

Walter Arthur Reginald GRANT

Born: 1890, Morden, Dorset

Parents: Edwin Grant and Mary Fry

Last known address: Mayfield, Furzyhurst Road [Oxford Street], Northwood

Last known occupation: Labourer

Service number: 27157

Regiment: 6th Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry

Service history summary:

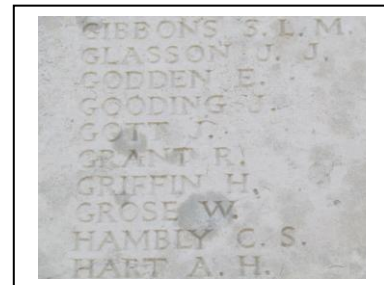
- enlisted: Newport, 12th April 1916
- rank: Private
- decorations: British War Medal and Victory Medal

Died: 23rd August 1917

Age: 27

Commemorated: [Tyne Cot Memorial](#), Belgium

Family: Walter Arthur Reginald Grant (known as Reggie) was born Morden, Dorset on May 29th 1890. Morden is a village six miles to the north of Wareham and a few miles east of Bere Regis. When Mary Fry married Edwin ('Edward' on the marriage certificate) Grant on December 23rd 1869, both bride and groom were stated to be then living in Bloxworth. Edwin and Mary Grant had ten children between 1870 and 1890, of whom Reggie was the youngest. They lived at first in Wareham, at West Street, where their first child Eliza Ellen was born, later in Trinity Lane and then Cow Lane. The family subsequently moved to West Morden, Dorset where, in 1891 Reggie's eldest brother Edwin (19) was working as a dairyman and his 16-year-old brother Charles (born Frederick Charles) was working as a carter.



Reggie's father Edwin died on 16th October 1923 whilst living at Mayfield, Furzyhurst (now 50 Oxford Street), Northwood. Mary Grant died 11th August 1927 at 6 Albert Road, Gurnard, where she was living with Frederick Charles, another of Reggie's brothers, and his wife Harriett who had also moved to the Isle of Wight. Edwin and Mary are buried in Northwood Cemetery as are Reggie's brothers Frederick (died March 1943) and William (died June 1952) and Frederick's wife Harriett (died 1924).

Brothers: Edwin (c1872), Frederick Charles (1876), William Henry James (1880), Albert Shadrack George (1883-1892) and John (1884)

Sisters: Eliza Ellen (1871), Alice Beatrice Bessie Louisa (1878), Annie Elizabeth (1884) and Ada Jane (1885-1892)

Northwood/Gurnard connection: Edwin and Mary moved to Cowes at some point between 1893 and 1901 when they lived at 4 Alma Place (between 13 and 14 Union Road) with Reggie, now aged 14, and his youngest sister Annie. Edwin was working as a bricklayer. It is unclear whether Reggie was still at school or had started work.

By 1911 Edwin, Mary and Reggie Grant had moved to Albert Road, Gurnard. Annie was no longer living at home but both Reggie and his father were now working as labourers. A 79-year-old widower, Edwin Chessell, was boarding with them. Reggie's brother William, also a labourer, was then living at 3 Alma Place, Cowes, with his wife and children. Edwin and Mary must have moved to Furzyhurst either during or shortly after the War.

War record: Reggie enlisted at Newport on April 12th 1916 (conscription was introduced in March 1916), the same day as Albert Tross *qv*. He gave his age as 26 years and 11 months and occupation as labourer. Interestingly his Attestation record gives his name as Arthur whereas the Duke of Cornwall's Regimental Roll of Honour calls him Reggie. Having reported to the Regimental Depôt at Bodmin, Reggie would have received a medical examination and been fully documented. On 14th April 1916 he was posted to the 3rd Training and Reserve Battalion DCLI at Freshwater Fort, Isle of Wight. Although recruits were supposed to receive six month's training, this may have been cut short due to the terrible losses being sustained in the battles of the Somme and Reggie was posted to the 6th Battalion. This was the senior "Service" battalion (raised for the duration of the War only). It was formed at Watt's Common, Aldershot on September 4th 1914 from men who had volunteered as a result of Lord Kitchener's call to arms. Most of its men came from London and Birmingham as Cornwall had too small a population to maintain a complete regiment. After training the 6th Battalion landed in France in May 1915. They were part of the first division to be attacked by flame throwers and fought in many actions on the Western Front including the battle of the Somme (July 1st to November 1916).

Reggie may well have joined his new battalion while it was still heavily involved in the Somme battles. In their final battle of Flers-Courcelette (September 15th – 22nd 1916) the DCLI 6th Battalion lost 15 officers and 294 soldiers. The Battalion was then withdrawn to rest and re-fit. On August 16th 1917 the Battalion was deployed into the fighting in the Ypres Salient (which came to be known as the Third Battle of Ypres, also known as Passchendaele) at Langemarck. After the Langemarck attack began, the breaching of dykes to try to slow the German advance combined with the heaviest rain for 30 years turned the area into a quagmire so bad that men and horses drowned. On the August 23rd, the date recorded for Reggie's death, the 6th Battalion attacked the Inverness Copse. The action involved four of the earliest tanks although only one of them actually contributed to the action with its machine gun, the other three being either knocked out, withdrawn or toppled down an embankment. The enemy counter-attacked heavily causing the Battalion to fall back temporarily although later they managed to break up the counter-attack. Throughout the night of the August 23rd the enemy's guns bombarded both the old and new lines very heavily, inflicting heavy casualties. Reggie must have gone missing presumed dead during this action hence his name appearing on the memorial as his body was never recovered.