

The Death Of Edmund Otto Krohn

Combat Aviator and Resident of Madeira

By: Harry Fecitt MBE TD



A plaque in the Holy Trinity Church in Funchal commemorates the death during the Great War of Edmund Otto Krohn of the Royal Flying Corps.



Mr. Edmund William Krohn, com sua senhora

Emma Dina Krohn e seus filhos

NAN: 56.997

Rua do Carmo

10 Setembro 1915

Fotógrafo: Vicentes Photographos



Edmund was born in Madeira on the 13th December 1898. His grandfather was Wilhelm Krohn who, with his brother, Nicolai, operated Krohn Brothers, a major Madeiran wine business. Edmund's other ancestral links to the trade in Madeira were his great grandfather, William Grant, and his great, great grandfather, Robert Innes. Edmund's parents were Edmund William Krohn and Emma Dina Krohn (nee Hertz), and his father's address is listed on Edmund's military records as being 'care of Blandy Brothers and Company', Funchal.

The Great War started as Edmund was being educated, but when he was old enough to enlist he joined the East Surrey Regiment as SD31704 Private Krohn, E.O. However, he was attracted to the Royal Flying Corps where he was accepted and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on the 10th May 1917. He was posted to No. 84 Squadron which was a fighter unit based in France. On the 1st March 1918, Edmund gained promotion to Lieutenant.

Piecing together events from several sources it appears that on the 28th February 1918, 84 Squadron



aircraft were flying strafing missions against a very large German artillery gun mounted on a railway wagon that had been concealed in the Forest of Gobain. Other 84 Squadron tasks probably included attacking enemy observation balloons. The squadron was equipped with single-seater SE5a aeroplanes. German aircraft came up to challenge the 84 Squadron pilots.

At 15:25 hours, Edmund, nineteen years of age, took off in his SE5a serial number C5379. At 16:35 hours, he was in aerial combat with three enemy aircraft over the Saint Gobain Forest. Edmund's aircraft was probably shot down or else it crash-landed in German territory after being damaged by enemy fire. As Edmund's date of death was recorded for official purposes as the 1st of March 1918,

Edmund might have died of his wounds or injuries in an enemy hospital on that date. The Germans reported his death to the British authorities. A pilot named Ulrich Neckel, from the German aviation unit Jagdstaffel 12, claimed to have shot down a SE5a on the 28th February. During his war service, Neckel shot down 10 Allied aircraft.

Edmund was at first buried by his foes in German-held territory but after the war his remains were re-buried by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in the Chauny Communal Cemetery British Extension in the Aisne region of France.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them".

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