# Edmund Brooke





**Rank: -** Rifleman

**Number: -** 54146

**Regiment: -** London Rifle Brigade 1/5th Battalion (Pvt 20388 formerly Durham Light Infantry)

**Died of wounds: -** 19th November 1918 aged 20 at 30 Casualty Clearing Station, France

**Cemetery:** - Cambrai East Military Cemetery 111.A.46

## Family Details

Edmund was born in Pudsey in 1898 the son of Thomas and Mary (nee Sheard) who in 1901 (Brook) was living at 15, Stanley Mains, Wakefield with his parents and sister, Lenora (Louisa), born in 1896 at Pudsey. Thomas came from Gomersal and Mary from Liversedge. The couple had married at St. Peter's, Birstall on 7th September 1889. His father, Thomas was a miner.

The census shows that In 1911 Mary and the two children were living at 1, Court 3, King Street, Batley Carr. Mary was married and employed as a weaver and Louisa worked as a confectioner dealing with sweet. Edmund was still at school.

## Service Details

He enlisted at Dewsbury but his service records do not appear to have survived and we have found no newspaper reports of him being wounded or his death. The Division crossed the Canal du Nord on the 27th September although they were in reserve several units went to assist the Canadians. They fought at the Battle of Cambrai which took place between 8th and 10th October 1918 around the French city of Cambrai. This was a battle between troops of the British First, Third and Fourth Armies and the German Empire Forces. The battle incorporated many of the newer tactics of 1918, in particular tanks. The attack was an overwhelming success with light casualties in an extremely short amount of time.

There were three German lines, spanning 7,000yards supported by 150 guns. The weak defence was due to the Allied general offensive across the Western Front and specifically in this sector, the rapid approach of the Canadian Corps, who had overwhelmed much stronger defences in the previous days.

The German defenders were unprepared for the bombardment by 324 tanks, closely supported by infantry and aircraft. On 8th October the 2nd Canadian Division entered Cambrai and encountered sporadic and light resistance. They rapidly moved northwards leaving the mopping up to the 3rd Canadian Division who found the town deserted when they entered the town on the 10th October 1918.

The London Rifle Brigade advanced on the Canal de la Sensee, where it dug in. Fressies was captured on the 11th October and with the assistance of the

divisional Engineers and attempt was made to cross the Sensee on the 14th October. Although some units got across, they were forced back and the positions were handed over to the Canadians the next day.

Open warfare characterised the last phase of the war when on the 4th November the division crossed the River Aunelle and took Sebourg. By the 10th November it had crossed the Grand Honnelle and was relieved only a few miles from Mons.

At some point during this fighting Edmund was injured and taken to 30th Casualty Clearing Station where he died of his wounds on 19th November 1918 just over a week after the war had ended.

Edmund was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Holy Trinity Church, Cambrai East Military Cemetery and Batley War Memorial.




Researched by members of
Batley History Group