

A GREAT WAR FAMILY GRAVE IN ENGLAND

by David Craigen (from his talk at the October 2010 Branch meeting)

It began, as many of our stories do, with a chest from the attic. The chest had belonged to my grandfather who served for the 4 years and survived the war. I was aware of brothers who also served and were lost, but I had few details.

In the chest was a small black and white picture of a cross and plinth with the name Edward Cyril Drury engraved. A search of the Commonwealth War Grave Commission (CWGC) website led me to Netley cemetery Southampton.

Netley was once the site of the British army's largest military hospital; the hospital was built in the 19th century and reached its greatest capacity in the Great War.



All that remains now is the chapel and tower in a beautiful park overlooking Southampton Water.

I found Edward's gravestone in the hospital cemetery in the wood behind the park, and another brother Maurice who is buried in France also commemorated on the back of the gravestone.

The gravestone had fallen into disrepair with time – the cross on the top had gone and there was a rusting piece of steel where the cross had once been joined to the plinth.

I contacted CWGC, they offered to replace the gravestone with a standard gravestone at their expenses, but I decided to try a repair. CWGC referred me to an approved stonemason who advised me, and I arranged for the stonemason to place a new stone over the rust. He added a carved cross, and also an inscription to my grandfather, so all three brothers who served are now commemorated together.

It cost me a little money, but enabled me to preserve as much as was possible.



IN
EVER LOVING MEMORY
OF

PTE. EDWARD CYRIL DRURY
15th KINGS LIVERPOOL REGIMENT
DIED OF WOUNDS OCTOBER 15th 1916
AGED 18 YEARS.



IN MEMORIAM
LT COLONEL
SAMUEL C DRURY
1891 - 1981
BROTHER

ALSO OF

O. N. ST NAURICE WILLIAM DRURY
ROYAL ENGINEERS R.E.
WHO DIED AT BOLLOGNE
OCTOBER 23 1918. AGED 24 YEARS