

Extract from *"The Fighting 10th"*, Adelaide, Webb & Son, 1936 by C.B.L. Lock;
kindly supplied courtesy of the 10th Bn AIF Association Committee, April 2015.

OLDHAM, Edward Castle

Born 8 September 1876 at Gawler, South Australia.

Son of William John OLDHAM and Mother Julia (nee CASTLE).

He was educated at Prince Alfred College.

He subsequently became a Clerk by profession, and at the outbreak of the Great War resided at Edward Street, Evandale.

On 19 April 1912, at the Registry Office in Adelaide, he married Elsie Sophia, daughter of Frank Johnson.

He received his first commission as a Lieutenant in the 10th Australian Infantry Regiment on 6 February 1904, and was promoted to the rank of Captain in the same unit on 1 July 1908.

On 1 July 1912, upon the introduction of universal military training, he was transferred to the 78th (Adelaide Rifles) Infantry with rank of Captain, and held this commission at the time of joining the AIF.

On 1 November 1910 he was temporarily appointed Area Officer at St Peters, where at the outbreak of the Great War he was well known by many compulsory trainees.

He underwent a military course of training in India during 1909-10, and was regarded as one of the first Company Commanders selected by Lieutenant-Colonel S P Weir for the 10th Battalion, and was appointed a Captain at Morphettville on 19 August 1914, when he was posted to the Command of original E Company.

He embarked with the original Battalion on *HMAT A11 Ascanius* on 20 October 1914, and at Mena, Egypt, in January 1915, when his company merged with original C Company and became the new B Company, he was appointed to the command of same and promoted to the rank of Major on 1 February 1915.

He embarked with the Battalion on the *Ionian* for the Dardanelles, and landed with his company from the Prince of Wales at the historic landing on 25 April 1915.

During the severe fighting of 25 April 1915 he unnecessarily exposed himself, and whilst in the act of so doing was shot dead.

His attention had been drawn by one of his men, and standing up in order to make a fuller observation, he was mortally wounded. He was a strict disciplinarian, but after associating with his men for some months softened considerably.

One of his men, No. 172 Bugler H A Bartholomaeus, in writing from Gallipoli after the landing, referred to the death as follows:

"You remember how hard we used to think the Major was at Morphettville. Well, he turned out differently at Mena, and I don't think any company had a better officer than the one under his command."

He was affectionately known to rank and file of the Battalion as "Froggy".

He was particularly popular in military circles in South Australia, where his mother resided at Hackney and his wife and son at Bakewell Road, Evandale.