

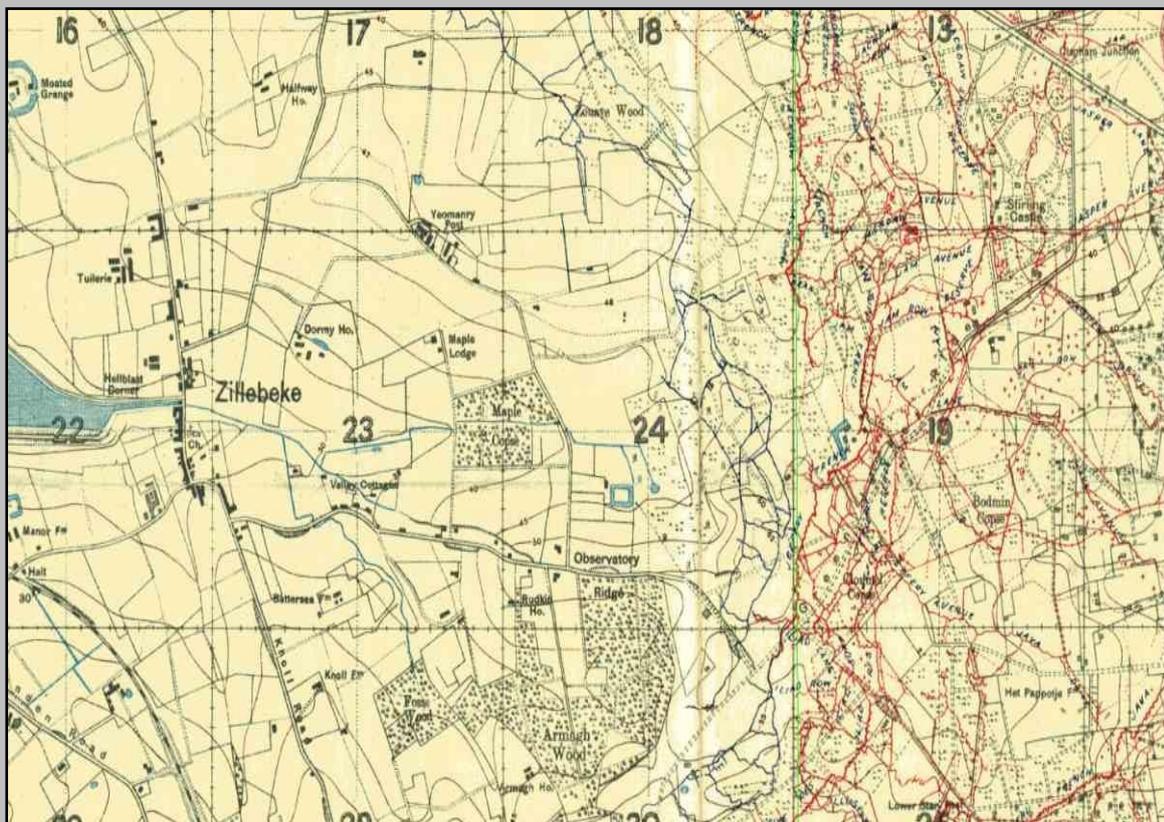
Edmund's last days

The 7th Batt Buffs moved from the Arras sector to the Ypres sector on the 3rd July 1917 and took over as reserve battalion billeted at CANEL RESERVE CAMP. On the 6th July 1917 they took over the front line from the 17th Kings Liverpool Regt. The trenches taken over were square (I) 24 – square (I) 30 if you look at (map 1) you can see the map square 24 and below it square 30. Each map squares cover 4 x smaller squares. Reserve D Company took over Maple Reserve trench running from I 23 - I 24. They were relieved in the line by 7th Sussex on the 16th July 1917 casualties for this period were:

Killed, Wounded & Missing:

Officers nil,

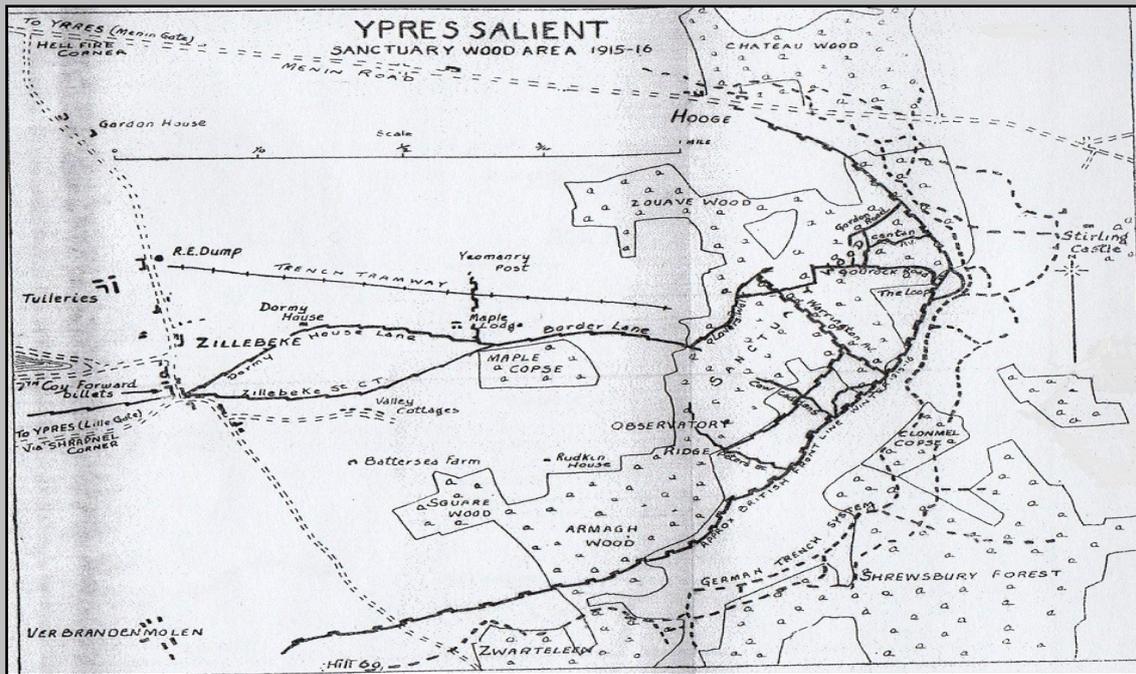
Other ranks 38.



The 7th Batt Buffs moved back to the rest area *Château Segard* approx 3km SW from the trenches. However all units in the area would have to provide work parties during rest periods. These work parties took up stores or worked on repairing trenches during the nights.

The 7th Buffs diary Reads 16-23 July 1917, *working parties provided to 7 R Sussex for the digging, sandbagging & clearance of ZILLEBEKE ST TRENCH.*

ZILLEBEKE ST Trench was a communication trench which ran from north of Zillebeke village church running up the north side of Maple copse and into Map area I 24 (See map 1 & 2). This trench had to be cleared from Maple Copse to Sanctuary Woods (Approx 200m) to allow reserve troops to get to the front line for the start of the battle, Third Ypres 30th July 1917.



Map 2- 1915-16 showing route of Zillebeke St CT Trench. By June 1917 Border lane section from Maple Copse, was renamed Zillebeke St.

On the evening of 19th or 20th July Edmund Payne was part of a working party, sent to work on the Zillebeke Street trench area. The Buffs diary records: Casualties from 16-23 July Killed, Wounded & Missing, Officers nil, other ranks 23. Edmund Payne was one of the Other Ranks killed on the early morning or evening of the 20th.

It is most likely that he was killed by shellfire, as at the time the Germans knew something was being planned, and were constantly shelling the area. Also evidence in other war diaries on the same date as Edmund's death show the amount of shelling activity at the time.

2nd Batt Manchester's record: 20th July, 40 men sent as working party to Zillebeke trenches . Heavy shelling in area casualties killed, wounded and missing Officers nil, Other ranks 26.
5th Bedfordshire's record: morning of 20th July 1917. Shelling continual around Zillebeke. Casualties in working party at Zillebeke Street, Colour Sgt Herne returning to Bedford House with wounded, killed at 0545 by shell along with 5 Other Ranks from remaining working party.

The 5th Bedfordshire's entry regarding Bedford House is interesting in the relation to Edmund's burial.