

## PRIVATE WILLIAM MIDDLEDITCH (5824946)



(Suffolk Regiment)

Private William Middleditch was born circa. 1913 and his parents were William and Sybil Middleditch of **Bradfield Combust**. He served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment.

At the start of WW2 there were two regular battalions of full-time infantry of 800-1000 men each (the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions) with a further two battalions of territorials (the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) - the equivalent of today's Territorial Army. On the outbreak of war the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was part of 8th Infantry Brigade, 3rd UK Division and based in Devonport. In October 1939 the Battalion formed part of the British Expeditionary Force and went to France. The British Expeditionary Force did not commence hostilities until the invasion of France on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1940.

After the commencement of battle, the Battalion was driven back through Belgium and north-western France, forcing their eventual evacuation from several ports along the French coast including Dunkirk. Private Middleditch didn't live to see the evacuation and was killed on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1940.



1940 evacuation - Dunkirk

Private William Middleditch died aged 27 and he is laid to rest in grave plot A.5 in the Oostduinkerke Communal Cemetery, West Flanders, Belgium. Forces War Records indicate that he was awarded the British War Medal 1939-1945 and the 1939-1945 Star.



Oostduinkerke Cemetery



Plaque in All Saints Church



*Remembered With Honour*

