

Edwin CLARKE

c1895 – 1 July 1916

Edwin appears aged 6 years in the 1901 census with his family living at Wickford Road, Runwell in Essex. His father, Joseph Hingley Clarke was a Butler, his mother's name was Ruth and he had two brothers, Frank and Albert. Edwin was born in Runwell.

The 1911 census shows that they were all living in Bolton-le-Moors at 9 St Pauls Place, Halliwell Road close to the present junction of Halliwell Road and Moss Bank Way. Edwin's father was again shown as a Butler.

At the beginning of the First World War Edwin joined the 17th Battalion Manchester Regiment as a private number 8101.

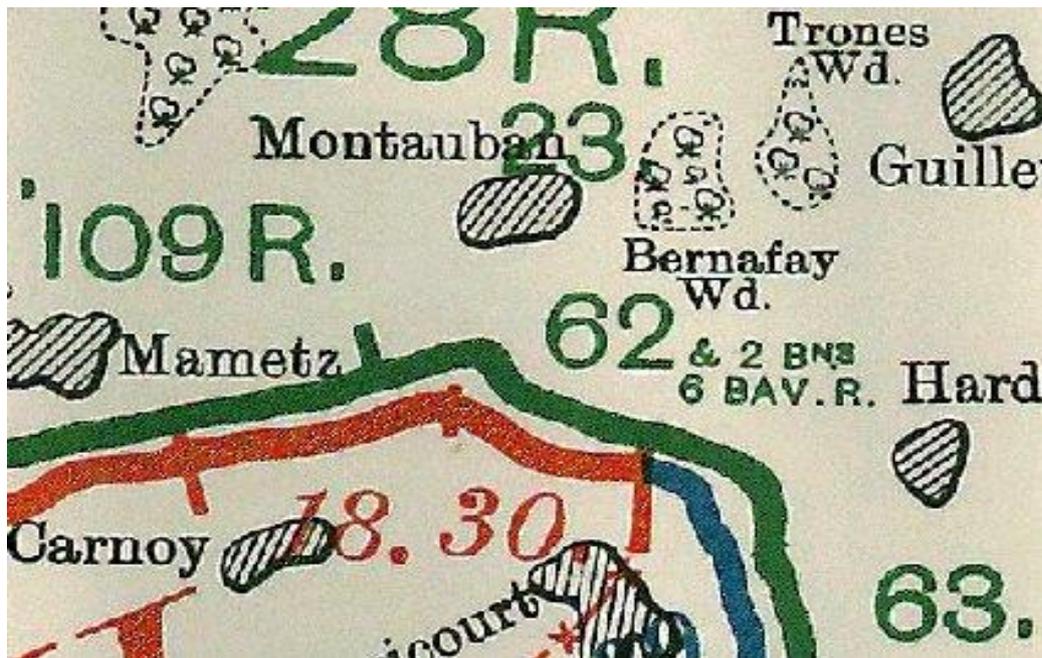
On 30th June 1916 his regiment moved to the south of Cambridge Copse in France. An assault on the village of Montauban [SEE PICTURE] (about 10 kilometres east of Albert - between Amiens and Arras) was launched on 1st July 1916, which was the first day of the Battle of the Somme. The Regimental War Diary shows that 900 officers and men were involved in the assault on the village of Montauban. 350 were killed or wounded including Edwin. The Regiment War Diary records Edwin's name among the dead and shows him as "**of Smithills Hall**". He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial for those soldiers who have no named resting place. He was aged 21. On the Commonwealth War Graves Commission certificate Edwin is described as "the son of Joseph Hingley Clarke and Ruth Clarke, **of Smithills Hall**, Bolton, Lancashire." It is therefore highly likely that his father was a Butler at the Hall.



Thiepval Memorial



Montauban before the assault



Map showing positions of Allied Army (red line) and German Army (green line) prior to 1st July 1916

7



Montauban after the assault showing the Virgin of Montauban as “the only thing left untouched by shell fire”

Edwin is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial