



Private Edward Cooper (9653) was born in Brentford in 1888 to parents Edward & Elizabeth (nee Smith). The 1891 Census records that the Cooper family are living in Hamilton Road, Ealing. Edward who is now three has two older sisters, Elizabeth and Charlotte, and a baby brother William. Edward Senior was a Lath Render (which is someone who splits wood to make laths for internal walls). It was a skilled occupation that young Edward would strive to learn as he grew up. By 1901, the Cooper family had moved to Brook House, 81 Brook Road, Brentford which they appear to be sharing with their eldest daughter and her family. Edward is now 13, and Alfred and Harold have joined the family.

In 1909, Edward, who is now 21, marries May Nellie Allwright. The 1911 Census shows the couple living with Edward's parents at 81 Brook Road with a couple of his younger brothers. A little later that year, Edward can be found on a passenger list for the "SS Scotian" which sailed from Glasgow to Quebec – his occupation was Lath Render. His wife May was not with him. Perhaps Edward was searching for a better quality of life and May had every intention of joining him once he was settled. Whilst Edward was away, May can be found living at a number of addresses – 35 Mafeking Ave, 10 Boars Head Yard and 236 High Street Brentford.

Surprisingly Edward's Canadian Attestation Record shows that he had in fact served with the 12th Middlesex Regiment for three years before he emigrated to Canada. On the 1st September 1914, not long after war was declared, Edward presented himself for an Army medical examination at Valcartier in Quebec where he was deemed fit. A few weeks later on 22nd, he joined the 3rd Bn (Central Ontario Regiment) Canadian Infantry, 1st Canadian Division. Within days Edward and his new battalion embarked on the troop ship 'Tunisian', arriving in England on Oct 14th. The battalion stayed in England, probably for training purposes, until February 1915 when it set sail for France.

The Battle of Festubert was one of the first offensive actions on the Western Front of the 1st Canadian Division. Unfortunately it was a complex and poorly organised battle which began on May 13th with a 60 hour artillery bombardment! It is reported that 'half the infantry who fought there were fresh from reinforcement camps in the UK and were thrown into action'. History has described it as 'the most unsatisfactory engagement' involving Canadians of the entire war. Over 2,500 Canadians were killed, wounded or went missing. Edward's service record states 'the location of his unit at the time he was killed in action in the field' was 'in the vicinity of Festubert' on 27th May 1915. He was buried in an 'unmarked grave behind a trench ref. 36.S.20'. Edward was 27. He was awarded the 14-16 Star and is commemorated on the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. Edward's wife, May, found happiness again with Alfred Cripps whom she married in 1919. They lived at 20, Challis Rd. Brentford and Gladys was born in 1920. Edward was also remembered on the memorial at All Saints, Church, Isleworth.



Canadian National Vimy Memorial