

**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard,  
Harefield, Middlesex, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**2016 CORPORAL**

**ALBERT STANLEY RICHARDS**

**48TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**1ST DECEMBER, 1917 Age 23**

*Erected By His Comrades*

*In Loving Memory*

*Of The Third Son*

*Of Mr & Mrs Richards*

*Of Owen, SA.*

## Albert Stanley RICHARDS

Albert Stanley Richards was born at Balaklava, South Australia on 30th March, 1895 to parents Albert Henry & Annie Richards (nee George).

Albert Stanley Richards was a 21 year old, single, Draper from Owen, South Australia when he enlisted on 2nd March, 1916 in Adelaide, South Australia with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of Christ & his next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Annie Richards, of Owen, South Australia.

Private Albert Stanley Richards was posted to "E" Company of 2nd Depot Battalion on 2nd March, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to "B" Company of 43rd Battalion on 9th March, 1916. Private Richards was sent to Musketry School on 1st May, 1916 then to N.C.O. School, 4th Military District on 15th May, 1916. He was transferred to 18th Reinforcements of 10th Battalion on 12th June, 1916 as Provisional Corporal then on 30th June, 1916 he was transferred to 3rd Reinforcements of 48th Battalion as Provisional Corporal.

Private (rank as per Embarkation Roll) Albert Stanley Richards, Service number 2016, embarked from Adelaide, South Australia on HMAT *Seang Bee (A48)* on 13th July, 1916 (as per Embarkation Roll, however the Casualty form – Active Service recorded that he embarked from Outer Harbour, South Australia on 12th July, 1916) with the 48th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcements & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 9th September, 1916.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Provisional Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was taken on strength of 12th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 10th September, 1916.

Provisional Corporal Albert Stanley Richards proceeded overseas via Folkestone on S.S. *Victoria* on 20th November, 1916 from 12th Training Battalion. He was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 21st November, 1916 from England. Provisional Corporal Albert Stanley Richards reverted to rank of Private on 21st November, 1916 on marching into 4th A.D.B.D.

Private Albert Stanley Richards reported sick on 24th November, 1916. He was admitted to 24th General Hospital at Etaples, France on 24th November, 1916 with Mumps. He was admitted to 14th Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France on 2nd December, 1916 with Mumps. Private Richards was transferred to No. 1 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 15th December, 1916. He was discharged on 16th December, 1916 & was marched in to 4th A.D.B.D. at Etaples on 19th December, 1916 Private Richards was taken on strength of 48th Battalion in France on 7th January, 1917 from 3rd Reinforcements.

Private Albert Stanley Richards was appointed Lance Corporal from 13th February, 1917.

Lance Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was promoted to Corporal from 15th February, 1917 to complete Establishment.

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was wounded in action on 11th April, 1917. He was admitted to 13th Australian Field Ambulance on 11th April, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Abdomen then transferred the same day to No. 3 Australian Casualty Clearing Station. Corporal Richards was transferred to Ambulance Train on 24th April, 1917 & admitted to 8th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 25th April, 1917. He embarked for England on 1st May, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Western Australia*.

### 48th Battalion

The 48th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 16 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Roughly half of its new recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 16th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 16th, the men of the new battalion hailed mainly from regional South Australia and Western Australia. The new battalion formed part of the 12th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division. It became known as the "Joan of Arc" (the Maid of Orleans) battalion because it was "made of all Leanes" - it was commanded by

Lieutenant Colonel Ray Leane, his brother was the adjutant, and several other relatives were scattered throughout the battalion.

...

1917 was also a trying year for the 48th Battalion. In two of the major battles in which it fought - the first battle of Bullecourt, in France, and the battle of Passchendaele, in Belgium - it was forced to withdraw with heavy casualties as result of poor planning and inadequate support. On neither occasion did the battalion fail for want of courage or skill amongst its own troops.....

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

#### War Diary – 48th Battalion

*11th October, 1917:*

*The attack on BULLECOURT was carried out this morning assisted by TANKS. The attack was timed to commence at 4.20 am. The TANKS were late getting away and slow in moving forward the consequence was that the attack was delayed and it was not until 6.19 that any men were able to penetrate the 2nd position, as the \_\_\_\_\_ lifted off the East edge of BULLECOURT at 8am it meant that my men were exposed all this time to Rifle and Machine Gun fire. We suffered heavy casualties before reaching trenches. Casualties 14 Officers. 421 OR.*

*A full report is attached herewith. Both Officers and OR did splendid service. Moved back to BAPAUME on night of 11th inst being relieved by 45th Bn.*

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

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was admitted to 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England on 2nd May, 1917 with G.S.W. to Abdomen – severe.

Base Records advised Mrs A Richards, Owen, S.A., mother of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, on 3rd May, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards had been wounded.

Mrs A. Richards, Owen, mother of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, contacted Base Records on 11th May, 1917 asking for further information on Corporal Albert Richards as she had word that her second son had been killed in action & she was anxious about another son.

Base Records advised Mrs A Richards, Owen, S.A., mother of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, on 15th May, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards had been admitted to Hospital on 2nd May with gunshot wound/s to abdomen – severe.

Base Records wrote to Mrs A. Richards on 18th May, 1917 advising her that her son Corporal A. S. Richards was reported as having been admitted on 2nd May, 1917 to 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England suffering from gunshot wound to abdomen (severe).

Mrs A. Richards, Owen, mother of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, contacted Base Records on 21st May, 1917 asking for further information regarding No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards who was wounded on May 2nd in France.

Base Records advised Mrs A Richards, Owen, S.A., on 7th August, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards was progressing favourably. Mrs Richards was advised on 14th August, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards was dangerously ill.

Mrs A. Richards, Owen, mother of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, contacted Base Records on 15th August, 1917 with the following letter: *“Just received wire Cpl Albert Richards dangerously ill. In the last letter we received from him he mentioned he had a relapse but was again recovering. We had no notification of this at the time so we are wondering if this wire refers to that or something later.”*

Base Records advised Mrs A Richards, Owen, S.A., on 21st August, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards was slightly improved.

Base Records replied to Mrs A. Richards, c/o A. H. Richards & Sons, Main Street, Owen, S.A., on 29th August, 1917 advising that *the "following reports have been received here respecting your son, No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion.*

- *Admitted 2/5/17, 2nd Southern General Hospital, gunshot wound abdomen, severe.*
- *Progressing favourably – cable dated London 1/8/17.*
- *Dangerously ill – cable dated London 4/8/17.*
- *Slightly improved – cable dated London 17/8/17.*

*The dangerous illness was evidently the after effects of the severe wounding he had previously sustained.... Any late cabled report received will be promptly transmitted to you."*

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was transferred from 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield on 13th October, 1917.

Mrs A. Richards, Owen, contacted Base Records on 26th October, 1917 with the following "we have heard today that No 2016 Cpl A. S. Richards of the 48th Battalion has been removed from Southmead Hospital Bristol to the Harefield Hospital London suffering with lung trouble. Do you think this is correct..."

Base Records replied to Mr A. Richards on 1st November, 1917 advising "...no further information has been received regarding your son, No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion, since he was reported as "slightly improved." A cable message inquiring his condition and present whereabouts is being despatched to A.I.F. Headquarters, London. You will be promptly communicated with when a reply is to hand."

Base Records advised Mrs A. Richards, Owen, S.A., on 17th November, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards was reported to be dangerously ill. She was advised by Base Records on 27th November, 1917 that Corporal Albert Richards was stationary.

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards died at 9.45 am on 1st December, 1917 at 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from Pulmonary Tuberculosis (primary) & Cachexia (secondary).

A death for Albert S. Richards, aged 22, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was buried at 2 pm on 4th December, 1917 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Grave number 40.

*From the burial report of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards - Coffin was good polished Elm. Brass fittings. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military Funeral, Firing Party being supplied by the Guard, Administrative Headquarters, Australian Imperial Force, London, and Bearers by the Staff of Harefield Hospital. A service was conducted in the Church and at the graveside by Chaplain Rev. Terry attached to Harefield Hospital. The "Last Post" was sounded by 2 Buglers of A.I.F. Captain Renwick and 50 Patients followed the procession from the Hospital to the graveside. Two wreaths were sent by Mr & Mrs Billyard Leake. A representative of Administrative Headquarters, London attended the funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mrs A. Richards, c/o Messrs A. H. Richards & Sons, Owen, S.A. on 19th April, 1920 stating that her son's "remains have been exhumed from grave No. 40, Parish Churchyard, Harefield, and re-interred in grave No. 51 in the Australian Section of the same Churchyard. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain."

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - Aust.51. Corporal Albert Stanley Richards now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Mrs A. Richards, Owen, wrote to Base Records on 18th January, 1918 requesting a certificate of death of No. 2016 Corporal Albert Stanley Richards, D Company, 48th Battalion.

Base Records replied to Mrs A. Richards on 25th February, 1918, enclosing a certificate of report of death of her son, the late No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion.

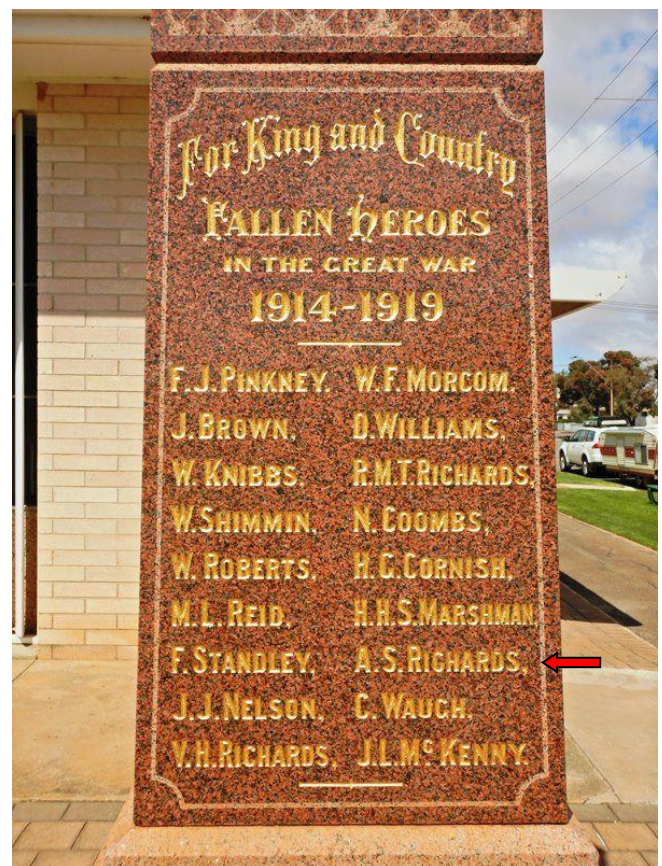
Base Records contacted Mrs A. Richards, c/o A. H. Richards & Sons, Owen, South Australia on 3rd April, 1922 stating she was registered on the records of the late No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion, as the next of kin but were enquiring if there were any nearer blood relatives than herself & specifically asked if his father was still alive due to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Mrs A. Richards replied to Base Records on 11th April, 1922 advising the address of her husband was "A. H. Richards, Owen."

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Corporal Richards' father – Mr A. H. Richards, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Corporal Albert Stanley Richards – service number 2016, aged 22, of 48th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Albert Henry & Annie Richards, of Owen, South Australia.

A. S. Richards is remembered on the Owen War Memorial, located on Main Street & Railway Terrace, Owen, South Australia.



Owen War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – Michael Kuilboer)

A. S. Richards is remembered on the District of Dalkey Roll of Honor, located I Institute Hall, Railway Terrace, Owen, South Australia.



**District of Dalkey Roll of Honor** (Photo from Monument Australia – Stephen Warren)

A. S. Richards is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



**National War Memorial – Adelaide** (Photos by Bilby)

Corporal A. S. Richards is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 146.

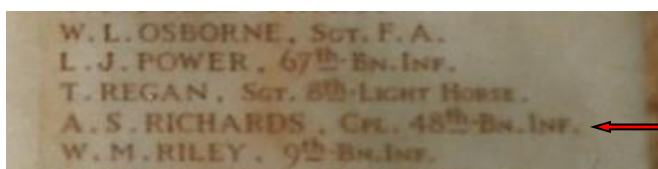


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. S. Richards is remembered on the Australian Soldiers' Memorial in St. Mary the Virgin Church, Church Hill, Harefield, Middlesex, England.

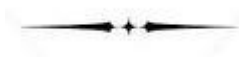


Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield (Photo from War Memorials Online – B. Wood)



(73 pages of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards' 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**

### **ROLL OF HEROES**

#### **CASUALTY LIST NO. 296**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Wounded

2016 Cpl A. S. RICHARDS, Owen

*(Daily Herald, Adelaide, South Australia – 14 May, 1917)*

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### **FOR KING AND COUNTRY**

...Mr and Mrs A. H. Richards, of Owen, have received the sad news of the death on April 11, on active service in France, of their eldest son, Lance Corporal R. M. Richards, aged 29 years, also that his brother, Corporal A. S. Richards, had been wounded. Another son, Private V. H. Richards, was killed some months ago. The Richards' family is well known in Balaklava and district, and the greatest sympathy is felt for the bereaved.

*(The Wooroora Producer, Balaklava, South Australia – 17 May, 1917)*

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### **THE ROLL OF HONOR**

#### **303rd CASUALTY LIST**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Severely Wounded

2016 Cpl A. S. RICHARDS, Owen

*(The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 28 May, 1917)*

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### **FOR KING AND COUNTRY**

RICHARDS – In England, on the 1st December, Cpl Albert Stanley Richards, third son of A. H. And A. Richards, Owen, of wounds received in France on the 13th April, aged 22 years and 9 months.

*(The Journal, Adelaide, South Australia – 10 December, 1917) & (The Advertiser, Adelaide, South Australia – 10 December, 1917)*

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## THE AUSTRALIANS

### 376TH CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DIED OF ILLNESS

2016 – Cpl A. S. RICHARDS, Owen (Dec 1)

*(The Register, Adelaide, South Australia – 28 December, 1917)*

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### IN MEMORY OF THE BRAVE

RICHARDS – In loving memory of Cpl. A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion, A.I.F., and third son of A. H. and A. Richards, of Owen, who was wounded on the 12th April and died on the 1st December, 1917.

*(The Register, Adelaide, South Australia – 2 December, 1918) & (The Journal, Adelaide, South Australia – 2 December, 1918)*

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### 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)*

A letter from Base Records, dated 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1921, to Mrs A. Richards, Owen, S.A., advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her son, the late No. 2016 Corporal A. S. Richards, 48th Battalion, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Base Records contacted Mrs A. Richards on 21st September, 1921 asking “*if she wished to add a personal inscription on the permanent headstone...*”

Mrs A. Richards replied to Base Records on 27th September, 1921 advising “*...I have enclosed a few words that I would like put on the headstone...*”

Corporal Albert Stanley Richards does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Loving Memory Of The Third Son*

*Of Mr & Mrs Richards of Owen, SA.*

## St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield contains 126 Commonwealth War Graves.

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Harefield (St. Mary) Churchyard contains war graves from both world wars. There are 120 First World War graves, mostly those of Australians who died in No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park. Uniquely, their graves are marked by scroll shaped headstones, chosen by the staff and patients at the hospital. In the centre of the Australian plot stands a memorial obelisk which was erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, late Governor of Tasmania and of Western Australia, and Mr. C.A.M. Billyard-Leake, of Harefield Park. The churchyard also contains six graves of the Second World War.

*(Information & photos from CWGC)*





Photo of Corporal Albert Stanley Richards' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)*



**St Mary the Virgin Church, Harefield** *(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)*



**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield** *(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)*



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photos courtesy of Peter Bennett)



