

Alan Richard Forsell (1894-1915)



He was the son of John Thomas Forsell, of Winkadale, Bushby, Leicester. He was educated at Uppingham (Redgate) and Leeds University. A member of the O.T.C. he was "Gazetted" into the British Army in Aug., 1914, as a super-numerary Second Lieutenant to the 4th Battalion, The Leicestershire Regiment (Territorial Force).

On the 4th August 1914 the 1/4th stationed at Leicester and the 1/5th stationed at Loughborough which were both part of the Lincoln & Leicester Brigade of the North Midland Division, moved to Luton.

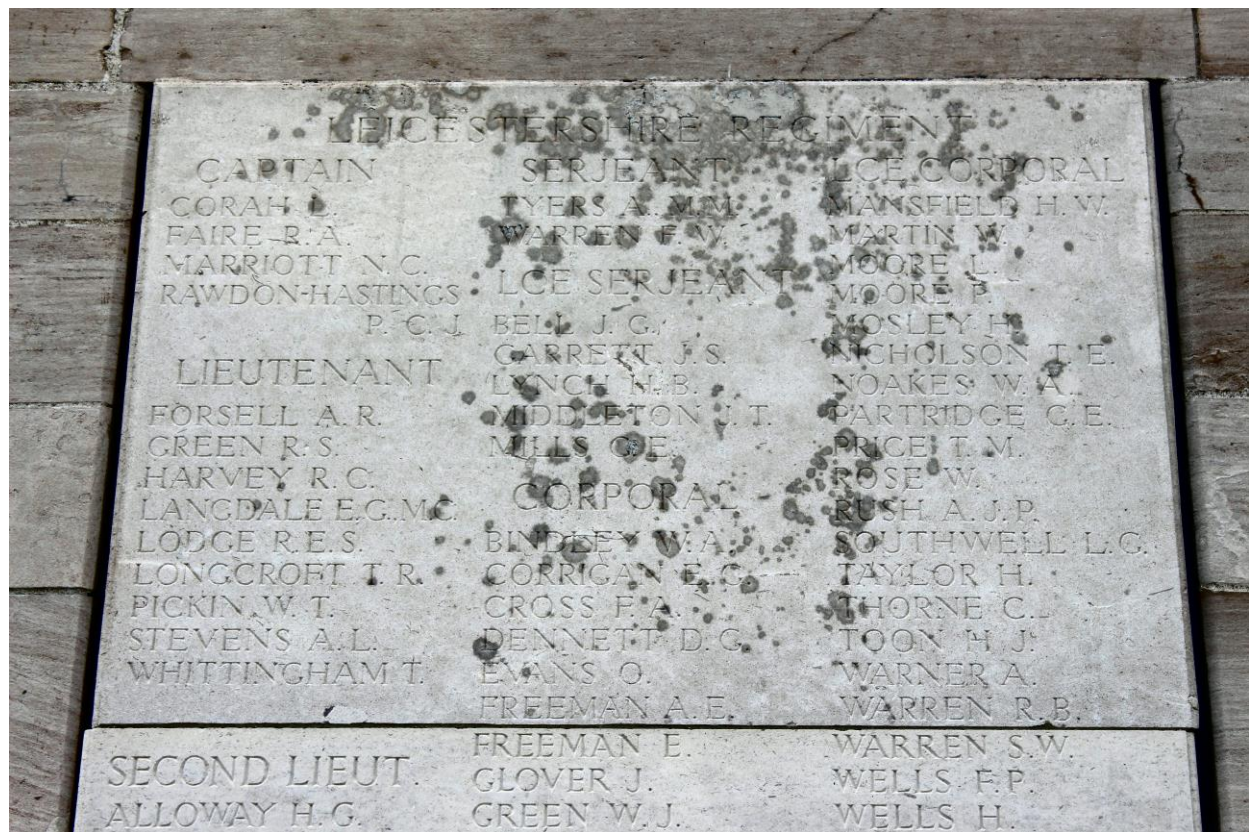
On 3rd March 1915 they were mobilised for war and landed at Havre where the formation became the 138th Brigade of the 46th Division. By this time Alan Forsell had been promoted to Lieutenant. His unit was engaged in various actions on the Western Front including, the attack at the Hohenzollern Redoubt as part of the Battle of Loos. This was also the first battle where the British used poison gas.

The Hohenzollern Redoubt, Battle of Loos, October 1915

On 13th October 1915, The battle started at 2.pm with 138th Brigade tasked to clear the Hohenzollern Redoubt. 138th Brigade attacked at 2.05pm. and reached their first objectives in that area with relatively few losses. On carrying on towards Fosse Trench, heavy fire from both the Dump and Mad Point cut across them causing very high casualties. The attack came to a standstill within ten minutes. Isolated parties and men gradually returned to the shelter of the Redoubt. The Division had lost 180 officers (including Alan Forsell) and 3,583 men within ten minutes, and achieved nothing.

Dud Corner Cemetery and the Loos Memorial.

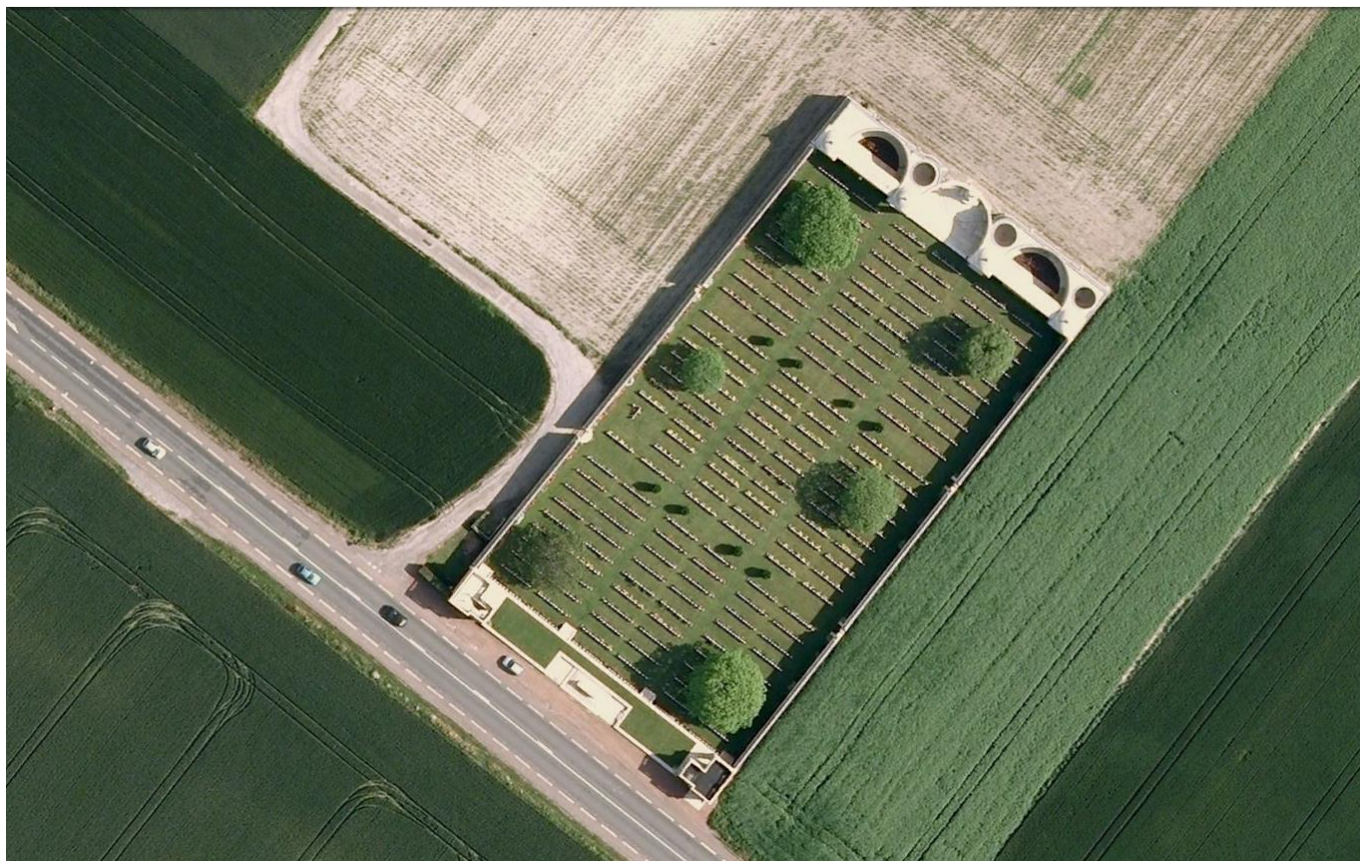
After the war, the site of the Hohenzollern Redoubt was named "Dud Corner" due to the high numbers of unexploded shells present on the site. When the area was cleared, the Loos Memorial was built on the site. The Loos Memorial commemorates over 20,000 officers and men who have no known grave, who fell in the area from the River Lys to the old southern boundary of the First Army, east and west of Grenay. The memorial was designed by Sir Herbert Baker with sculpture by Charles Wheeler. It was unveiled by Sir Nevil Macready on 4 August 1930.



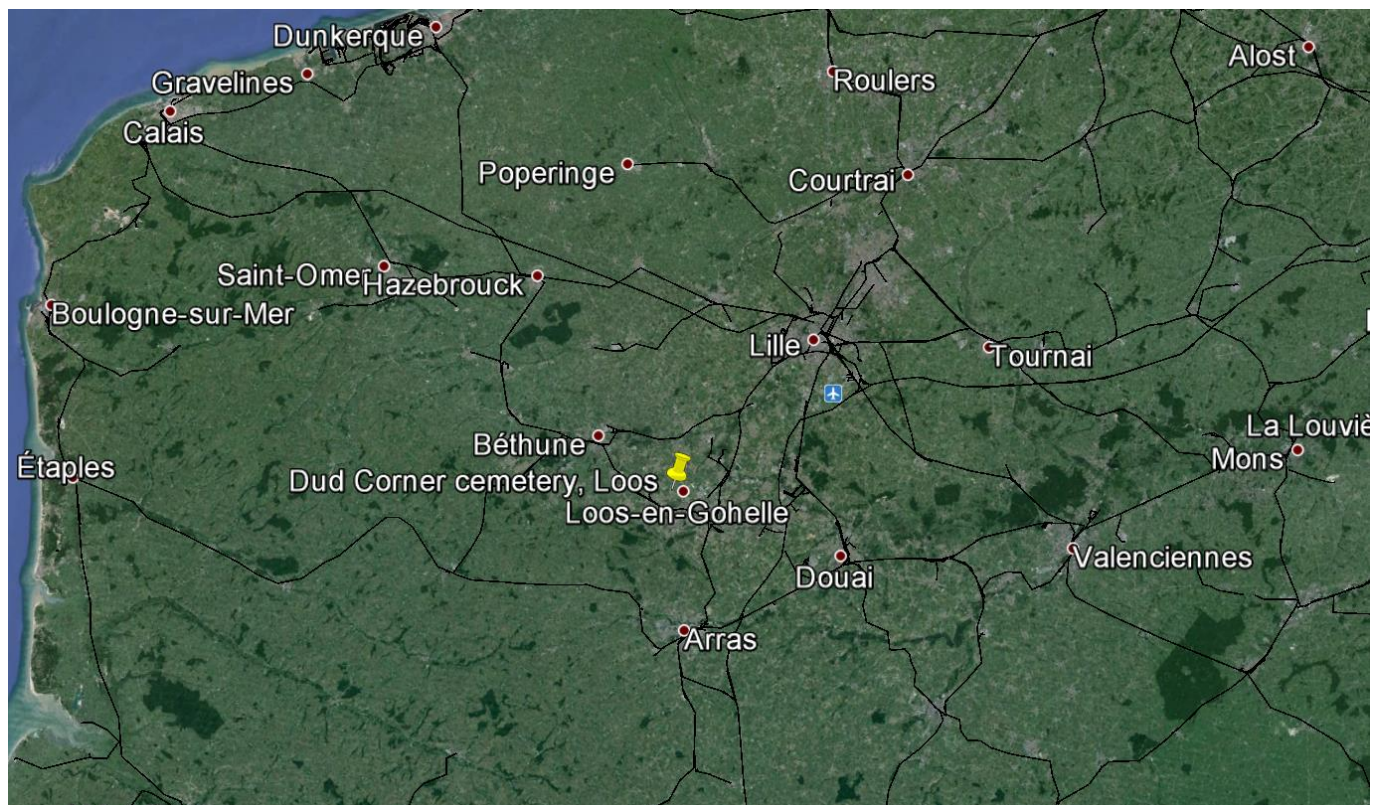
The top section of Tablet 42 of the Loos Memorial bearing Alan Forsell's name (middle left).



A broader view of the Dud Corner Cemetery, which has graves for those bodies recovered, most not identified. The surrounding walls carry 137 tablets each with 3 columns of names of the 20,000 who have no known graves.



Aerial view of Dud Corner Cemetery (Google Earth)



Location of Dud Corner Cemetery, about 55 miles inland from Calais. (Google Earth)

The War Medals

1914/15 Star

Alan Richard Forsell was awarded the 1914-15 star campaign medal of the British Empire for his service in World War One. This Star is identical to the 1914 Star in every respect except that the centre scroll bears the dates "1914- 15" and the two small scrolls bearing "Aug" and "Nov" are omitted.

As Alan Richard Forsell was a recipient of this medal he also received the British War Medal and Victory Medal, as it was not awarded singularly. These three medals were sometimes irreverently referred to as Pip, Squeak and Wilfred. With Pip representing either this medal or the 1914 Star, only one of which could be awarded to a soldier, Squeak represented the British War Medal and Wilfred represented the Victory Medal.

Victory Medal

Like many service personnel of World War One, Alan Richard Forsell was entitled to the Victory medal, also called the Inter Allied Victory Medal. This medal was awarded to all who received the 1914 Star or 1914-15 Star and, with certain exceptions, to those who received the British War Medal. It was never awarded alone. These three medals were sometimes irreverently referred to as Pip, Squeak and Wilfred.

Eligibility for this award consisted of having been mobilised, fighting, having served in any of the theatres of operations, or at sea, between midnight 4th/5th August, 1914, and midnight, 11th/12th November, 1918. Women who served in any of the various military organisations in a theatre of operations were also eligible.

British War Medal

As with many Armed Forces personnel, Alan Richard Forsell was entitled to the British War Medal for service in World War One. This British Empire campaign medal was issued for services between 5th August 1914 and 11th November 1918. The medal was automatically awarded in the event of death on active service before the completion of this period.