

The Battle of Passchendaele known as **The Third Battle of Ypres.**

This battle was a campaign fought by the Allies on the Western Front, from July to November 1917, for control of the ridges south and east of the Belgian city of Ypres in West Flanders.

One hundred years ago, between July and November 1917, the fields of Flanders witnessed one of the bloodiest episodes of the First World War. The name, along with the Somme, has come to symbolise the Great War for many. In three-and-a-half months of fighting, an advance of less than five miles saw an estimated 550,000 Allied and German troops killed, wounded or lost.

Around 90,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers were missing; 50,000 buried without being identified, and 42,000 never recovered from the Belgian fields of Flanders that turned into an ocean of mud.

Passchendaele lay on the last ridge east of Ypres, 5 miles (8.0 km) from a railway junction at Roulers, which was vital to the supply system of the German 4th Army.

The next stage of the Allied plan was an advance to Thourout–Couckelaere, to close the German controlled railway running through Roulers and Thourout.

A campaign in Flanders was controversial in 1917 and has remained so. The British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, opposed the offensive, as did General Ferdinand Foch the French Chief of the General Staff. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, commanding the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), did not receive approval for the Flanders operation from the War Cabinet until 25 July. Matters of dispute by the participants, writers and historians since the war, have included the wisdom of pursuing an offensive strategy in the wake of the Nivelle Offensive, rather than waiting for the arrival of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in France.

From the names on the Roll of Honour at St Nicholas' Church, it is believed that the following died as a result of wounds inflicted at Passchendaele:

Geoffrey Bunnell Burton

John Prior Jamieson

Robert Noel Mountfield

