

**Holy Cross Churchyard,
Crediton, Devon
War Grave**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



172126 GUNNER

W. S. DODDRIDGE

ROYAL GARRISON ARTILLERY

13TH JANUARY, 1919 Age 26

Love Is Greater Than Death

William Sargent DODDRIDGE

William Sargent Doddridge was born at Crediton, Devon, England on 29th December, 1893 to parents William and Ellen Jane Doddridge (nee Abbott). His birth was registered in the March quarter, 1894 in the district of Crediton, Devon, England.

The 1901 England Census recorded William S. Doddridge as a 7 year old, living with his family at 34 High Street, Crediton, Devon, England. His parents were listed as William Doddridge (Shoemaker, aged 45, born Crediton) & Ellen J. Doddridge (aged 41, born Gillingham, Dorset). William was the younger of two children listed on this Census – also listed was his older sister – Ellen J. Doddridge (aged 12, born Crediton).

William Sargent Doddridge is recorded in the School Admissions Register for Hayward School, Crediton, being admitted on 1st July, 1901. He had previously attended Landscore School. His last day of attendance at Hayward School was 11th April, 1906 when he was then to be educated at Crediton Grammar School.

The 1911 England Census recorded William Sargent Doddridge as a 17 year old Student, living with his parents in a 7 roomed dwelling at 34 High Street, Crediton, Devon, England. His parents were listed as William Doddridge (Boot Shoe Manufacturer, aged 55) & Ellen Jane Doddridge (aged 51). William & Ellen Jane had been married for 25 years & only had two children.

William Sargent Doddridge was aged 21 years & 11 months when he enlisted on 10th December, 1915 with the British Army. His residence was 49 Cleveland Park Avenue, Walthamstow, Essex & he was listed as a Civil Servant (Customs & Excise). William Doddridge's religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr William Doddridge, 34 High Street, Crediton, Devon, England. William Doddridge stated he had served for 3 years with 6th Devons (Territorials).

A letter was sent to The Recruiting Officer, Walthamstow on 28th June, 1917 from Custom's House regarding Mr William S. Doddridge which reads: *"I am directed by the Board of Customs and Excise to inform you that they will release the undermentioned officer of this Department for service with the Colours..... The Certificate of Exemption from Military Service held by him may now be regarded as cancelled."*

William Sargent Doddridge was mobilized on 7th July, 1917 & posted to Royal Garrison Artillery with a service number of 172126 & the rank of Gunner. He was transferred to 475th Siege Battery on 23rd July, 1917 at Deepcut. Gunner Doddridge qualified as Observer on 29th October, 1917.

William Sargent Doddridge married Emily Marian Hayward on 11th November, 1917 at St. Mary the Virgin, Walthamstow, Essex, England. (The "Statement of Names and Addresses of all Relatives of the deceased soldier" form completed on 24th May, 1919 recorded that there were no children born to Emily & William Doddridge.)

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was posted overseas on 20th November, 1917. He was transferred to 270th Siege Battery, R.G.A. (Royal Garrison Artillery) on 26th November, 1917 from Base Details.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was admitted to Hospital – Gassed on 23rd March, 1918. He was admitted to 16 Philadelphia, USA General Hospital, on 26th March, 1918 suffering from gas poisoning & mild shrapnel wound. Gunner Doddridge was transferred to 3rd Convalescent Depot at Le Treport, France on 28th March, 1918. He was sent to Base Details on 21st April, 1918.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge rejoined 270th Siege Battery on 5th May, 1918 from Base.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was on leave to UK with Royal Artillery via Boulogne, France from 28th October, 1918 to 11th November, 1918.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was admitted to War Hospital, Exeter, Devon on 20th December, 1918 *"whilst on leave to UK & taken on strength of R.G.A. Clearing Office"*.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge died on 13th January, 1919 at No. 2 War Hospital, Exeter, Devon, England from Influenza, Pneumonia & Heart Failure. (Note: A telegram reporting the death of Gunner Doddridge states he died in Hospital on 12th January, 1919. There are some other forms that also report the date of death as 12th, however the Hospital Admissions form has the date of death as 13th January, 1919.)

A death for William S. Doddridge, aged 26, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Exeter, Devon, England.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was buried on 18th January, 1919 in Queens Road Cemetery, Waltham Forest, Greater London, England.

William Sargent Doddridge's body was exhumed from Queens Road Cemetery, Waltham Forest, Greater London, England and the Headstone removed to Devon on 21st March, 1921. He was re-interred in Holy Cross Churchyard, Crediton, Devon, England (near north boundary) and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The widow of the late Gunner William Sargent Doddridge - Mrs Emily Doddridge was awarded a Pension in the sum of 13/9 a week for herself with effect from 21st July, 1919.

Gunner William Sargent Doddridge was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Gunner Doddridge's widow - Mrs Emily Doddridge, as the closest next-of-kin.

Mrs Emily Doddridge, widow of the late Gunner William Sargent Doddridge wrote to Officer in Charge, R.G.A. Records on 13th February, 1921 stating that she was leaving England for Australia in March & her permanent address in Australia was going to be c/o F. G. Hayward, Esq, The Britain, Emmaville, Deepwater, NSW, Australia. Mrs Doddridge was enquiring when she would be receiving the Memorial Plaque & War Medals which were due to her late husband & was disappointed at not being able to take it with her. Mrs Doddridge had previously written to R.G.A. Records in October, 1920 stating she had received the Scroll but requested to know where to apply for the medals. Mrs Doddridge was advised by R.G.A. Records that the Memorial Plaque would be forwarded to her direct from the manufacturers as soon as available for issue.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Gunner William Sargent Doddridge - service number 172126, aged 26, of 270th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery. He was the son of William and Ellen Doddridge, of Crediton; husband of Emily Marian Meffan (formerly Doddridge) of 4 Coopee St., Randwick, Sydney, Australia.

The Walthamstow Cenotaph Memorial at the Town Hall, Forest Road, Walthamstow, does not list individual names.



Walthamstow Cenotaph Memorial (Photo from War Memorials Online)

W. S. Doddridge is remembered on the Crediton Church Roll of Honour, located in Holy Cross Church, Church Lane, Crediton, Devon, England.



Crediton Church Roll of Honour (Photo from War Memorials Online – Bill Jerman)

W. S. Doddridge is remembered on the Crediton and Hamlets War Memorial, located at Union Street, Crediton, Devon, England.



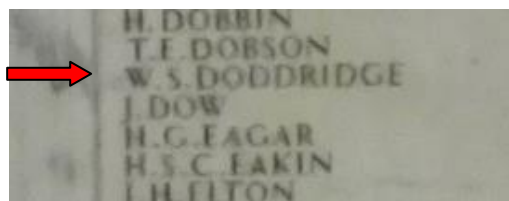
Crediton and Hamlets War Memorial (Photo from War Memorials Online – John C – Torquay)



W. S. Doddridge is remembered on the Customs and Excise Roll of Honour, located in Customs House, Lower Thames Street, London, England.



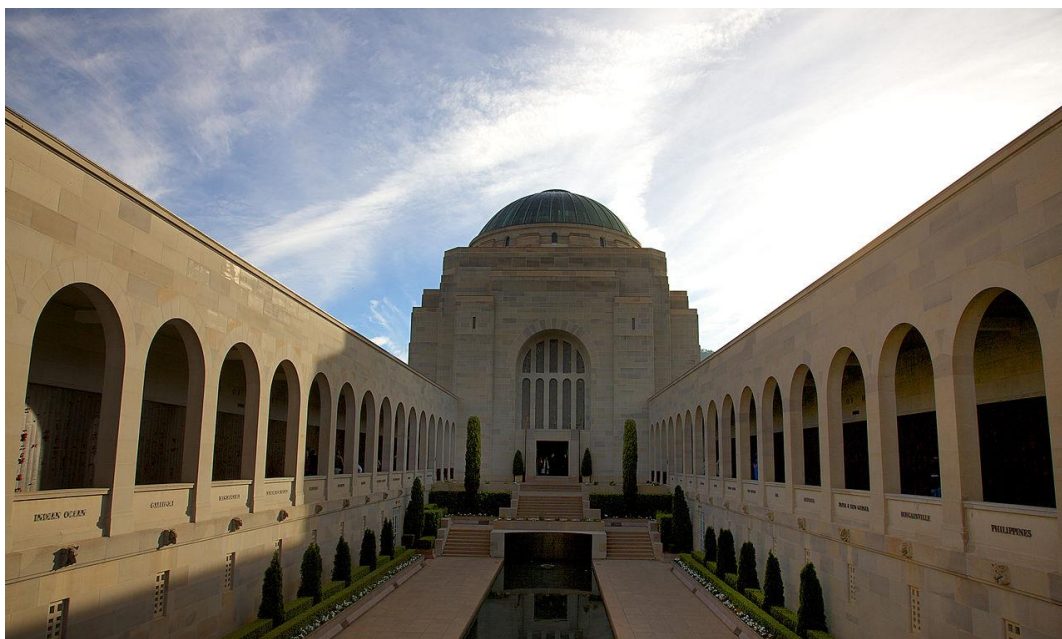
Customs and Excise Roll of Honour (Photo from War Memorials Online – WMT)



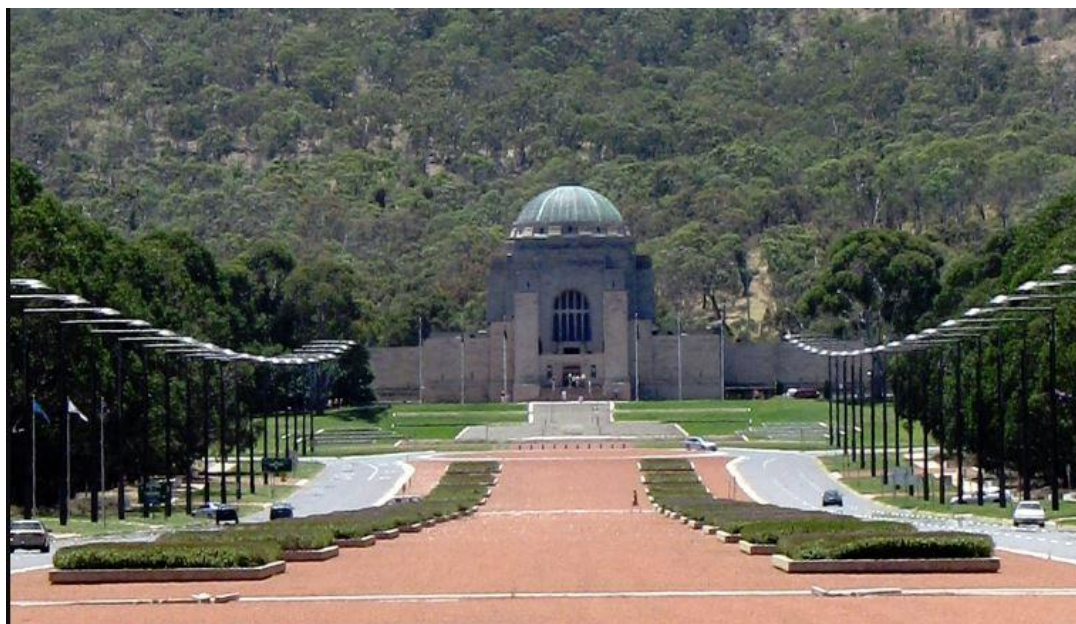
Gunner William Sargent Doddridge is remembered on the Commemorative Roll Book, located in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The Commemorative Roll records the names of those Australians who died during or as a result of wars in which Australians served, but who were not serving in the Australian Armed Forces and therefore not eligible for inclusion on the Roll of Honour.

(Note: It appears that Gunner William Sargent Doddridge's name was listed in error on the Commemorative Roll. His name was included on the Commemorative Roll based on the information that his next-of-kin's address was listed as Australia & therefore the soldier concerned, it was assumed, would be Australian.)

*The widow of the late Gunner William Sargent Doddridge, Emily Marian Doddridge, was a passenger on *Euripides* which departed from the port of London, England on 11th March, 1921 bound for Australia. Emily Doddridge married Henry Alexander Meffan in Sydney, NSW, Australia in 1922.



Commemorative Area of the Australian War Memorial *(Capital Photographer)*



(Gunner William Sargent Doddridge's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Ancestry & Find My Past).



Newspaper Notices

DEATHS

DODDRIDGE – Jan. 13th, 1919, William Sargeant, only son of William Doddridge, of 34, High-street, Crediton, at No. 2 Hospital, Pennsylvania, Exeter, aged 25.

(*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, Exeter, Devon, England – 15 January, 1919, 16 January, 1919 & 17 January, 1919)

CREDITON

We deeply regret to record the death of Mr William S. Doddridge, R.G.A., which occurred at No. 2 V.A.D. Hospital on Monday last. The deceased, who is the only son of Mr and Mrs William Doddridge, of Crediton, some months ago, whilst serving in France, was gassed, and was brought back to England, and became a patient at one of the Exeter Hospitals. Mr Doddridge, who was only 25 years of age, was educated at the Crediton Grammar School, and just before joining the Colours passed his examination for an Excise Officer. He was formerly a member of Crediton Territorials. Deceased leaves a widow, for whom much sympathy is felt, as also for the parents.

(*Western Times*, Exeter, Devon, England – 21 January, 1919 & 24 January, 1919)

Holy Cross Churchyard, Crediton, Devon, England

Holy Cross Churchyard, Crediton has 13 Commonwealth War Graves – all from World War 1.



Holy Cross Church, Crediton (Photo by *julia&keld- Find a Grave*)

Photo of Gunner W. S. Doddridge's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Holy Cross Churchyard, Crediton, Devon, England.



(Photo courtesy of Bill – on behalf of Crediton Parish Church)



Holy Cross Churchyard, Crediton *(Photo by julia&keld- Find a Grave)*