

RICHARD HENRY LYON

WX13006 Pte. Richard Henry Lyon was born at Naraling near Northampton Western Australia on the 18th of March 1916. His parents were John Henry and Ada Lyon (nee Woodforth).

At the time of his enlistment (14th of May 1941), Richard gave his occupation as that of farmhand with a marital status as single and a permanent address as Nannup WA. Richard was then aged 25 years.

On the 10th of June 1941, Richard was posted to the 2/16th battalion. Early in his military service, Richard suffered serious bleeding and was diagnosed with Diathesis. From July to September 1941, Richard spent intermittent terms of hospitalisation, finally re-joining his unit on the 19th of September 1941.

Granted pre-embarkation leave of 10 days from 15th to 25th of October 1941 before embarking at Fremantle (Convoy U.S. 13) bound for the Middle East. Upon arrival in the Middle East (24th of November 1941), Richard was placed with 21 A.I.T.B. (Australian Infantry Training Battalion) and taken on strength, 2/27th battalion on the 27th of January 1942. Just two days later, Richard and the rest of the 2/27th embarked on the S.S. Ile de France bound for Bombay where the battalion transferred to the S.S. City of London, disembarking at Adelaide on the 25th of March 1942.

After undertaking some training in Queensland, the battalion embarked at Brisbane on the 7th of August 1942, disembarking Port Moresby a week later and by the 6th of September, the 2/27th was in position at Mission Ridge on the Kokoda Trail, preparing to meet the Japanese. The battalion held its position for just two days before being forced to withdraw after being outflanked. There followed a grim two-week withdrawal, through harsh conditions and with little food. Sick and exhausted the 2/27th Re-joined the main Australian force at Jawarere, 40 kilometres east of Port Moresby on the 22nd of September.

After a period of rest and re-training, the 2/27th was again in action at Gona on the 28th of November 1942. The battalion suffered heavily in a series of rushed and ill-conceived attacks and was further assailed by the ravages of tropical disease. By the time it was relieved on the 6th of January 1943, the battalion was just 70 strong.

It was during the actions at Gona that Richard Lyon was to lose his life, Killed in Action on the 1st of December 1942.

Richard was buried at Gona War Cemetery Grave Number 21, map reference 165287. Later, his remains were exhumed and reburied at Soputa War Cemetery. At the end of the Pacific war, Australian servicemen buried at Soputa, were exhumed and re-buried at Bomona War Cemetery.