

Edward Glanville TAYLOR



- Born:** 2nd November 1889, Bocastle, Cornwall
- Occupation:** Farmer
- Enlisted:** Saskatchewan: 14th March 1916 (Volunteer)
- Unit:** 46th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force
- Rank/number:** Sergeant: No.255406
- Death:** Killed in action, 2nd September 1918
- Detail:** Edward, a Lewis machine-gunner, died during a brilliant attack by the Canadian 46th Battalion on the Hindenburg Line at Dury. The last German defensive line was breached, but the price paid by Edward's loved-ones was terrible. His parents, whose 2 daughters both died young, had now lost their only son - and his fiancée was left to mourn the man she had been due to wed later that week.
- Age at death:** 28
- Military info:** During the late 19th and early 20th centuries up to one third of Cornwall's population emigrated in search of a better life - farmer's son Edward Taylor was among this exodus. In 1911 he left for Canada and settled in Saskatchewan, an untamed prairie province. When the war began Canada was automatically involved and thousands enlisted. Edward joined up at Prince Albert on 14th March 1916. He was 26, 5ft 8ins tall, with brown eyes and black hair. Edward was made corporal. He signed his pay over to his Cornish sweetheart, Violet Mitchell, a teacher from Boscastle. On 30th December 1916 Edward's young diabetic sister Bessie died aged 19. Twelve years earlier his other sister Mildred died aged 13. In April 1917 Edward sailed for England and went to Bramshott Camp, Hampshire. On 14th August he went absent without leave for 12 days to propose to Violet. She accepted and he gave her an engagement ring. Edward was demoted as a result. On 10th September 1917 he crossed to France, and was posted to the 46th Battalion, nicknamed the "Suicide Battalion" because of its high casualty rate. Edward won back his stripes. Germany launched a last-ditch offensive on 21st March 1918, but the Canadians were kept out of battle to be trained as a counter-attack force. Their chance came on 8th August when they helped defeat the Germans at Amiens - the beginning of the end for the Kaiser's armies. The 46th Battalion went north to join the fight for the Hindenburg Line and on 2nd September they took Dury, securing a vital breakthrough. Seven Canadians won the VC at a cost of 1,400 casualties. Edward, who was due to wed Violet a few days later, was killed.
- Grave/memorial:** Edward is buried at Dury Crucifix Cemetery in France, and is commemorated in Canada, at St Petroc's Church, Padstow and on the Padstow War Memorial.
- Family info:** Father: John Taylor, born Trevalga, near Boscastle, Cornwall in 1858. Farmer. Mother: Bessie Thomas, born Padstow, Cornwall in 1862. The married in 1888.



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

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