

ST JAMES CHURCH TAUNTON
WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL PROJECT

Edward Huddy

Name: Edward Huddy

Rank: 2nd Lieutenant

Service Number:

Regiment: Gloucestershire Regiment

Battalion/Unit number: 12th Battalion

Date/year of Birth: c.1891

Place of Birth: Dowlish Wake nr. Ilminster

Place of Residence: Weir Lodge, Staplegrove Road, Taunton

Date of Death: 30th July 1916

Place of Death: Longueval, The Somme

Burial/Memorial: Thiepval Memorial

Edward was born in 1891 at Dowlish Wake, the son of a farmer, Edmund Huddy and his wife Rosa England. He had four older sisters Mabel, Helen, Flora and Rosa and two brothers, John and Charles both of whom fought in the Great War. John died when his ship was torpedoed in 1915 by a U Boat off the coast of England, Charles survived.

Like his older brother he attended Taunton School and is commemorated on the school memorial. He was accepted for a temporary commission in January 1915. In his army file there is a testimonial to his "good moral character" from John J. Berringer, Principal of the Camborne School of Mines where he trained from September 1910 to July 1913 and from an official of the Anglo-Continental Mine Company where he had been employed for the previous 16 months. He was passed fit for a temporary commission on 27th January 1915. His wish was to fight in the Infantry or Engineers and he was posted to the Gloucester Regiment 12th Battn ("Bristol's own") which formed and trained in Bristol from June 1915 and finally landed in France on 21st November 1915.

Although we have no details of his service from joining until July 1916, it is likely he saw active service during that time.

On 1 July 1916 the Somme offensive began; supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defenses were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained.

The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before 20 March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died, like Edward, between July and November 1916.