:15 a.m. had reached their objective, partly along Lucky Way, a sunken road leading into Grandcourt. No German counter-attacks were encountered^[27]

The 39th Division attacked to the west of the 19th Division, with the 118th Brigade on its right. The brigade formed up on tapes laid without the German sentries noticing and one battalion advanced north about 1,100 yards (1,000 m) to the Hansa line by 7:30 a.m., while three battalions attacked north-west to Mill Trench and then reached the station crossing and Beaucourt Mill by 10:00 a.m.. The other two battalions got lost in the fog. At 6:15 a.m. the 117th Brigade attacked from Mill Road up the Ancre valley, next to the river with one battalion and achieved surprise, despite a special barrage from twelve 18-pdrs. The battalion cleared dugouts in the side of the river bank and along the top. The battalion met some of the troops of 118th Brigade, who were lost and combined to attack St Pierre Divion, which was captured around 7:40 a.m. Three tanks were to advance from Thiepval to assist but one was bogged on the drive to the village, the second broke down and the third reached the German front line at 7:00 a.m. then fell into a dug-out, where it was attacked by the Germans. A messenger pigeon was sent by the tank crew for help but infantry arrived at 9:00 a.m. and the Germans withdrew.^[28]

In V Corps, two [63rd Division](#) brigades each advanced with all four battalions forward and two in support from the reserve brigade. On the right the advance met much

2 November	3	59°–48°	–
3 November	1	59°–48°	–
4 November	2	64°–52°	wet cloudy
5 November	0	59°–48°	clear
6 November	0	57°–45°	cloudy
7 November	12	55°–45°	–
8 November	2	57°–43°	–
9 November	0	54°–30°	bright clear
10 November	0	50°–30°	–
11 November	0.1	55°–32°	mist frosty
12 November	0.1	50°–48°	dull
13 November	0	54°–46°	fog
14 November	0	55°–36°	overcast
15 November	0	46°–36°	–
16 November	0	46°–37°	clear cold
17 November	2	37°–25°	clear
18 November	8	54°–36°	–
Weather conditions are taken from Gliddon, G. <i>When the Barrage Lifts</i> (1987) ^[25]			
27 October	1	55°–43°	showers cold
28 October	8	55°–41°	wet, cold
29 October	7	53°–45°	wet
30 October	7	61°–48°	wet, cold
31 October	0	63°–46°	–
1 November	3	59°–46°	–

German machine-gun fire from the start but captured the German front trenches, then advanced on time to take Beaucourt station and Station Road, taking 400 prisoners by 6:45 a.m. The two battalions on the left were severely depleted by machine-gun fire, as was the left brigade although about 100 men reached the first objective. On the extreme left only isolated groups managed to advance, where they met troops from the 51st Division. The left brigade began bombing attacks and the reserve brigade was sent forward. By 7:40 a.m. troops were digging in along the German reserve line in the south, while three battalions were held up along the German front line, although some of their troops appeared on the Beaumont Hamel spur. At 7:45 a.m. about 450 men advanced to the edge of Beaucourt, before withdrawing slightly and digging-in under artillery fire, before gaining touch with troops from the 39th Division from across the river. The German strongpoint on Beaumont Hamel spur was attacked many times but little ground was gained. As night fell the division had linked with the 51st Division on the left in the German support trench. Reinforcements from the reserve brigade and an extra battalion reached Beaucourt and extended the position to the left as far as Beaucourt Alley by 9:30 p.m. Two battalions reached the first objective by midnight and a battalion took over the British front line.^[29]^[Note 8]

Both brigades of the 51st Division attacked the first objective (green line) at Station road and Beaumont Hamel and the final objective (yellow line) at Frankfort Trench with three battalions, while the fourth provided carrying parties.^[30] Six minutes before zero, the leading battalion of the right brigade moved beyond the British wire and advanced, when the new 30,000 pounds (14,000 kg) mine at Hawthorn Crater was blown, past the east end of "Y Ravine" and reached the first objective at 6:45 a.m., with a stray party from the 63rd Division. The battalion pushed on then withdrew slightly to Station Road. On the left, fire from "Y Ravine" held up the advance and at 7:00 a.m. another battalion reinforced the attack. Troops skirted the ravine to the north and early in the afternoon a battalion from the reserve brigade attacked Beaumont Hamel from the south, joined by troops in the vicinity. The left brigade was held up in places, by uncut wire south of Hawthorn Crater and massed machine-gun fire north of the Auchonvillers–Beaumont Hamel road. Two tanks were sent up, one bogging between the German front and support lines and the other north of the village. Consolidation began and three battalions were withdrawn to the German reserve line and reinforced at 9:00 p.m., while one battalion formed a defensive flank to the south, as the positions reached by the 63rd Division were unknown.^[Note 9]^[31]

The 2nd Division advanced along Redan Ridge. The 5th Brigade on the right formed up in no man's land, hugged the barrage and got into the German front line easily. Two battalions reached Beaumont Trench on schedule and the other two formed a defensive flank facing north and repelled bombing attacks from the 6th Brigade area, where the advance had been held up by fog and mud, then fire from "The Quadrilateral" in the middle of the 6th Brigade area, where some troops on the right managed to reach the first objective. The junction of Beaumont Trench and Lager Alley was blocked and some troops veered north-east, after finding stray troops from the 3rd Division and assuming that they had lost direction. By 7:30 a.m. the 5th Brigade was ready to advance on the second objective and reached Frankfort Trench so depleted, that the troops fell back to Munich trench, Wagon Road then Crater Lane in the German front line. The reserve brigade moved forward at the same time and two battalions were sent to reinforce the 5th Brigade at the first objective. At 9:00 a.m. the remainder of the 6th Brigade was ordered back to the British front line to reorganise and two attacks by the reserve brigade were ordered then cancelled. Overnight the ground was consolidated and two 37th Division battalions were sent up from corps reserve next morning.^[32]

The [3rd Division](#) attacked Serre with two brigades, the 8th Brigade on the right using all four battalions and the 76th Brigade on the left attacking with two battalions and two in support, with 36 machine-guns. Waist-deep mud caused a fiasco; some troops from the 8th Brigade reached the German support line, then fell back and some lost direction. The 76th Brigade had the same trouble and at 6:30 a.m. an attempt was made to collect exhausted men scattered around in shell-holes. At 4:30 p.m. all operations were cancelled.^[33]

In XIII Corps, the [31st Division](#) was to attack with the 92nd Brigade on a 500 yards (460 m) front to form a defensive flank. Two battalions advanced at midnight with snipers and Lewis gunners in support. The main attack began at 5:45 a.m. and the German first line was easily occupied. The advance to the support trench was contested all morning, with German bombers counter-attacking towards Star Wood. Carrying parties were held up in no man's land by German artillery fire and at 9:30 a.m. a German attack from Star Wood in the open was "destroyed" by British machine-gun fire from the flank. Due to the

failure of the 3rd Division attack, the brigade was ordered to retire at 5:25 p.m. which was carried out by 9:30 p.m.^[34]

Edward Leslie Arnold's Background

In 1911 Edward was living with his mother and father Annie and Tom and his sister Fannie at 13 Sutherland Street. Ashton-under-Lyne. His father Tom was a master printer and owned his own business, Edward was working as his clerk and his sister Fannie was still at school aged 14.

His father Tom was from Yorkshire and had come to Ashton to work as a compositor printer by 1891 staying at Booth Street.

By 1901 the family had moved up a little in the world, Tom was now a foreman at a printing works and the family lived at 14 Granville Terrace.

He is also mentioned on the Ashton-under-Lyne Municipal War Memorial.

Obit from the Reporter

He was the only son of Tom and Annie Arnold. He went to Albion School and then won a scholarship to Ashton Secondary School. He went on to work for the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking company. He played for Ashton Nomads football team and the Parish church and Ashton Secondary School Cricket Clubs.