



**Lance Corporal William Albert Rich (D279)** was born in 1889 in Cambridge. His parents Benjamin and Mary Jane (nee Ashley) lived in the village of St Andrew the Less where his father worked as a coachman (a horse drawn vehicle with more than one passenger). William had eight brothers and sisters Charlotte, Frederick, Percy, Henry, Benjamin, Gertrude and Maude. William was the last but one to be born!

In 1911, William can be found at the Salamanca Army Barracks in Aldershot. He is 22 years old and serving with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoon Guards (Prince of Wales) Regiment. When WW1 began, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoons were stationed in Egypt. They were immediately called back to Britain arriving home in October, and then shipped to France (Le Havre) on 4th Nov 1914 for service on the Western Front. William's regiment joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Cavalry Division for the duration of the war. Therefore William would probably have fought at the Second Battle of Ypres and the Battle of Loos in 1915. There were no major engagements recorded for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoons in 1916, however in June of this year William married Mary Elizabeth Mullins in a civil ceremony in Brentford. In 1917 William was back in France where his Battalion was in action at the Arras Offensive in 1917. In 1918 the Battalion fought at the Battles of St Quentin, Avre, Amiens, Cambrai and the Final Advance on Flanders. William's Division was also selected to advance into Germany and form part of the Occupation Force.

Sadly, William, who had clearly devoted his working life to the Army, died on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1918 soon after the end of the war. He died at Hounslow Military Hospital, Cavalry Barracks in Beavers Lane. A post mortem revealed that he died of pneumonia. He left a wife and a baby daughter Joan (b.2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1917) who were then living at 94 Bath Villas, Twickenham Road.

In 1948, Joan (now 30), can be found on the passenger list for the RMS Rangitata that was leaving the Port of London for New Zealand. Her last address in the UK was 13 Whitton Road. Joan was taking advantage of the 'assisted passage' scheme introduced in 1947. A Miss Eileen Parkes was also on the passenger list, her address being Hounslow West. Both ladies are listed as factory hands - they may well have been friends braving a new life on the other side of the world. Two years later in 1950, William's wife Mary (59) can be found on the SS Mataroa passenger list, sailing from Southampton to New Zealand to join her daughter. Her previous address was also 13 Whitton Road Hounslow.

William was awarded the Victory and British Medals and the 14 Star. He is buried in New Brentford Cemetery Ref F. D. 70.

**My darling will always be with me  
Forever in our thoughts (CWGC Inscription)**

