

Edwin Charles Andrews

Second lieutenant Edwin Charles Andrews is the last name listed on the war memorial in St. John's church and his grave can be found in the churchyard. According to the 1893 census, he was born in Nursling and is listed as living with his parents William C Andrews (a groom coachman) and Emily Andrews (dressmaker). Emily was local, but William may have come from either Fordingbridge or Nursling, depending upon whether you believe the 1911 or 1901 census records. In 1911 the family was living at Sudbury Villa, Rownhams, but Edwin wasn't there the night the census was taken – so far I've yet to find out where he was.

Enlisting at the outbreak of war in 1914, Edwin landed in France on 9th March 1915 then served in France for two years with 17th Battalion The London Regiment. He received a commission in November 1917 and subsequently served with the 8th Battalion of the Royal West Kents. The London Gazette of 23rd November 1917 states (from the War Office), "The under mentioned cadets to be temporary 2nd Lieutenants 31 October 1917: Royal West Kent Regiment - Edwin Charles Andrews."

His battalion was in action during the German offensive of spring 1918 – in the April 18 he was invalided suffering from the effects of poison gas. On the 19th May he returned home on the Hospital Ship 'Princess Elizabeth' and was at various hospitals where his condition continued to give cause for concern. After further protracted deterioration 2nd Lt. Andrews died at the Military Hospital, Netley on 12th August. His parents are recorded as living at Peartree Avenue, Woolston.

The record of his will says that Edwin was living at Stapleton, 27 Obelisk Road Woolston. He left £172 6s 10d to his mother.

Ann Laird - Rownhams February 2014