

Oliver Charles Gerrard

M.M. Sergeant, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade. Enlisted at Box, December 30th, 1907. Previous service in Ireland and India. Sent to France with B.E.F. Wounded at Ypres, April, 1915. Killed in action at Ypres, October 23rd, 1917. Buried in Military Cemetery, Warneton, South of Ypres. Awarded the Military Medal, 1914-15 Star, etc.



OLIVER GERRARD CAME from a large Corsham family – he was born in the town in 1888 to Joseph and Eliza Mary Gerrard. Joseph was a brushmaker, who was born in Frome. In 1891 the family were living in Westripp (Westrop), and Oliver had three brothers, Eli, Edmund and Henry, and two sisters Lotty and Eliza. By the time he enlisted in the Army in 1907 he had nine living siblings, with the addition of Mary, Sidney, John and Edith. The 1911 census shows that Joseph and Eliza had a total of twelve children, ten of whom were alive at the time of the census.

Oliver, who had been in the Army since 1907, was transferred to the war front in October 1915. He was promoted to Lance Corporal in February 1916; to Corporal in March 1917; then in August 1917 to Sergeant during the Battle of Ypres. He was killed in action on 23rd October 1917.

Early in the war, the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette* reported that the Gerrards were one of two Corsham families who had four sons serving under the Flag – Oliver, 4th Rifle Brigade, Henry, Government Telegraph Department, Sidney, Royal Marines and John, Royal Marines.