

Private Christopher Grigg

Devonshire Regiment



Pte Christopher Grigg won the Distinguished Conduct Medal whilst serving in Italy with 8th (Service) Battalion the Devonshire Regiment.

Born in the village in 1891 to parents Jethro and Emily Grigg, he was one of five children and lived in The Street.

As a young man he went to work in a local market garden, but the 1911 census records him as a Water Keeper, working for the Greywell Hill Estate and still living at home with his parents. It is known that he loved the work and was very well thought of on the Estate. He looked after the fishing and was busy keeping the river stocked as well as producing fish eggs for sale in vast numbers.

Christopher survived WW1, to return to Greywell and take up his old job as Water Keeper, living in the village for many more years.



Christopher's Service Records are incomplete, however it is known that he originally enlisted in the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

He later served in the Devonshire Regiment and the Gloucestershire Regiment. Unfortunately, dates and other details are unknown and

although he was well remembered in the village in the 1960s, he never spoke of his time in the war.



Soldiers who had been wounded were often transferred to different regiments after convalescence, so it is possible Chris was wounded, maybe even more than once.

Chris was certainly at home in Hampshire during October 1915 for his wedding to Nora Dean.

We are also able to trace the history of the 8th (Service) Battalion Devonshire Regiment, and it is possible that Chris was with them in France before they were transferred to Italy.

During 1916 as part of 20th Brigade, 7th Division. The Battalion took part on the Somme at The Battle of Albert, The Battle of Bazentin and the attacks on High Wood, The Battle of Delville Wood, The Battle of Guillemont, followed by Operations on the Ancre.

During 1917, they were in action during The German Retreat to the Hindenburg Line, The Arras offensive, The Battle of Polygon Wood, The Battle of Broodseinde, The Battle of Poelcapelle, The Second Battle of Passchendaele.

In late 1917 The Allies were seriously worried by the near collapse of the Italian Army. British and French troops were withdrawn from other theatres of war, and rushed to shore up Italian resistance against the Austria-Hungarians and Germans in the north east of Italy. The 8th (Service) Battalion Devons as part of 7th Division was moved to Italy arriving at Legnago in November 1917 to help strengthen the Italian army.



British Trenches in Italian Woodland 1917

The Battalion was engaged in various actions including; The crossing the River Piave and the Battle of Vittoria Veneto.

Christopher Grigg won his DCM in this action and the citation reads:

33350 Pte C Grigg 8th (Service) Bn Devonshire Regiment (Odiham) (ITALY)

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during the advance on 27th October 1918, near Cimadolmo. On his own initiative he attacked in succession with the Lewis Guns two enemy machine guns, killing 15 of their crews and capturing two men and both guns. He displayed great skill and resource and determination throughout the attack.

The war in Italy ended on 4th November 1918 with the Austro-Hungarian Armistice. whilst 8th Devons were at Cisterna east of Gradisca.

Pte Christopher Grigg was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal in addition to his Distinguished Conduct Medal.

