

## William RICHARDS, 24/1792 (MM)

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### **SALISBURY.**

#### **A SOLDIER WELCOMED HOME.**

A very pleasant evening was spent in the Salisbury schoolroom last Wednesday to welcome home Private W. Richards, M.M., and present him with a gold medal as a slight mark of appreciation of his services for his country. Mr C. Parry, chairman of the Social Committee, on behalf of the people of Salisbury, welcomed Private Richards home, congratulating him on his safe return and thanking him for his services. He then called on Miss A. McAuliffe to pin on the medal, which was done to the accompaniment of musical honours and cheers. Messrs Hawke and Mauger expressed their great pleasure in seeing Private Richards home again, looking so fit and bringing honour to his family and country. Private Richards briefly returned thanks to all for their kind sentiments and handsome present, modestly disclaiming the idea that he had done any more than his comrades. More cheers and then supper, after which dancing went merrily on again to the music of Messrs Brasell and Hawke Bros., with Mr Evans as M.C. During the evening Messrs G. Parry, J. Hawke and F. Evans contributed songs.

Private W. Richards, left New Zealand with the 9th Reinforcement over three years ago, spent two months in Egypt and then on to France. He was invalided to England, wounded in the knee, but was able to return in time to take part in the last great battle. After the Armistice he was fortunate enough to march into Germany, and entered Cologne. After three weeks there his draft was sent back to England and demobilised.

## WAR DECORATIONS.

### TIMARU PRESENTATION CEREMONY.

Last night another presentation ceremony was held in the Drill Shed, Timaru, to present medals won at the war to the successful soldiers or their next-of-kin. There was a very large attendance of the general public and a ceremonial parade of the local military group was also held. The troops paraded at 7.30 as follows:— “A” Coy, 2nd (South Canterbury) Regiment, under Lieut. C. L. Gillies; No. 7 N.Z.A.S.C., under Lieut. A. E. Sharp, N.Z.P.S.; No. 43 Coy Senior Cadets, under Captain W. Fossey; Nos. 44 and 45 Coys, under Lieut. J. P. C. Walshe; the 2nd (South Canterbury) Regimental Band, under Mr Schnack; and the Bugle Band under Mr Home, were also on parade. The parade was under Major F. H. Hume. R.N.Z.A., officer commanding Group 10, Timaru, and was marshalled by Lieut. C. Quartley, N.Z.P.S., adjutant, with the following of the N.Z.P.S.: Mr H. Frank (W. O.1.), Mr Thatcher (W. O.1.), and S.S.M. A. Mathieson. Besides the above there were present — His Worship the Mayor (Mr Wm. C. Raymond), Major Foden, Major Holdgate, Major Dryden N.Z.M.C, and Captain Chaplain Jacob.

The medals were presented by Colonel R. Young, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., N.Z. S.C., Officer Commanding the Canterbury district, and on his entering the Drill Shed the general salute was sounded. The parade state was 330 officers, n.c.o.'s and men.

The Mayor at the outset accorded a hearty welcome to Colonel Young. It was his honour a short time ago to welcome Sir James Allen for the purpose of presenting awards to men of the town, who had rendered valiant service in the recent war. It gave him great pleasure that evening to accord to Colonel Young, on behalf of the citizens of Timaru, a cordial welcome to the town. He did so with additional pleasure on account of the many honours Colonel Young had earned on the battlefields, and of his long and distinguished war service. (Applause.) His Worship congratulated the Colonel on coming through so much hard fighting and being spared to return to New Zealand to continue his good work. His Worship also took the opportunity of congratulating the officers and men present that evening who were to receive decorations. It was unfortunate, however, that some of their gallant boys were not there that evening — they were numbered amongst the unreturning brave. Their next-of-kin, however, would receive their decorations, and he was sure it would be a source of deep gratification to them to possess such tangible marks of the King's appreciation of their services as those decorations symbolised. (Applause.) In conclusion he called upon Colonel Young to present the awards.

Colonel Young, who was accorded a very hearty reception, thanked the Mayor for his kindly welcome. He was very pleased on the occasion of his first official visit to Timaru, to have the opportunity of presenting medals to returned soldiers. He congratulated those present who were to receive awards. No one knew better than he did how well those medals had been earned. One of the most difficult jobs a battalion commander had was the allocation of medals. The friends and relations of those men who were to receive decorations that evening had every reason to be proud that those men had been selected as most worthy of those honours. It was his honour, said the gallant officer continuing, to command the 1st Canterbury Battalion for nearly two years, while as a brigade commander he had the first and second battalions under his command in 1918 up till the signing of the Armistice. He assured all officers and men of the battalion on parade that night that esprit de corps, which had ever been present in those battalions on the field was remarkable. They had also won a tradition which ought to be dearly cherished, and it was handed on to those present to maintain without blemish. (Applause.) He asked every officer and man of the regiment there that evening to see to it that the good name they had won was ever upheld, because it had been earned by hardships and bloodshed on the field of battle. Nothing they could do in the future could be too much. All they could do — as those before them had done — was their duty, and if they did that the old officers and men of the regiment would be proud of them. (Applause.) He then presented the decorations to those present, the gazette notice of each award being read by Lieutenant A. E. Dendy as the next-of-kin or the soldier concerned came for the medal. Each award was heartily applauded. The following is a list of the honours presented, the first four being posthumous awards which were presented to the mother of each deceased soldier:

24/938 Rfm. Wootten, F. C, French Croix de Guerre.

6/1785 Sergeant Brien, W. S., M.M.

6/1636 Private McRohan, J., M.M.

62709 Lance-Corporal Minnis, W. H. M.M.

13800 R.S.M. Emerson, A. L., M.S.M. (presented to Mrs Emerson).

7/790 2nd Lieut. Martin, A., D.C.M.

7/778 2nd Lieut. Purves, L. D., D.C.M.

6/3199 Sergeant White, W., D.C.M.

12294 Corporal Toms, S. W., D.C.M.

7/2427 Sergeant Smillie, J., M.M.

32380 Corporal Paterson, D. T., M.M.

9/160 Bombardier Dobson, T., M.M.

6/2329 Private. Glassey J., M.M.

27271 Private Gillon, J., M.M.

24/1792 Private **Richards, W.**, M.M.

7/1481 Private Jackson, J., M.M.

10739 Private Brown, C, M.M.

32286 Rifleman Allan, J., M.M.

26/1045 Sergeant Patching W. J., M. M.

4/73a Sergeant Elsom, C. H., M.M.

25/1645 2nd Lieut. Hunt, R. E., M.S.M.

25/984 L-Corporal Hickey, M., M.S.M.

S.S.M. Johnston, G. G., Imperial Long Service and Good Conduct.

S.S.M. Edmonds, W., M.S.M.

The following were to have received awards but were absent:—

2/1126 Sergeant White, J. A., M.M.

52670 Lance-Corporal Wilson, J. J. H., M.M. '

7/893 Lance-Corporal Robinson, L., M.M.

7/1845 Lance-Corporal Gaffney, P. J., M.M.

8/3662 Lance-Corporal Langford, E. H., M.M.

6/3905 Sergeant Turner, H. H., M.M.

The Mayor, at the close of the presentation of prizes, called for three hearty cheers for the men who had received decorations, and these were very lustily given.

The 2nd South Canterbury Regiment Band discoursed selections during the evening.