

**Wareham Cemetery,  
Wareham, Dorset  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**1661 LANCE CPL.**

**A. CRICHTON**

**13TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**1ST FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 29**

## Alexander CRICHTON

Alexander Henry Crichton was born at Footscray, Victoria in 1885 to parents George McHardy Crichton & Elizabeth Ann Crichton (nee Rule).

Alexander Henry Crichton married Marie Ethel Marchand in 1907 in Queensland.

A birth for Alexander Francis Crichton was registered in 1909 in Queensland.

Newspaper Notice – The Brisbane Courier, Queensland – 20 February, 1909:

### *BIRTHS*

*CRICHTON – On February 17, the wife of Alexander Crichton, “The Laurels,” Northcote street, East Brisbane – a son.*

The 1909 Australian Electoral Roll for the district of Oxley, subdivision of Woolloongabba, Queensland, listed Alexander Henry Crichton, Traveller, of Northcote Street.

Alexander Crichton was charged by his wife, Marie Crichton, with assault in 1911. *(See Newspaper Items below).*

Alexander Crichton was a 29 year old, married, Journalist when he enlisted on 16th September, 1914 in Brisbane, Queensland with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs Marie Ethel Crichton, of P.O. Box Lismore, NSW. Alexander Crichton stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with the Melbourne Cavalry.

Alexander Crichton was attached to 15th Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade of the Australian Imperial Force.

Private Alexander Crichton, D Company, 15th Infantry was reported Absent without leave between 10 pm on 19th October, 1914 until 10 pm on 20th October, 1914 while posted at Enoggera Camp.

Private Alexander Crichton was reported Absent without leave from Route March & not returning until 11.30 pm on 7th November, 1914, also for attempting to break into camp & stating a falsehood while posted at Sandgate on 5th November, 1914. He forfeited 3 days' pay at 5/- per day.

Private Alexander Crichton was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on 9th November, 1914 under Section 15.

Alexander Crichton was a 29 year old, married, Clerk from Kelvin Road, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, Queensland when he re-enlisted at Liverpool, NSW on 4th December, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1661 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs M. E. Crichton, of Kelvin Road, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, Queensland. Alexander Crichton stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with the Melbourne Cavalry for 9 months but had then left Victoria.

Private Alexander Crichton embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Seang Choon (A49)* on 11th February, 1915 with the 13th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements.

Private Alexander Crichton was wounded at Gallipoli. He was transferred to Hospital Ship *Gascon* on 29th May, 1915 with gunshot wounds to upper & lower extremities. Private Crichton was admitted to 1st Australian General Hospital at Cairo on 7-8th June, 1915. He was transferred to Ras-el Tin on 5th July, 1915.

### 13th Battalion War Diary

*23rd May, 1915 – Monash Valley – Sectional Reserve. 1 killed 4 wounded.*

*24th May, 1915 – Monash Valley – Sectional Reserve. Armistice 7 am till 4.30pm. Supplied Burial Party 5 Officers 100 men, MO & Chaplain – Recovered over 100 rifles & about 25,000 rounds ammunition*

*25th May, 1915 –*

26th May, 1915 – 2 wounded

27th May, 1915 - Monash Valley – 350 all ranks & 100/10th ALH Garrison Quinn's Post under Major Hunt. Remainder in Sectional reserve.

28th May, 1915 – Quinn's Post – 2.30 am Blew in Enemy's sap under our trenches – Bn. (less "D" Coy) in trenches with 100 10th ALH in support.

29th May, 1915 – Quinn's Post – 3.30 am Enemy blew in No. 3 sect front trench & attacked with bombs taking small portion of trench. Col. Burnage wounded by bomb. Supports (D Coy 13th & 15th Bn) arrived & retook trench taking 18 prisoners & killing about 35. Artillery killed many more.

Casualties:- Lt. Col Burnage, Lieut. Smith, Captain Forsyth, Lieut. H. H. Sinclair, 2/Lt. N Vine—hall, 2/Lt. Wilson } 6 Officers wounded.

Other Ranks - wounded = 64, Killed = 13, Missing = 1

1pm – moved down to Sectional Reserve.

(Extract of War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Alexander Crichton was admitted to Overseas Base at Mustapha on 18th August, 1915.

Private Alexander Crichton was admitted to 17th General Hospital at Alexandria on 5th October 1915 with VD then transferred to A.B.D.I. at Abbassia with Venereal on 7th October, 1915. Private Crichton absconded from the Australian Dermatological Hospital on 20th October, 1915.

A letter was sent from Base Records to Mrs M. E. Crichton, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, Queensland advising her that information had been received by post dated 14th August that her husband was in No. 21 Convalescent Home, Raseltin, suffering from a wound in the arm & was now a Y.M.C.A. orderly.

Private Alexander Crichton embarked on *Royal George* from Zeitoun on 8th November, 1915. He was admitted to 24th Field Ambulance at Mudros on 13th November, 1915 with V.D. & discharged to Convalescent Depot on 14th November, 1915. Private Crichton was admitted to 24th Casualty Clearing Station at Mudros on 25th November, 1915 with Gonorrhoea & temporarily medically classed as Class B. He was discharged to duty from 24th Casualty Clearing Station, Convalescent Depot, Mudros on 2nd December, 1915 after 59 days (V.D.).

Private Alexander Crichton was admitted to Anzac Base Depot at Mudros on 5th December, 1915. He rejoined his Battalion on 25th December, 1915 at Lemnos. Private Crichton disembarked at Alexandria from Mudros on 3rd January, 1916 from H. T. *Tunisian*.

Private Alexander Crichton was admitted to No. 3 (?) Australian Stationary Hospital at Ismailia on 16th January, 1916 – cause N.Y.D. (Not yet determined).

Private Alexander Crichton was absent from 07.00 hrs on 8th February, 1916 to 07.00 hrs on 14th February, 1916 while posted at Moascar. He was given 7 days F.P. (Field Punishment) No. 2 & forfeited 6 days' pay.

Private Alexander Crichton proceeded to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) from Alexandria on 1st June, 1916 & disembarked from *Transylvania* at Marseilles, France on 8th June, 1916.

Private Alexander Crichton was absent without leave from 4 pm on 20th July, 1916 to 4 pm on 22nd July, 1916. Pte Crichton had been held awaiting trial from 24th to 27th July, 1916. A Court Martial was held in 28th July, 1916 in the field in France. Private Crichton pleaded guilty to the offence of being absent without leave & was found guilty. He was awarded 56 days F. P. (Field Punishment) No. 2 on 28th July, 1916 & forfeited 64 days' pay.

Private Alexander Crichton was appointed Lance Corporal on 24th August, 1916.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was wounded in action on 29th August, 1916. He was admitted to 3rd Casualty Clearing Station with gunshot wounds then transferred to CRS. Pte Crichton transferred from 3rd Canadian General

Hospital at Boulogne to Hospital Ship *Jan Breydell* & embarked for England on 16th September, 1916 with gunshot wounds to back.

### 13th Battalion War Diary

*29th August, 1916 – Mouquet Farm*

*At midnight night 28/29th 13th Bn. moved out of CRATER TRENCHES to the relief of 15th Battalion. March by Companies at 10 minutes interval by the following route:- Tramline to KAY DUMP thence by KAY TRENCH, TOM'S CUT to Firing Line. 'B' Company left in CRATER TRENCH to move up with rations during the morning.*

*Took over from 15th Battalion at 4.30 a.m. at which hour Headquarters moved to Dugout at R.34.b.1/2.7. Found that with the exception of the left flank the line had advanced very little since Battalion was relieved on morning of 15th August.*

*Line as follows:- R.28.c.9.2. to 4.1. to 2.1. to 0.1. to R.27 d.9.1. Regimental Aid Post at R.28 c.8.1/2. "A" Company on left "C" and "D" Companies in that order. "B" Company arrived with rations at 11 a.m. and went into support in TOM'S CUT.*

*"B" Company moved up and took its place in the line at 9 p.m. Captain T. WELLS who was wounded during the morning remained in command of his Company.*

*The attack was launched at 11 p.m. with Company Frontages as follows:-*

*"A" Company . . . R.27 d.7.3. —28 c..O.3.(exclusive)*

*"B" " . . . R.28 c.O3 – 36 (inclusive)*

*"C" " . . . R.28 c.3.6 - 66*

*"D" " . . . R.28 c.6.6 – 66 (exclusive) - 95*

*"D" Company of 15th Battalion in Reserve in TOM'S CUT.*

*"A" Company worked out about 40 yards into No-man's-land and then followed up the barrage, meeting with heavy machine-gun and rifle fire and showers of bombs. They rushed and took first objective and reached communication trench leading into point 73. Two Sections of Bombing Platoon working along trench from R.27 4.91 under covering fire from Stokes Mortar situated at R.27 d.9.0., worked up trench to 73 and established a block about 30 yards on far side of it. A Patrol which tried to connect with 16th Battalion on left met with heavy opposition. Patrol was heavily bombed but forced the enemy back after hand-to-hand fighting. Company Commander then informed by Patrol that 16th Battalion was seen retiring. The enemy counter-attacked with bombs but were again driven off. Owing to the objective being very thinly held and heavily shelled the Company then withdrew bringing their wounded with them. One Prisoner taken, a member of 1st Reserve Regiment of Prussian Guard. "B" Company encountered similar opposition to "A" Company and was forced to withdraw with them.*

*"C" and "D" Companies reached their objectives but met with heavy opposition from enemy dugouts situated near R.28 C.9.4. They were forced to withdraw in the face of a strong counter-attack, being too weak to hold the line. They suffered heavy casualties from machine gun fire from the right.*

*Each Company experienced great difficulty owing to the mud, soaked and crumbling condition of parapet, the clogging of rifles with mud and the heavy shelling throughout the day. Rain had fallen throughout practically the whole day and night.*

*Casualties: 18 other ranks Killed Captains T. WELLS and R.H.BROWTING, 2/Lieuts COLE and IRVINE and 95 other ranks Wounded, 2/Lieuts. B.S.N. PATTRICK and J. ALLEN and 31 other ranks Missing.*

*(Extract of War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)*

### **13th Battalion**

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt. While in Egypt the AIF was expanded and was reorganised. The 13th Battalion was split and provided experienced soldiers for the 45th Battalion. The 4th Brigade was combined with the 12th and 13th Brigades to form the 4th Australian Division.

In June 1916, the 13th sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918, the battalion took part in bloody trench warfare. Its first major action in France was at Pozieres in August.

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was admitted to East Leeds War Hospital, Yorkshire on 17th September, 1916 & discharged on 27th September, 1916. He was then to report to "Admin Stds Drs Westminster for Disposal Section A."

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire, England on 13th October, 1916. He was granted furlough on 13th October, 1916 & reported back from furlough on 24th October, 1916. Pte Crichton was medically reclassified as B1 A.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was transferred from No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire to No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham, Dorset on 27th October, 1916.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was reported absent from No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham, Dorset from 18th November, 1916.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was found drowned on 1st February, 1917 at Poole Harbour, Poole, Dorset, England, previously reported as absentee over 2 days on 22nd November, 1916. The date of death was unknown.

A death for Alexander H. Crichton, aged 30, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wareham, Dorset, England.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was buried on 5th February, 1917 in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England – Plot number B. D. 12. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. The Burial Register records Alexander H. Crichton, Military Camp, Wareham, aged 30.

Letters & communications were sent from Base Records to Mrs M. E. Crichton at "Lonicera" St. George's Rd. Thornbury, Victoria but were redirected to Mrs Friend of 61 Penders Street, Thornbury, Victoria. Mrs Friend contacted Base Records in 1921 to advise that Mrs Crichton had left her residence about 2 years ago & Mrs Friend had sent & forwarded letters on to Mrs Crichton to her address in Queensland – "Drapery Store", Station Road, Indooroopilly, Queensland, with no reply or return of letters. Mrs Crichton had previously written to Base Records in 1917 with her address as "Burrawong" Northcote Street, East Brisbane, Queensland.

Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Corporal Crichton's widow – Mrs M. E. Crichton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent July, 1921 & Plaque sent March, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal A. Crichton – service number 1661, of 13th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Lance Corporal A. Crichton is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 68.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(78 pages of Lance Corporal Alexander Crichton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **YOUNG COUPLE'S DIFFICULTIES**

Another domestic tragedy came to light at the City Police Court on Tuesday, when Alexander Crichton was charged by his wife, Marie Crichton, with assault. Their ages are 25 and 21 respectively.

The complainant entered the box, and stated that her husband came home the worse for drink, and assaulted her by catching her by the throat, and half choking her. He had at one time held a good position in town as a traveller, but owing to his intemperate habits had had to fall back upon a job as a tally clerk. He seemed to object to her aunt living in the house. For four years she had been suffering, and she was determined to live with defendant no longer. Defendant had a friend in court who stated that he was convinced of the young man's innocence, and suggested an adjournment, so that legal advice might be obtained. Defendant himself claimed that all he had done was in self-defence.

The Police-magistrate. Lieutenant-colonel Moore, said it was a great pity to see so young a couple falling out, and did all in his power to heal the breach. It was all in vain, however, the complainant reiterating her determination not to live with her husband, again.

Finally the defendant agreed to pay 16s. per week towards the support of the one child of the marriage. He was also ordered to enter into his own recognisance of £10, and one surety of £10 to keep the peace towards complainant for 12 months.

*(The Telegraph, Brisbane, Queensland – 13 September, 1911)*

---

### **ADMIRABLE CRICHTONS**

**Hubby, Wifie, and Auntie**

### **BARE HANDS VERSUS AN IRON BAR AND THE AXE**

**A Dour, Determined Dame.**

(The full report relating to the above article also included the following artist sketches)



**ALEXANDER CRICHTON.**



**MARY CRICHTON.**

*(Truth, Brisbane, Queensland – 17 September, 1911)*

An "Alexander Crichton" of Beaudesert was charged with having unlawfully used a pony gelding and trap on October 19th, 1912.

The full report was located in *Truth*, Brisbane , Queensland – 27 October, 1912

---

## **SUPREME COURT**

### **Criminal Sittings**

The criminal sittings of the Supreme Court were continued yesterday afternoon, before his honour Mr Justice Real. Mr J. J. Kingsbury prosecuted.

### **ONE YEAR'S IMPRISONMENT**

Alexander Crichton was sentenced to one year's Imprisonment on charges of fraudulently uttering and false pretences, the sentences to be concurrent.

Mr. Kingsbury said that the police reported that the accused was addicted to liquor. The only convictions known against him were for assault and illegally using.

His Honour, addressing the accused, said, "The police know practically nothing against you, except that you are on the road to trouble." In some further remarks, his honour said that personally he had a feeling of great objection to indeterminate sentences.

(*The Telegraph*, Brisbane, Queensland – 4 November, 1913)

---

## **CASUALTIES**

### **273rd LIST**

#### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

Drowned

Cpl. A. Crichton, Kelvin Grove, Q.

(*The Land*, Sydney, NSW – 23 February, 1917)

---

#### **DIED ON SERVICE**

CRICHTON – On the 1st February, 1917, accidentally drowned, in France, after two years' active service abroad, Corporal Alexander Crichton, the youngest son of the late Geo. M. and Elizabeth Ann Crichton, and beloved brother of Mrs Bruce (South Melbourne); Mrs Lack (of Thornbury), Fred (on active service), Colin (of Surrey Hills), J. P. Crichton, J.P. (of Port Melbourne) and the late George C. (of Brunswick).

Wounded at Gallipoli and France.

"His duty noble done."

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 24 February, 1917)

---



### Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

*(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)*

Lance Corporal A. Crichton does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

### **Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England**

Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset contains 71 Commonwealth War Graves. Wareham Military Hospital, with 185 beds, was at Worgret Camp during the First World War and the regimental depot of the Royal Armoured Corps was at nearby Bovington during the Second World War. Wareham Cemetery contains 49 First World War burials and 15 from the Second World War, 5 being unidentified. The cemetery also contains 12 German burials, 1 being an unidentified airman. *(Information from CWGC)*



**Wareham Cemetery, Wareham** *(Photo courtesy of Tracy Dunne)*



Photo of Lance Corporal A. Crichton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Tracy Dunne)*





**Wareham Cemetery, Wareham** (Photo courtesy of Tracy Dunne)



**Lance Corporal A. Crichton's headstone marked by red arrow** (Photo from "[Following the Twenty-Second](#)")