

Edmund Nicholas PRIDEAUX-BRUNE

Born: 8th October 1898, The Grange, Welwyn, Herts
Occupation: Aspiring composer
Enlisted: September 1916: Cadet, Sandhurst (Conscripted)
Unit: 3rd Bn, Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own)
Rank/number: 2nd-Lieut
Death: Killed in action, 22nd May 1918
Detail:



Edmund died along with several other soldiers when they were bombed by a German aircraft near Lens in northern France. He was killed instantly. He had been with the battalion barely a month. His commanding officer, who would probably never have met the lad, said simply: "He had not been with us long, but in him I know we had lost a valuable officer."

Age at death: 19

Military info: Born into money and privilege, Edmund's life was mapped out for him. An expensive education, a lucrative career and a 'sound' marriage were to be his future milestones. But the Great War intervened and wealth and breeding were no protection against bomb and bullet - quite the opposite, in fact. The life expectancy of a frontline junior officer was six weeks. Edmund would not last five. He was 15 when war came, and after finishing schooling he attended the Royal Military College at Camberley in September 1916. A year later he was gazetted 2nd Lieut. in the Rifle Brigade, his father's old regiment. On 21st March 1918, the Germans launched a last-ditch attack to win the war and troops were rushed out from England. Edmund arrived in France on 19th April and joined 3rd Battalion, The Rifle Brigade, at Ostreville. Just 34 days later he was dead, killed with five other officers by a bomb dropped from a German aircraft near Maisnil Bouche. Edmund's mother was heartbroken and marked every anniversary of his death in a book of common prayer. She wrote out extracts from his diary and in one entry quoted Binyon's famous stanza that begins "*They shall grow not old..*," a poem written near Prideaux Place. She never got over her grief and died eight years after her son's death. Edmund's siblings all served in the war. Both brothers fought in France, Denys twice winning the DSO, and Fulke dying at 42 through wounds he received. His sisters, Winifred, Eva and Sylvie, nursed the injured in England and France.

Grave/memorial: Edmund is buried at Villers Station Cemetery in France, and he is also honoured at St Petroc's Church, Padstow and on Padstow War Memorial.

Family info: Father: Charles Prideaux-Brune, born Bodmin, Cornwall in 1848. Mother: The Hon. Katherine Knatchbull-Hugessen, born London in 1859. The couple married in 1883 and inherited Prideaux Place, an Elizabethan manor, at Padstow.



This information was researched by Peter Smith, who is currently writing a book about Padstow's part in the Great War. Anyone wishing to correct errors or supply additional information can write to him at 24 Mallard Drive, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5PW. Also phone 01825 762226 or email smithpeter24@gmail.com

+Lest we forget+