



## Alan Wakefield

### Head of First World War and Early 20th Century at Imperial War Museums (IWM)

*On 31 July 1917, the British forces launched a major offensive around the Belgian town of Ypres in an attempt to capture German U-boat bases on the Belgian coast. The Third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele, took place between 31 July and 10 November 1917. The campaign was fought in appalling weather conditions: muddy ground threatened to drown the men, guns could not be transported and low cloud grounded aerial reconnaissance planes. By the end of the offensive, the Allied forces had sustained over 320,000 casualties, and had gained just five miles of the Ypres Salient.*



*The First World War Galleries at IWM London feature content relating to Passchendaele, including paintings by CRW Nevinson and Paul Nash, as well as the sign indicating Menin Gate and a duckboard utilised by soldiers to overcome the dreadful battlefield conditions.*

Alan is able to talk about Passchendaele, the Third Battle of Ypres, including the events that led up to the battle, its significance and its impact. He is also able to bring to life the personal stories of the men who fought, and why it is important for people today to remember these stories.

Alan joined Imperial War Museums in 1999 as a curator in the Photograph Archive. After being appointed Head of Photographs in 2010, Alan was made Head of IWM's First World War & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Conflict Team in 2016. Alan is a member of the British Commission for Military History. He writes and lectures on various aspects of First World War military history, and over the past decade has led many tour groups to the forgotten battlefields of the Salonika Campaign in Greece and Macedonia.

**Alan is available for interview on 27-28 July (pre-records) and 31 July 2017 (pre-records and live) in the First World War Galleries at IWM London.**

**To arrange an interview with Alan, please contact Alicia Powell in the IWM Press Office on [apowell@iwm.org.uk](mailto:apowell@iwm.org.uk) or call 020 7416 5436.**