

PRIVATE ALFRED VICTOR GRIMMETT

17237, 8th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment

Died aged 24 on 21 October 1918

Buried with honour in *Romerics Communal Cemetery Extension, France*; V E 16

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



*Romerics Communal Cemetery
Extension, France*



*Pte. A.V. Grimmatt & family
[Mrs. H. Robinson]*



*Gloucestershire
Regiment*

ALFRED VICTOR GRIMMETT was born in December 1894 to Samuel Grimmatt and Millicent (formerly Minett) who married in 1892. Samuel was born in Alderton and Millicent came from Gretton. In the 1901 and 1911 Censuses, Alfred was living at Alstone Fields Farm, Beckford, with two brothers and two sisters. A younger brother, Aldred Vincent, was living with their uncle and aunt, Thomas Hale Sharp, a Master Baker, and Joan Sharp of Alderton; Joan was his father's sister. Alfred is listed on the Tewkesbury Grammar School Register between 1907 and 1913.

Alfred enlisted as a volunteer in Tewkesbury sometime late in 1914 or early 1915 (though his name is not recorded). He joined the Gloucestershire Regiment and, after training, was posted to the 8th (Service) Battalion. The battalion had originally been formed at Bristol in September 1914 as part of Kitchener's New Army. It came under the command of the 19th (Western) Division. The battalion landed in France on 18 July 1915. Alfred followed soon afterwards, disembarking in France on 20 September 1915, which qualified him for the '1914-15 Star' medal. His medal rolls confer the rank of Lance Corporal although his casualty records refer to him as a Private; presumably the higher rank was acting and unpaid.

The 8th Gloucesters were involved in many of the key battles on the Western Front during the period of Alfred's service. In a letter from the front in April 1917, Alfred says that *'he is in fairly good health except for two sties on his left*

eye which were proving painful'. He added that some local lads serving nearby *'were full of sympathy for us on account of Aldred'*. He signed *'your loving son Victor'*, which indicates that the family had as much problem with two similar Christian names as does posterity.

In October 1918 the 19th (Western) Division was part of the Third Army which was in the forefront of the campaign known as *'The Last Hundred Days'* that saw the Allies inflict a series of crushing defeats on the German Army, culminating in the Armistice. The Division, including the 8th Gloucesters, was involved in the *Battle of the Selle* (17-25 October 1918), south of Le Cateau, when the British ejected the Germans from a new defensive line they had established along the River Selle after being forced out of the Hindenburg Line.

Private Alfred Victor Grimmatt was killed in action on 21 October 1918, midway through the *Battle of the Selle*. His body was recovered and it is likely that he was buried initially in a temporary grave before being moved after the Armistice to *Romerics Communal Cemetery Extension* near Valenciennes.

Alfred's brother, **Private Aldred Vincent Grimmatt** [†], had been killed in action two months earlier on 23 August 1918. Both brothers are commemorated on the *Tewkesbury Grammar School Memorial*, currently displayed at the Town Hall, and in Alderton, but in different places in the village: Aldred in St. Margaret's of Antioch Church and Alfred on the roadside War Memorial.