

**A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS GREAT WAR PHOTO POSTCARD PORTRAYING PRIVATE EDWARD DWYER. AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS AT HILL 60**

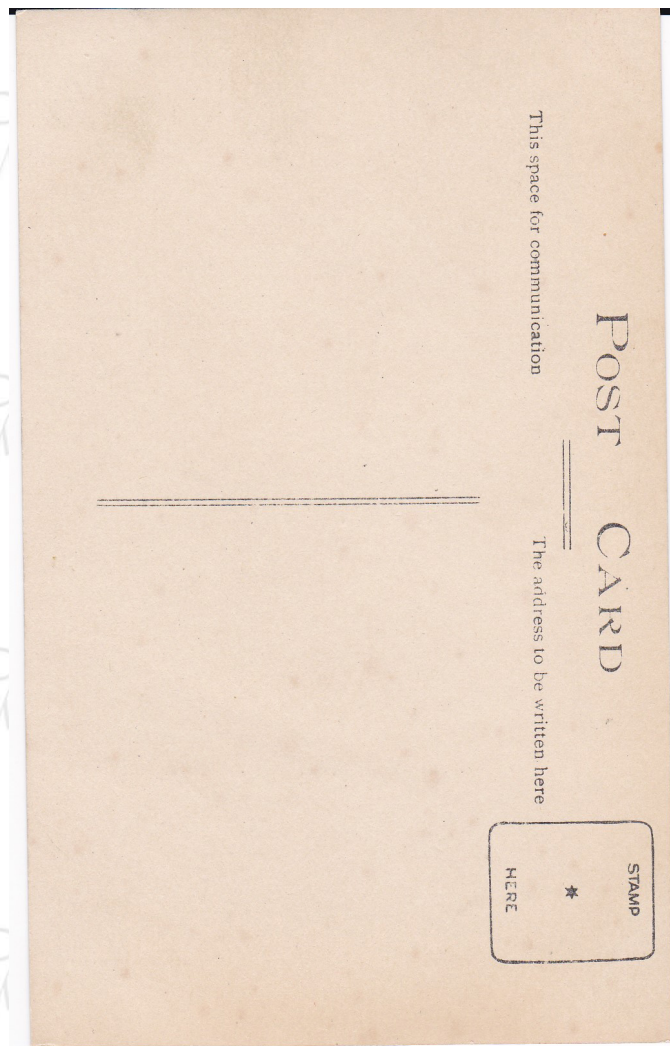


Edward Dwyer (1895-1916) was born at 4 Cassidy Road, Fulham, London on 25th November 1895. He was registered with the name Edwin at birth. His mother's parents originally hailed from Ireland. His father, James, had various jobs ranging from greengrocer, labourer and house painter. James Dwyer enlisted in the Army Service Corps in October 1915 and served at Mudros with 27th Labour Company from 7th November 1915, at ANZAC later in November and Helles before being evacuated from the Gallipoli peninsula. He went to France via Egypt, but his health failed and with failing eyesight he was invalided out of the Army on

1st September 1916. Edwin's mother was Mary Ann nee Felstead known as Sally. She had been previously married to Arthur Inglis but that marriage failed, and she met James. They lived together and had six children before they married in 1912 in Fulham, when Edward was 17.

Edward was educated at St Thomas of Canterbury Church School, Fulham and was employed as a greengrocer's assistant in Knightsbridge. He enlisted in the 4th East Surrey (Special Reserve) on 12th July 1912 giving his name as Edward. It is rumoured he enlisted due to the fact he had run away from home over his parent's marriage. He then transferred into Regular service and was posted to 1st Battalion on 6th October 1912. Edward was not a model soldier however, and throughout 1913 had regular brushes with authority. He was confined to barracks for 5 days for trying to sell another soldier's boots, confined for three days for being absent from church parade and confined for 5 days for being improperly dressed on parade and disobeying an order.

When the war broke out in August 1914, Edward was in Dublin, recovering from illness. He went across to France on 13th August, and had a spell away from the front line in October 1914 due to a septic heel. He would become within a few months the youngest recipient of the VC of the Great War, until Jack Cornwell would break his record in 1916.



On 20th April 1915 on "Hill 60" near Ypres, Belgium, his trench was heavily attacked by German grenade throwers so he climbed on to the parapet, and, although subjected to a hail of bombs at close quarters, succeeded in dispersing the enemy by the effective use of his hand grenades. Private Dwyer displayed great gallantry earlier on this day in leaving his trench, under heavy shell fire, to bandage his wounded comrades.

Four days after his action, he was promoted to Lance Corporal, and three days later was wounded by a gun shot to the head. This wound saw him evacuated back to England, and he received his VC from King George V at Buckingham Palace on 28th June 1915. On recovering from his wounds, he was posted to 3rd (Reserve) Battalion on 22nd September 1915 and carried out recruiting duties for six months. During this time he made a recording of his experiences. He was awarded the Cross of the Order of St George 3rd Class (Russia) on 25th August 1915.

Edward married Maude "Billie" nee Barrett-Freeman at St Thomas' Catholic Church in Fulham on 20th December 1915. She was a Red Cross nurse who tended to him in France. Edward and Maude would not have any children. He returned to duty in January 1916, and returned to the 1st Battalion on 29th March that year. He received a promotion to Corporal in July 1916, before he was sadly killed in action at Guillemont, France on 3rd September 1916 by a chance shell near Battalion HQ while guarding a prisoner who was also killed. Edward was buried in Flat Iron Copse Cemetery.

Edward left his VC in the care of Father Browne (who had married him and Maude) until his death in 1962. The VC was found by a parish priest who contacted the War Office and it subsequently was sent to the Regiment. It is now held by the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum, which sadly has no home at present following the fire at Clandon Park, near Guildford. In addition to his VC, he was awarded the 1914 Star with Mons clasp, British War Medal 1914-20, Victory Medal 1914-19 and the Russian Cross of St George 3rd Class. One of his other brothers, Charles was also killed in the Great War at Salonika in 1917.

Postcard sized Approx 13.7 x 8.6 cm. The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/edward-dwyer-vc/4586604086.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC photo postcard