

## PRIVATE ALDRED VINCENT GRIMMETT

65012, 13th (Service) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers

Died aged 20 on 23 August 1918

Buried with honour in *Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension, France*; III F 11

Commemorated in Tewkesbury on the Grammar School Memorial, and in Alderton



*Achiet-le-Grand Cemetery Extension*



*Private A. V. Grimmatt*



*Royal Fusiliers*

**ALDRED VINCENT GRIMMETT** was born in March 1898 at Rectory Barn Farm, Alderton, the third son of Samuel Grimmatt and Millicent (formerly Minett) who married in 1892. In 1901 he was living with his uncle and aunt, Thomas Hale Sharp, a Master Baker, and Joan Sharp of Alderton; Joan was his father's sister and when Aldred died it was said that he had been adopted. This might have been because the Sharps had no children of their own. Aldred had two brothers and a sister living at home at Alstone Fields Farm. In 1911 he was still living with his uncle and aunt and is listed on the Tewkesbury Grammar School Register for 1911-1913.

Aldred volunteered in December 1914, enlisting at Grove Park in London even though he was still living officially in Alderton. His casualty record suggests that he was initially assigned to a Mechanical Transport Company in the Army Service Corps. The British Army was the most mechanised of the armies involved in the Great War, using motor vehicles for transport. His Medal Index Card indicates that he did not serve overseas until 1916 or later; the card also records that the two standard medals he was awarded (*Victory Medal* and *British Medal*) were returned in 1923 but no reason is given.

At some stage, Aldred transferred to the 13th (Service) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. The battalion was formed at Hounslow on 13 September 1914 as part of Kitchener's New Army and had landed at Boulogne on 30 July 1915. In 1918, the battalion came under the command of the 111th Infantry Brigade in 37th Division. In August 1918, this Division was part of the Third Army in the Somme sector, in the campaign known as

*'The Last Hundred Days'* which saw the Allies inflict a series of crushing defeats on the German Army, culminating in the Armistice. The Division took part in the *Battle of Albert* (21-23 August 1918), the start of a northward extension of the British advance begun on 8 August at the *Battle of Amiens*, often taken to be the turning point of the war on the Western Front.

The Regimental History comments that the 13th Royal Fusiliers, attacking a railway cutting on the south-west of Achiet-le-Grand, *'had a stirring time'* and recounts the battalion's *'fine success ... the cutting was like a rabbit warren. It was simply alive with Germans, and their surrender was almost embarrassing. The position had been thought so secure that in one of the dugouts a meal had just been taken. Hot coffee lay on the table. It was one of the greatest days experienced by the battalion ... over 1,000 prisoners were taken'*. It was noted that the battalion's casualties from 21 to 27 August were *'little more than a fifth of this number'*; 200+ was clearly considered an acceptable figure for what had been achieved.

**Private Aldred Vincent Grimmatt** was killed in action on 23 August 1918 and is buried in *Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetery Extension*, on the Somme. His brother, **Private Alfred Victor Grimmatt** [†] of the 8th Gloucesters, was killed in action on 21 October 1918. Both brothers are commemorated on the *Tewkesbury Grammar School Memorial*, currently displayed at the Town Hall, also in Alderton, but in different places in the village: Aldred in St. Margaret's of Antioch Church and Alfred on the roadside War Memorial.