

Cheltenham & Gloucester Branch
of
The Western Front Association

Remembering one of Gloucestershire's Fallen



Second Lieutenant Hedley Goldsmith Browne
Royal Air Force

Hedley Goldsmith Browne was born on 15 June 1888 in Norwich, the son of John Goldsmith and Edith A Browne. His father was an insurance clerk. According to the 1901 Census the couple had three sons and one daughter and the family lived at 26 York Street, Norwich.

Prior to his military service, Hedley was a cashier with Norwich Union Life Assurance from 1905 to 1914.

His Medal Index Card shows that he joined the Army on 17 August 1914 and was a Motor Cycle Despatch Rider with the Royal Engineers (number 28090), prior to entry into the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). His CWGC Register entry records that he was on active service in France for three years from 1914.

In 1917 he transferred to the RFC and his National Archives File (AIR76/62) shows he was

declared fit as a pilot on 16 October 1917 and became a Cadet on 30 November 1917. He went on to obtain his Flying Certificate on a Maurice Farman biplane at Military School, Thetford on 25 January 1918, thereby becoming a Second Lieutenant in the RFC on 25 January 1918 (number 5886). He carried forward that rank when the RFC was absorbed into the newly formed Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918.

He was killed in a solo flying accident at Rendcomb, Gloucestershire on 8 April 1918, aged 29: he was flying a DH6 (Serial Number C9345) with 59 Training Squadron.

He was buried in Cirencester Cemetery, where a stone cross marks his grave. Part of the inscription reads: *...who was called to 'higher service' whilst doing a solo flight near Cirencester.*