

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



1750 PRIVATE

D. G. RICHARDS

57TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

23RD JUNE, 1917 Age 22

Douglas George RICHARDS

Douglas George Richards was born at Plaistow, London, England in 1892 to parents George William and Louisa Richards

The 1901 England Census recorded Douglas Richards as an 8 year old, living with his family at 20 Jefferson Street, Bromley, London, England. His parents were listed as George Richards (Warehouseman (meat), aged 37, born Spitalfields, Middlesex) & Louisa Richards (aged 33, born Camberwell, Surrey). Douglas was one of five children listed on this Census – Lillian (Packer (match), aged 14, born Stratford, Essex), Frederick (aged 10, born Bermondsey), then Douglas (born Bromley, Middlesex), Hilda (aged 3, born Bromley, Middlesex) & Robert (aged 11 months, born Bromley, Middlesex).

Douglas George Richards attended Hilda Road Boarding School, West Ham, England.

The 1911 England Census recorded Douglas Richards as a 19 year old Carver, living with his family at 263 Grange Rd, Plaistow, West Ham, Essex, in a five roomed dwelling. His parents were listed as George William Richards (Warehouseman, aged 45) & Louisa Richards (aged 43). George & Louisa Richards had been married for 25 years & had a total of eleven children – five having since died. Douglas Richards was the eldest of six children listed on this Census – Douglas then Hilda (aged 14), Robert (aged 11), George (aged 9, born Plaistow, Essex), Violet (aged 7, born Plaistow, Essex) & Ivy (aged 4, born Plaistow, Essex).

According to information supplied by his father for the Roll of Honour, Douglas Richards came to Australia when he was 17 years old.

Douglas George Richards was a 22 year old, single, Labourer when he enlisted in Melbourne, Victoria on 7th February, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 1750 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – George Richards, of 78 Northern Road, Plaistow, England.

Private Douglas George Richards was posted to 2nd Reinforcements of 58th Battalion on 31st March, 1916 at Broadmeadows for recruit training.

Private Douglas George Richards embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 4th April, 1916 with the 15th Infantry Brigade, 58th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Reinforcements & disembarked at Alexandria on 8th May, 1916.

Private Douglas George Richards was reallocated from 2nd Reinforcements, 58th Battalion to 57th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 24th May, 1916.

Private Douglas George Richards was taken on strength of 57th Battalion on 27th May, 1916 from 15th Training Battalion while posted at Ferry Post.

Private Douglas George Richards embarked from Alexandria on *Kalyan* on 17th June, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force) & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 24th June, 1916.

Private Douglas George Richards was admitted to 15th Field Ambulance on 3rd July, 1916 with Otitis Media (inflammation of middle ear). He was transferred to 12th Casualty Clearing Station the same day then transferred on 4th July, 1916 to No. 1 Hospital Train. Private Richards was admitted to 25th General Hospital at Hadelot on 5th July, 1916. He was transferred to No. 1 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France on 10th July, 1916 then discharged to Base Details on 11th July, 1916 as unfit. Private Richards was marched in to 5th Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France from Hospital on 19th July, 1916. He proceeded to rejoin his Battalion on 12th August, 1916 & rejoined his Battalion on active service the same day.

Private Douglas George Richards was sent to Hospital sick on 1st November, 1916. He was admitted to 36th Casualty Clearing Station on 3rd November, 1916 with Trench Feet then transferred to No. 1 Ambulance Train on 4th November, 1916. Private Richards was admitted to 12th General Hospital, France on 5th November, 1916. He was marked for transfer to England on 6th November, 1916 & embarked for England from Havre, France on Hospital Ship *Panama* on 7th November, 1916.

57th Battalion

Having only arrived in France in late June, the 57th became embroiled in its first major battle on the Western Front on 19 July, without the benefit of an introduction to the trenches in a "quiet" sector. The battle of Fromelles was a disaster. Fortunately for the 57th it was allocated a supporting role and suffered relatively light casualties compared to its sister battalions. This, however, meant that 57th carried the burden of holding the line in ensuing days for the battalion. Despite its grievous losses, the 5th Division continued to man the front in the Fromelles sector for a further two months.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Douglas George Richards was admitted to Graylingwell War Hospital, Chichester, West Sussex, England on 8th November, 1916 with Trench feet. He was transferred from Graylingwell War Hospital on 15th December, 1916 to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital, Southall, West London. He was discharged from Hospital on 19th December, 1916.

Private Douglas George Richards was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire on 20th December, 1916.

Private Douglas George Richards was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs from furlough on 5th January, 1917 & medically classified as B1 A (temporarily unfit for active service).

Private Douglas George Richards was marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Wareham, Dorset on 20th January, 1917 from No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs.

Private Douglas George Richards was admitted to Military Hospital, Wareham, Dorset on 2nd March, 1917 seriously ill with pneumonia.

Private Douglas George Richards died at 7.50 pm on 23rd June, 1917 at Military Hospital, Wareham, Dorset, England from Disability Pneumonia. He had been in Hospital for 114 days.

A death for Douglas Richards, aged 23, was registered in the June quarter, 1917 in the district of Wareham, Dorset, England.

Private Douglas George Richards was buried on 27th June, 1917 in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England – Plot number B. D. 16 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte D. G. Richards – *“Body was conveyed from Hospital to Church on Gun Carriage supplied by the A.S.C. The coffin was draped with the Australian flag. The bearers were supplied by a party from No. 4 Command Depot, A.I.F. Worgret Camp, Wareham. The cortege was proceeded by a Firing Party of the M.G. Corps from Bovington Camp, and followed by 15 comrades of the A.I.F. under the Command of Lt. Soloman, 25th Battalion, A.I.F. The service in the Church and at the graveside was conducted by Chaplain White, and the “Last Post: sounded by trumpeters of M.G. Corps. Flowers were sent from Parents and also Mrs White and Miss Hayden. Father, Mother and two sisters, Mr & Mrs Geo Richards, 38 Northern Road, Plaistow, England attended the funeral.”*

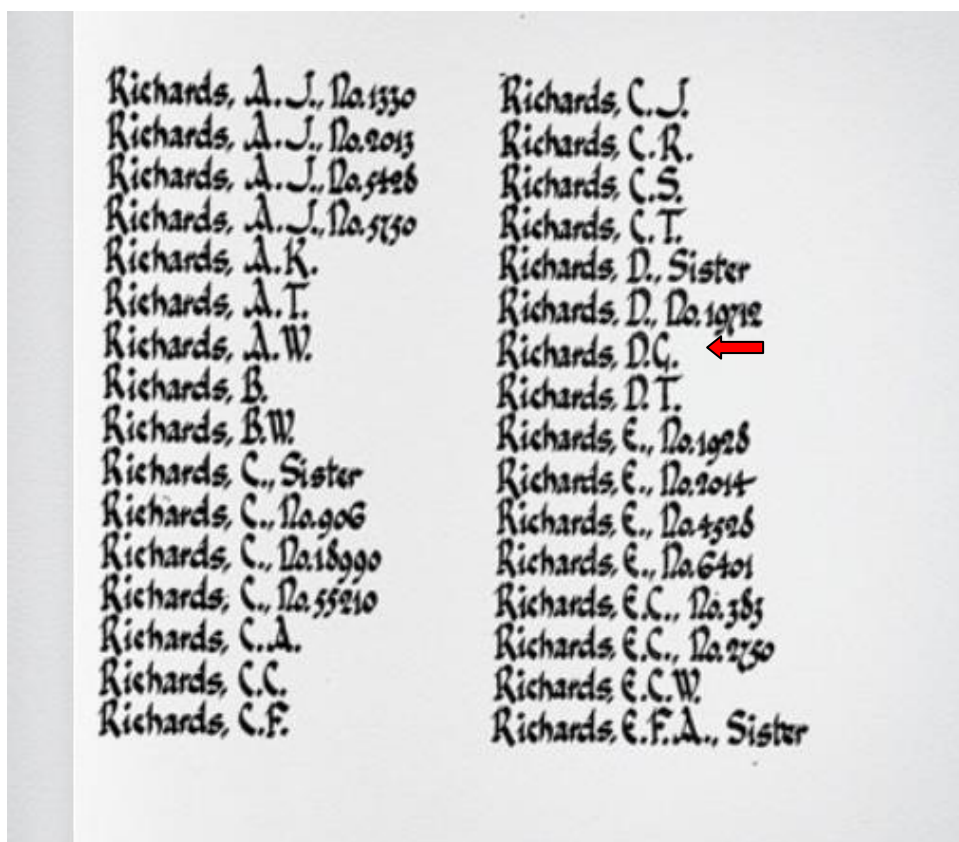
Private Douglas George Richards, No. 1750, “A” Company, 57th Battalion, France wrote the following Will on 10th September, 1916: *“Dear Farther, Just a line to let you that I an have enlisted and now in the trenches. I am sorry that I did not write before. I have left my money to people in Australia to this Address Mrs N. Deane, No. 130 Page St., Middle Park, Victoria so if you hear of think happen to me you no where to get my will. I have made it to you and do not forget to write to me as soon as you can I cose my letter with best love to all from your ever true son. Pte Douglas Geo Richards.”* (Letter transcribed as per typed copy).

A War Pension was granted to George William Richards, father of the late Private Douglas George Richards, in the sum of 10/- per fortnight from 28th August, 1917.

Private Douglas George Richards was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Richards' father – Mr G. Richards, as the closest next-of-kin.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Douglas George Richards – service number 1750, aged 22, of 57th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George William and Louisa Richards, of 38 Northern Road, Plaistow, London, England.

D. G. Richards is remembered in the Book of Remembrance at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Victoria.



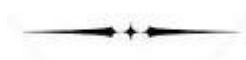
Private D. G. Richards is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 164.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(36 pages of Private Douglas George 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

THE 247th CASUALTY LIST

ILL

Private D. G, Richards, England

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 13 December, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LIST No. 324

Victoria

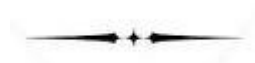
DIED OF ILLNESS

RICHARDS, D. G. Eng., 23/6/17

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 17 July, 1917)



Private Douglas George Richards



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)

Private D. G. Richards 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 *(Photos courtesy of Tracy Dunne)*

Private D. G. Richards' headstone marked with red arrow *(below)*



Photo of Private D. G. Richards' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Wareham Cemetery, Wareham, Dorset, England.



(Photo courtesy of Tracy Dunne)



(Photo from ["Following the Twenty-Second"](#))