

## **Herts at War**

([www.hertsatwar.co.uk](http://www.hertsatwar.co.uk))

**Name:** Alton Henry Willats

**Rank:** Captain

**Service Number:**

**Date of Death:** 7th September 1917

**Age:** 26

**Regiment/Service:** 2/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion  
York and Lancaster Regiment

**Award:** 1914/15 Star, British War and Allied Victory Medals

**Grave/Memorial Reference:** I.D.30

**Cemetery/Memorial:** Favreuil British Cemetery, Grance

**UK Cemetery/Memorial:** Hitchin Boys Grammar School WW1 Memorial, Stained Glass Window, School Library. Grammar School Walk, Hitchin.



### **Pre War:**

He attended the Hitchin Grammar School from 1899-1906 and whilst at the school "gained the affection of his fellows, was a keen sportsman, enthusiastic and eager with a genial personality and was the perfect gentleman".

A month before the war commenced he went to Africa to take up a Government appointment with the Uganda Railways. He returned almost immediately and applied for a commission in the army.

### **Wartime Service:**

He enlisted in the University and Public Schools Corps in September 1914 gaining his commission in February 1915 and arrived in France on the 27th August 1915. He was seriously wounded in 1916 whilst on patrol duty in France.

According to the School Chronicle, he was in the 8th Battalion and killed whilst on duty in the front line trenches. More probable is the account in 'Officers died' that he was in the 2/5th Battalion of the Regiment

He is remembered in Plot 1, Row D, Grave 30 in the Faveuil British Cemetery about 12 miles south east of Arras in France.

### **Additional Information:**

His surname is spelt 'Willatts' in the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

### **Acknowledgments:**

Adrian Dunne

David C Baines

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