

**City of London & Tower Hamlets
Cemetery, London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



357 PRIVATE

R. V. WATSON

6TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

5TH MAY, 1916

Richard Victor WATSON

Richard Victor Watson was born at Sawyers Bay, Dunedin, Otago, New Zealand on 14th July, 1895 to parents Richard Daniel & Margaret Younger Watson (nee McDermid).

According to information provided by his father for the Roll of Honour – Richard Victor Watson came to Australia when he was 11 years old.

Richard Victor Watson attended Trinity Grammar School, Kew, Melbourne, Victoria.

Richard Victor Watson was a 19 year old, single, Clerk (in London & Lancaster Insurance Company) from 111 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn, Victoria when he enlisted at Richmond, Victoria on 17th August, 1914 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Presbyterian & his next of kin was listed as Richard D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn, Victoria. Richard Victor Watson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served with Colonial Forces – 56 Infantry & also Senior Cadet Training.

Private Richard Victor Watson, Service number 357, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 19th October, 1914 with the 6th Infantry Battalion “C” Company & disembarked at Alexandria on 5th December, 1914.

Private Richard Victor Watson embarked from Malta on *Adania* on 9th June, 1915 for Egypt. He embarked from Alexandria on *Southland* on 14th June, 1915 for the Dardanelles. Private Watson joined his Unit from Base at Gallipoli on 20th June, 1915.

A Medical Report had been completed on Private Richard Victor Watson on 13th June, 1915 at Helouan. His disability was recorded as Rheumatism which had originated prior to Enlistment in Australia. *“Twelve months ago was off work for 4 months, & in bed 2 ½ months with Rheumatism in the back & the hips. Had slight attacks after before enlistment. Came to Egypt in December & was often off duty for a week at a time with Rheumatism. Went to the Dardanelles & was sent back seven weeks ago for Rheumatism. Has had rheumatism all the time since.”* Private Watson’s present condition was listed as *“At present has pain in the back & in the hips. Pain usually worst at night. Can walk very little & walks very lame. Cannot put any weight on right leg without pain.”* The Officer in charge of the case recommended that Private Watson be discharged as permanently unfit. The Medical Board agreed with the decision on 14th June, 1915.

Private Richard Victor Watson reported sick at Gallipoli on 23rd July, 1915. He was admitted to 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station at Anzac on 24th July, 1915 then transferred to Fleetsweeper on the same day with Influenza. Private Watson was admitted to 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance at Mudros on 24th July, 1915 with Debility. He was transferred to 24th Casualty Clearing Station at Mudros on 28th July, 1915 then transferred the same day to the Convalescent Hospital at Mudros. Private Watson was discharged to rejoin his Unit on 31st July, 1915.

Private Richard Victor Watson was admitted to 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 7th September, 1915 “Febrile”. He embarked on *Maheno* on the same day & was admitted to Military Hospital at Imtarfa, Malta on 12th September, 1915. The Hospital Admissions form recorded his disease as Gonorrhoea which he had *“contracted in Egypt on January 24th. Ceased 12th May”*. (Note: The Summary Sheet -page 60 in the Service Record file for Private Richard Victor Watson recorded that he had been admitted to Hospital at Malta from Maheno with Febrile Typhoid.) Private Watson was reported to be dangerously ill at Malta on 27th September, 1915. He was pronounced “out of danger” on 6th October, 1915. Private Watson embarked for England on 19th November, 1915 per *Kildonian Castle*.

Base Records advised Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 3rd October, 1915 that Private R. V. Watson was sick & had disembarked at Malta from Hospital Ship *Maheno* on 12th September. A cable was sent on 4th October, 1915 advising that Private R. V. Watson was dangerously ill on 27th September. Another cable was sent on 12th October, 1915 advising that Private R. V. Watson was now reported out of danger.

Base Records advised Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 15th October, 1915 that Private R. V. Watson had been transferred to First General Hospital at Heliopolis in July. A follow up cable sent on 17th October, 1915 reads: *"Please cancel my wire Fifteenth Instant Now Reported Private R. V. Watson Progressing Satisfactorily At Malta Will Promptly Advise If Anything Further Received."*

Private Richard Victor Watson was admitted to London War Hospital, Epsom, England on 27th November, 1915.

Base Records advised Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 28th November, 1915 that Private R. V. Watson embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Kildonian Castle* on 19th November, 1915.

Base Records advised Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 1st December, 1915: *"The following is an extract from a Nominal Roll of sick and wounded received by post, dated 22/9/15 who landed at Malta 12th September from Hospital Ship "Maheno", No. 357 Private R. V. Watson, 6th Battalion, suffering from febrile typhoid. You are already aware that he has since been pronounced out of danger, and reported embarked for England. Any further reports received will be promptly communicated to you."*

Base Records advised Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 13th December, 1915 that Private R. V. Watson was in Hospital at Epsom, England suffering from Enteric.

Private Richard Victor Watson was written up for a Crime on 30th December, 1915 – *"Missing Weymouth Draft 2 hours"*. He was awarded a forfeiture of 1 days' pay.

6th Battalion

The 6th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 7th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving on 2 December. It later took part in the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915, as part of the second wave. Ten days after the landing, the 2nd Brigade was transferred from ANZAC to Cape Helles to help in the attack on the village of Krithia. The attack captured little ground but cost the brigade almost a third of its strength. The Victorian battalions returned to ANZAC to help defend the beachhead, and in August the 2nd Brigade fought at the battle of Lone Pine. The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Richard Victor Watson died on 5th May, 1916 at 33 Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, London, England. A Coroner's Inquest was held on 9th May, 1916 & the cause of death was found to be: *"Accidental Death from Haemorrhage & concussion of the Brain consequent upon a fall at Herne Hill."*

A death for Richard V. Watson, aged 20, was registered in the June quarter, 1916 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Private Richard Victor Watson was buried on 11th May, 1916 in City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, Mile End Road, London, England – Grave No. 5771 Block "H".

This is now recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Screen Wall 49.5771 as he does not have a headstone.

According to Burial Register Richard V. Watson was buried in Grave 5771 with 4 other deceased persons.

THE CITY OF LONDON AND TOWER HAMLETS CEMETERY.

| No. of Grave, &c. | Description of Place of Burial, Date and Consideration of Grant or Assignment, and Names and Additions of Purchasers. | Names of Persons Interred. | REGISTER. | |
|-------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|
| | | | Year. | Number. |
| 5771 | Private grave 10 feet deep Cons £ 3. 3. 0 6 ft. 6 in. x 2 ft. 6 in. S ^g 49 25 February 1870 William Terrell South Mead Bristol Gilbert Henry Terrell & Charles Dickenson Terrell 8 Clarendon Road Redland Bristol S. R. 855 | Marlborough March 1860 Mary B. Hollins 18 Jane Stocks 85 Melbrough B. Watson Richard V. Watson 204 | 3/3/81 24/3/08 19/1/09 11/3/16 | 1497 340 |
| | | ↑ | | |
| | | | | ● This grave is now full 12/9/16 |

Private Richard Victor Watson was to be debited 19/6 for the loss of his Kit by Headquarters A.I.F. (Two dates shown on Casualty Form – Active Service: 7th June, 1916 & 17th June, 1916)

Mrs M. Y. Watson made a request to Base Records (unsure if the request was made in person or via telephone) at 4.50 pm on 3rd July, 1916 for the Death Certificate of "352? R. V. Watson, 6th Bn."

Base Records wrote to Mrs Watson, 111 Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria on 13th July, 1916: "In response to your personal request, please receive herewith, certificate of report of death of your son, the late No. 357, Private R. V. Watson, 6th Battalion."

The National Mutual Life Association of Australasia Limited, Melbourne, wrote to The Secretary, Defence Department, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, on 13th October, 1916 with the following: "We have been notified of the death of the above person who died in England on 5th May 1916. Please let me know when you receive confirmation of the death."

Base Records replied to The General Manager, National Mutual Life, Melbourne, on 20th October, 1916 enclosing, as requested, a certificate of report of death of the late No. 357 Pte R. V. Watson, 6th Battalion.

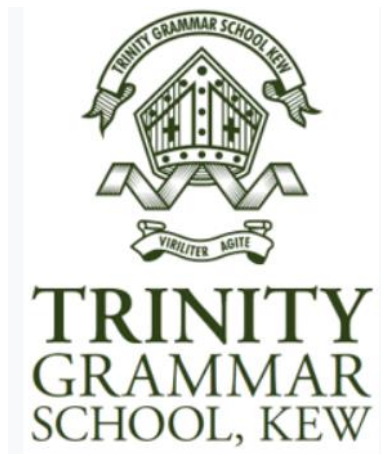
Base Records contacted Mr R. D. Watson, 111 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn, Victoria on 28th July, 1920 stating that "you are registered on the records of the late No. 357 Private R. V. Watson, 6th Battalion, as next of kin (relationship not stated) but in order that our file may be brought up to date, it is desired to learn whether the above-named soldier had any nearer blood relations than yourself, for instance is his father still alive...." (The "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" 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.)

Mr R. D. Watson, "Glendermid" Riversdale Rd near Yooringa Rd, Auburn, Melbourne, replied to Base Records on 4th August advising ".....I beg to state that I am his father, and Mrs M. Y. Watson is his mother. We both reside at the above address, but not the address you sent your letter to."

Private Richard Victor Watson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Watson's father – Mr R. D. Watson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent June, 1921 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Richard Victor Watson – service number 357, aged 20, of 6th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Richard Daniel & Marger Younger Watson, of "Glendermid", Riversdale Rd, Hawthorn, Melbourne, Australia.

R. V. Watson is remembered on the Trinity Grammar School Roll of Honour, Kew, Melbourne, Victoria.



Trinity Grammar School Roll of Honour (Photo by Kevin Cameron)

The Hawthorn Cenotaph, located in St. James Park, Burwood Road, Hawthorn, Victoria does not list individual names.



The Hawthorn Cenotaph (Photo from AWM Places of Pride – Krystal Lee)

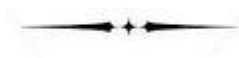
Private R. V. Watson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 48.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(61 pages of Private Richard Victor Watson'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 Australia



Newspaper Items

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

Ninety-Fifth List

VICTORIANS

ILL

R. V. Watson (dangerously)

(Colac Reformer, Victoria – 21 October, 1915)

AUSTRALIA'S ROLL OF HONOR

120th LIST

EMBARKED FOR ENGLAND

VICTORIA

Pte R. V. Watson

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 7 December, 1915)

DEATHS

WASON – On the 5th May, in camp, England, Private Richard Victor Watson, late 6th Battalion Infantry, dearly beloved son of Captain and Mrs R. D. Watson, of "Casewick," Riversdale road, Hawthorn, aged 20 years.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 11 May, 1916)

DEATHS

On Active Service

WASON – On the 5th May, in camp, England, Private Richard Victor Watson, late 6th Battalion Infantry, dearly beloved son of Captain and Mrs R. D. Watson, of "Casewick," Riversdale road, Hawthorn, aged 20 years.

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 11 May, 1916)

THE 170th CASUALTY LIST

DIED – CAUSE NOT STATED

Private R. V. Watson, Hawthorn

(*The Mildura Cultivator*, Victoria – 24 May, 1916)

IN MEMORIAM

WATSON – In sacred and loving memory of Private R. Victor Watson, late 6th Battalion, 1st Australian Division, who died on service, 5th May, 1916.

Anzac

-(Inserted by his loving mother and sisters, Madge and Linda "Casewick," Riversdale road, Hawthorn).

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 5 May, 1917)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials in 23,000 locations, in 153 countries. In all 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth forces from WWI and WWII have been honoured and commemorated in perpetuity.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, as part of its mandate, is responsible for commemorating all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally. To this end, the war dead are commemorated by name on a headstone, at an identified site of a burial, or on a memorial. War dead are commemorated uniformly and equally, irrespective of military or civil rank, race or creed.

Not all service personnel have a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. In some instances the relative chose to have their own memorial/headstone placed on the deceased's grave. These private headstones are not maintained by the CWGC as they have no jurisdiction to maintain them.

Private Richard Victor Watson is named on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall in City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England.

City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England (also known as City of London Cemetery & Crematorium)

Many of the soldiers buried here died in Bethnal Green Military Hospital. The Screen Wall at the back of the War Graves Plot commemorates by name those buried in the plot or in graves elsewhere in the cemetery which could not be marked by headstones and those who were cremated in the City of London Crematorium.

There are 732 Commonwealth War Graves located in this Cemetery – 332 relating to World War 1 & 400 from World War 2.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photo by Acabashi)



Cross of Sacrifice *(Photo from CWGC)*



(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)

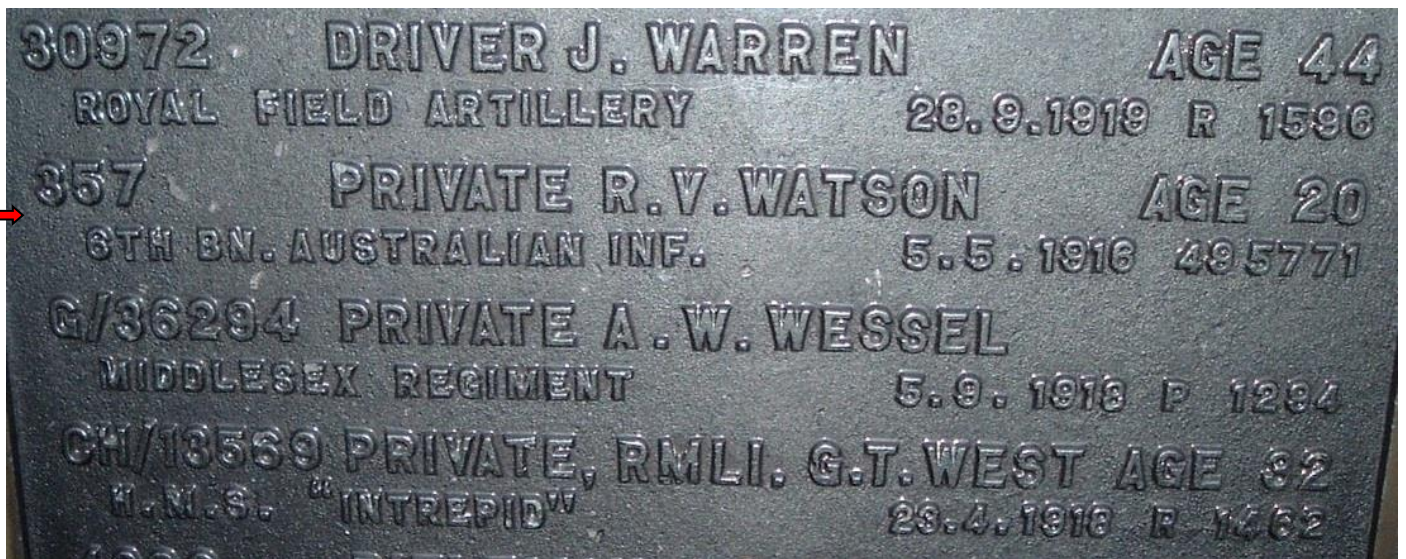


(Photo by Acabashi)



(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Private R. V. Watson's name on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Screen Wall in City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett Private Collection)



CWGC Screen Wall (Photo from CWGC)



(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)