

Private Joseph Richardson
Regimental number: 902265
“A” Company, 85th Battalion, Canadian Infantry

born: 19 April 1899 - died: 30 September 1918

On his attestation form for the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Private Joseph Richardson stated that he was born in April 1898.¹ The army checked this information and discovered that the date on his birth certificate was actually 19 April 1899. He was born in Eureka, Nova Scotia, the son of Matthew Chapman Richardson² and Jane Ackerley Maxwell.³ His father, Matthew, was born on 24 July 1872 in Nova Scotia⁴ and his mother, Jane, in May 1869 in Acadia Coal Mines, Pictou County, Nova Scotia.⁵ They married in December 1894 in Westville⁶ and had six children: Roderick MacDougald (born in 1896), James Maxwell (born in 1897), Joseph, Ann Burns (born in 1900),⁷ William A. (born in 1902)⁸ and Andrew L. (born in 1903).⁹

In 1901, the family was living in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, where Joseph’s father was a machinist.¹⁰ In 1908, the family moved to the United States and, by 1910, was living on Lindon Avenue in Byram, Sussex, New Jersey.¹¹ Joseph’s father was a machinist in a blast furnace. The family were aliens. The following year, Joseph’s mother, Jane, was back in Westville.¹² She and the children were living as guests in the home of Roderick McDougall. Her husband was not with the family – perhaps he remained in the United States.

When he enlisted on 25 March 1916, Joseph was a student and, based on his correct birth date, was just shy of his 17th birthday.¹³ He was 6’ tall and had a dark complexion, brown eyes and dark hair.

Joseph served with the 85th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. At the end of September 1918, the Battalion was stationed near Inchy, southeast of Cambrai, France.¹⁴ Joseph was injured on 29 September¹⁵ – a day that appears to have been quiet on the Front.¹⁶ He was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with gunshot wounds to his back and abdomen.¹⁷ That day, his Battalion learned that it was going to be relieved the following day.¹⁸ Joseph died the same day and was buried at Duisans British Military Cemetery (Grave 98, Plot 7, Row A) with the Canadian chaplain A. D. Reid presiding.¹⁹

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²⁰ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²¹ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September 1918.

The Richardsons lost two other children in the period during and immediately after the Great War. Joseph’s brother, James, age 17, died in 1915, of accidental drowning.²² His sister, Ann, age 19, died five years later of pulmonary tuberculosis.²³

In 1921, Joseph’s parents and his three remaining siblings were still living in Westville, where Matthew was a mechanical supervisor.²⁴ His mother died ten years later of a cerebral hemorrhage²⁵ and his father, then a mechanical engineer, who had retired from the coal mine, died in 1956 in Stellarton of apoplexy and arterial sclerosis.²⁶ Matthew is buried in Auburn Cemetery in Westville.²⁷

-
- ¹ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Joseph Richardson
- ² Ibid.
- ³ "Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 28 February 2016), entry for Matthew Chapman Richardson; "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," entry for Joseph Richardson
- ⁴ "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Joseph Richardson, Province: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District Number: 38, Sub-District: Ferrona, Sub-District Number: L-1
- ⁵ "Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics," (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com/>; accessed 25 February 2016) data entry for Jane Maxwell
- ⁶ "Nova Scotia Historical Vital Statistics" (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com/>; accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Jane A. Maxwell, Registration Year: 1894 - Book: 1832 - Page: 120 - Number: 176
- ⁷ "Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s-Current," entry for Matthew Chapman Richardson
- ⁸ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Joseph Richardson, Province: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District Number: 50, Sub-District: 43 - Westville, Sub-District Number: 43
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ "1901 Census of Canada," entry for Joseph Richardson,
- ¹¹ "1910 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Joseph Richardson
- ¹² "1911 Census of Canada," entry for Joseph Richardson
- ¹³ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," entry for Joseph Richardson
- ¹⁴ "85th Canadian Infantry Battalion," *Canadian Great War Project* (<http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com/warDiaryLac/wdLacP08.asp>; accessed 28 February 2016)
- ¹⁵ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2016), Record Group 9, series IIIC10, volume 4556, Record number 688
- ¹⁶ "85th Canadian Infantry Battalion"
- ¹⁷ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 688
- ¹⁸ "85th Canadian Infantry Battalion"
- ¹⁹ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 688
- ²⁰ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ²¹ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ²² "Historical Vital Statistics, Nova Scotia," (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com>; accessed 11 March 2016) entry for James M. Richardson, Registration Year: 1915 - Book: 44 - Page: 254 - Number: 929
- ²³ "Historical Vital Statistics, Nova Scotia," (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com>; accessed 11 March 2016) entry for James M. Richardson, Registration Year: 1920 - Book: 98 - Page: 164
- ²⁴ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 25 February 2016), entry for Michael C. Richardson, Province or Territory: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District Number: 50, Sub-District: Westville North, Sub-District Number: 50, City, Town or Village: Westville (North)
- ²⁵ "Historical Vital Statistics, Nova Scotia," (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com>; accessed 11 March 2016) entry for Jane Ackley Richardson, Registration Year: 1931 - Book: 150 - Page: 920
- ²⁶ "Historical Vital Statistics, Nova Scotia," (<https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com>; accessed 11 March 2016) entry for Matthew C Richardson, Registration Year: 1956 - Page: 5889
- ²⁷ "Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s-Current," entry for Matthew Chapman Richardson