

## SERJEANT LOUIS VICTOR MANN

3359, 9th Battalion, Essex Regiment

Died aged 36 on 12 August 1916

Remembered with honour on *Thiepval Memorial*; Pier and Face 10 D

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey & on the Grammar School Memorial



*Thiepval Memorial, France*



*1914-15 Star Medal*



*Essex Regiment*

**LOUIS VICTOR MANN** came from a long-established military family. He was born in Tewkesbury on 10 January 1880 to Colour Sgt. Nicholas G. A. Mann and Sarah Ann (formerly Dart) who was from Exeter in Devon. Nicholas was one of twin brothers born at Newry Army Barracks in Ireland in 1842; his father, Sgt. Major William Mann, originally from Tewkesbury, was a regular in 56th (Essex) regiment. By 1877 Nicholas, a cabinet-maker by profession, had moved to Tewkesbury where he married Sarah; they had six surviving children in 1911. From 1881 to 1901 the family lived in Gravel Walk but had moved to Bull Court, Church Street, by 1911. Until 1900 he served as a Colour Sergeant in the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, the predecessor of the Gloucestershire's Territorial Force of 1908.

Louis was a former pupil of the Grammar School, after which he worked as a grocer and was a member of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion. He enlisted on 10 December 1895 as a boy soldier in the Essex Regiment at the age of 15 years and 11 months and signed up for 12 years. He was soon posted to the 2nd Battalion, with whom he later served in India, Ireland and Malta, as well as South Africa during the *Boer War* – but with the Gloucesters. He was in the first batch of Volunteers and was presented with a Campaign Medal. On his return he worked for Haywards. His older brother, Nicholas Joseph, also served in South Africa. Louis was discharged from the Army on 9 December 1907 after completing his time with the Colours.

Louis Victor Mann volunteered and re-joined his old regiment, enlisting in London, probably

in October 1914. He was posted to the 9th Battalion, Essex Regiment, formed in August 1914 as part of Kitchener's Army and under the command of the 12th (Eastern) Division. Because of his experience, he was promoted Sergeant and landed at Boulogne on 31 May 1915 just over three months before it was involved in the *Battle of Loos*; he was thus awarded the '1914-1915 Star' medal.

The battalion moved south in June 1916 to take part in the Anglo-French campaign, now known as the *Battles of the Somme*. The Division was in reserve on 1 July but took part in an unsuccessful attack against Ovillers during 7-9 July. In August it was back in the front line, preparing to launch an attack in the evening of 12 August against German trench systems on *Pozières Ridge*. That night the battalion was subjected to heavy artillery bombardment, which caused 110 casualties. The attack in the evening, however, captured the enemy position without opposition and then successfully resisted German counter-attacks.

**Sergeant Louis Victor Mann** was killed in action on 12 August (although the CWGC – apparently incorrectly – records the date as 14 August). His body was never identified and he is commemorated instead on the *Thiepval Memorial*. His father was awarded a War Gratuity of £12. His older brother, **Pte. Nicholas Joseph Mann** [†] of the Worcestershire Regiment, was killed in Mesopotamia on 15 December 1916; his younger brother, **L/Cpl. Frederick Ernest Mann**, who also served with the Essex Regiment, survived the war despite being wounded.