

ROBERT VILLIERS DOYLE

Queen's South Africa medal: bars Cape Colony, Rhodesia, Transvaal, SA'01, SA'02 officially impressed
PTE R. V. DOYLE, MED: STAFF R.F.F.



Doyle was discharged from the Medical Staff, Rhodesia Field Force on 13th August 1900 and the first two bars are confirmed on WO 100/224 (Royal Army Medical Corps : Militia Volunteers, Rhodesian Field Force, Miscellaneous Civilians). The other three bars have unofficial rivets and it is possible that he earned them through subsequent service with a unit yet to be identified^{i ii}.

The RHODESIA FIELD FORCE was an Imperial corps of approximately 5000 soldiers under the command of Lt. General Sir Frederick Carrington, KCMG KCB. The corps was established at the request of the British South African Company, and the troops assembled from many different parts of the world. They arrived in Beira, Mozambique, early April and into May 1900. Initially, they were not allowed to disembark as Portugal had declared itself a neutral party in the Second Anglo-Boer War. However, with the occupation of Bloemfontein, and taking into account the diplomatic pressure that was being brought to bear by the British on Lisbon, the order to prevent disembarkation of the troops was rescinded.

Rhodesia was only 10 years old when the war broke out in October 1899, and its European population numbered less than 4 000. Yet, it is said that more than one-third of the males in that population saw service in the South African Republic (Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek, ZAR). They were in three units: the Mashonaland (No.3) and Matabeleland (No.2) Divisions of the BSAP; the Southern Rhodesia Volunteers (SRV) and the Rhodesia Regiment (RR).

Their initial role was defensive. Some 500 guarded the drifts over the Limpopo and Crocodile rivers, and were engaged in numerous skirmishes in the Tuli area when engaged by a force of between 1 300 and 2 000 boers from Pietersburg. When the Limpopo came down in flood in December 1899, the boers withdrew, never to return.

For the record, the WO 127/19 identifies the members of the Rhodesia Field Force Medical Staff. This is tabulated below.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Rhodesia Regiment | WO 127/19 |
|----------------------|--------------|

| No. | Surname | Initials | Rank | Rhodesia Field Force | Enrolled | Discharged & Notes |
|-------|------------|----------|-------|----------------------|---------------|--|
| N/N | D'Arcy | WN | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | CT 25 5/00 | Dis 18/1/02 T.Ex |
| N/N | Briere | L | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | CT 25 5/00 | ~ 14/12/01 T.Ex |
| N/N | Doyle | RV | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | ~ | ~ |
| N/N | Fisher | H | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Friesland | HA | Cpl | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Ford | G | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Haggerty | TW | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Halsebury | EC | L/Cpl | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Hill | JW | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| | Hook | | Capt | | | |
| N/N | Jones | Geo | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 14 4/00 | Dis 21/5/02 T.Ex |
| N/N | Manston | A | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Matthews | R | ~ | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Mills | JW | ~ | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Osment | EJT | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Phillips | J | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Pluke | F | ~ | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| | Stone | CA | Capt | Staff | | Med Officer R.A.M.C [Dr Charles Alfred Stone] |
| N/N | Speek | J | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 15/1/02 c/s |
| N/N | Seatter | J | ~ | ~ | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Trench | ? | Cpl | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 31/10/00 at own req |
| N/N | Webb | PW | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 8/1/02 c/s |
| 24355 | Wardley | TC | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 7. 1/01 | Dis 17/1/02 on completion of period of engagement [St Johns Amb Association] |
| N/N | Walkington | WC | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Wilson | T | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 26 5/00 | Dis 4/12/01 c/s |
| N/N | Watson | W | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | ~ | Dis 9/8/01 c/s |
| N/N | Williamson | EFG | Pvt | Med Staff RFF | 25 5/00 | Dis 30/5/01 c/s |

BIOGRAPHY and GENEALOGY of ROBERT VILLIERS DOYLE

Robert Villiers Doyle was born in July 1877 at Greystones (*Na Clocha Liatha*), Co. Wicklow, Ireland, the son of Peter and Margaret Doyle. His parents moved to Bradford between 1897 to 1881 presumably in search of work. Evidently R V Doyle received a good education for his handwriting is well-formed, and his syntax sound.

1881 Census of England and Wales
 Dwelling : 42 Jowett St, Bradford, York, England
 Household:

| Name | Relation | Marital Status | Gender | Age | Birthplace | Occupation |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------|-----|------------------|------------------------------|
| Peter DOYLE | Head | M | Male | 32 | Ireland | Shoemaker |
| Margret DOYLE | Wife | M | Female | 27 | Ireland | Mill Hand Gassing Dep (Silk) |
| Robert DOYLE | Son | | Male | 4 | Ireland | Scholar |
| Honora DOYLE | Daughter | | Female | 2 | Ireland | |
| Anna DOYLE | Daughter | | Female | 4 m | Bradford, York | |
| Honora DOYLE | Mother-in-law | W | Female | 65 | Ireland | |
| Catherine DOYLE | Boarder | U | Female | 20 | Stockton, Durham | Worst(ere)d Spinner |

At some stage, Doyle moved to Africa, participating in the 1897 Bechuanaland Rebellion (the so-called “Langeveld Campaign”) for which reportedly he earned the Cape of Good Hope General Service Medal bar 1897ⁱⁱⁱ.

He went on to join the Medical Staff of the Rhodesia Field Force presumably in Rhodesia in May 1900 and reputedly was discharged there from on the 13th August 1900, though he later records his service with the corps as being 11 months. He recounts that he was with the Cape Town Highlands after that for 6 years ceasing service in 1904.

Presumably over this period he met and married in Kimberley Julia Margaret Daniels. Between 1900 and 1910, together they had four children. When he was demobilised he became a traveler, the family home becoming 7 Station Road, Observatory.

1. Robert Villiers^{iv} Doyle b. July 1877 Greystones (*Na Clocha Liatha*), Co. Wicklow, Ireland d. June 1936^v m. Rondebosch, Julia Margaret DANIELS (do. George William and Elizabeth Johanna DANIELS) b. Kimberley c. 1873 d. (November) 1956 [?] ^{vi} aged 82 years & 7 months

1.1 Mabel Helena b. 2 March 1900 m/div. John Frederick KIRSTEN^{vii}
 1.1 Mabel Helena b. 2 March 1900 m. FURNESS / FORNESS^{viii}

1.2 Robert Villiers Doyle b. 1 January 1904 Rondebosch d. 7 March 1981 Durban m/div 1955 Gertruida Susanna née BERRANGE
 1.2 Robert Villiers Doyle b. 1 January 1904 Rondebosch d. 7 March 1981 Durban m/div 1963 Jennifer Ann née CRAMENT
 1.2 Robert Villiers Doyle b. 1 January 1904 Rondebosch d. 7 March 1981 Durban m/div 1966 Mireille Louise Arnoldine née LEMMONS
 1.2 Robert Villiers Doyle b. 1 January 1904 Rondebosch d. 7 March 1981 Durban m/div 1969 Olive Helen formerly WATSON née FOULKES

1.3 Sophie Eileen b. 6 June 1908

1.4 Victor Cuthbert Doyle b. 10 November 1910 m. Alice Caroline née ADAMS

In 1914, he joined the Cape Garrison Artillery for 10 months ceasing duty on 19th July 1915. Thereafter, travelling to Potchefstroom, he volunteered for the South African Oversea Expeditionary Force on 21st August 1915. He was signed up and sent to South African General Hospital, Wynberg (General Duties Section) on 4th September 1915, his Commanding Officer being Major E N Thornton.

On 25th September 1914 he was transferred to South African Military Hospital, (Richmond Military Hospital-Sanitary Section) where he remained until boarded on 1st January 1917, his Commanding Officer being Capt. G S Coghlan, RAMC. Whilst there, he was hospitalised between 6th to 18th July 1916 in “Richmond Park” for

what was diagnosed as a Duodenal ulcer. He was discharged on pension from Service on 27th July 1917, in terms of Para. 392, King's Regulations "No longer fit for war service". His London address in December 1917 was listed as 11 Shakespeare-terrace, Richmond Surrey.

Duplicate 1299
365

SOUTH AFRICAN OVERSEA EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

ATTESTATION OF

No. 365 Name Doyle Robert Villiers Regiment S. African Medical Services

Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.

1. What is your full name? ... Robert Villiers Doyle
2. In what country, town, or district were you born? ... Greytown, Natal
3. What is your age? ... 35
4. What is the full name and address of your next-of-kin? ... Mrs. Julia M. Doyle (wife), 7, Grosvenor Gardens, London, W.1
5. What is your profession, trade, or occupation? ... Medical Officer
6. Are you married or single? ... Married
7. If married, how many children have you under the age of 16? ... None
8. Have you any person (other than wife or children) wholly dependent on you, if so who are they and where do they reside? ... No
9. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? ... Yes
10. Are you now serving in any unit of the Union Defence Force, if so which? ... No
11. Have you previously served in any military force, and if so what are the particulars of such service? ... Rhodesia 9.3 Medical Corps, 4 months and 6 weeks Highland Light Infantry, 1901, also C. S. M. S. 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915
12. Do you thoroughly understand the nature and terms of this engagement? ... Yes
13. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the South African Oversea Expeditionary Force on the terms set forth in this attestation form? ... Yes

I, Robert Villiers Doyle, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true and that I am willing to fulfil the engagement made by me, and I hereby engage and agree to serve as an Imperial soldier under the Army Act in the South African Oversea Expeditionary Force and to be attached to any arm or branch of the service therein for the duration of the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany, and for six months after the termination of that war, provided that His Majesty should so long require my services or until legally discharged, such discharge to be carried out in South Africa if I so desire.

(WITNESS) W. J. ... (SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT) R. V. Doyle
 (PLACE) Potchefstroom
 (DATE) 2nd August 1915

Oath to be taken by the Recruit on Attestation.

I, Robert Villiers Doyle, do make oath that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty KING GEORGE THE FIFTH, His Heirs and Successors, and I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown, and Dignity against all enemies and will observe and obey orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

(SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT) R. V. Doyle
 (SIGNATURE OF WITNESS) W. J. ...
 (PLACE) Potchefstroom
 (DATE) 2nd August 1915

Attestation Papers of South African Medical Services 365 Pvt Doyle, Robert Villiers

Evidently he generated some sympathy amongst the physicians for regular medical follow-up was offered thereafter. By 8th August 1918, when seen at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, he was still ill, and considered 30% disabled remained on pension. However, the chronicity of the ailment concerned some attending physicians for it was considered that the complaint preceded his attestation and, as such, did not make him eligible for war pension.

Physical Appearance of DOYLE, R V:

Height: 6 ft 3/8 inches
Weight: 224 lbs
Chest 43-46 inches
Complexion: fresh
Eyes: brown
Hair: grey
Marks: tattoo right forearm; burn scar left side of neck

Other detail:

Religion: Wesleyan
Character: Good

Attestation Statement of Services:

Rhodesian Field Force 11 months
Cape Town Highlands 6 years 1904
Cape Garrison Artillery 10 months until 19th July 1915
SA Oversea Expeditionary Force, Potchefstroom 21st August 1915
SA General Hospital, Wynberg (General Duties Section) 4th Sept 1915 CO. Major E N Thornton
South Africa 13.8.15 – 25.9.14 (44 dys)
SA Military Hospital, Richmond Military Hospital (Sanitary Section) 1st January 1917 CO. Capt. G S Coghlan RAMC
England 26.9.15 – 27.12.17 (2 yrs 63 dys)

In September 1918, the Pensions Board decided to grant him one final gratuity of £ 75.00 and rid themselves of the problem. His address at the time was Miralite Ltd, 103 High Street, Mortlake, his employment as a traveler.

Robert Villiers Doyle of 11 Shakespeare-terrace, Richmond Surrey died 3rd June 1936 at the Royal Hospital Richmond cause unknown. He was 58 years old. His death was registered at Surrey, N.E. (formerly the Kingston and Richmond registration districts) in the June QRT of 1936; and probate issued in London, England on 17th June in favour of Edith Mary Argent spinster, his effects being valued at £291 5s. He was buried in Richmond Cemetery, London on 8th June 1936

REFERENCES:

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13. Sanderson E. Great Britain in Africa: The History of Colonial Expansion. Publ: Simon Publications LLC. 2001

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16. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints : <http://www.familysearch.org>
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18. University of Cape Town Libraries. Manuscript. Ref: BCZA82/5-6. Sir Frank William Frederick Johnson Papers. 1885-1943.
19. Villiers. www.thinkbabynames.com.

COMMUNICATION from a relative: 2016/09/19 09:44 PM, Robert O'Friel

I was directed to your website by a fellow researcher to the following link for information you had compiled on my Great Grandfather, Robert Villiers Doyle.

I'm very grateful to you for your work which has assisted me to find him and have some very interesting information about his life.

My mother, Jennifer Ann Crament is according to your research listed as the wife of and divorced from Robert Villiers Doyle, see below:-

The fact is that my mother was actually married to Robert Villiers Doyle born 1938, the son of Robert Villiers Doyle, born in 1904 and deceased on 7 March 1981. You may want to amend your research accordingly.

1.2 Robert Villiers Doyle b. 1 January 1904 Rondebosch d. 7 March 1981 Durban m/div 1963 Jennifer Ann née CRAMENT

ⁱ Communication dated 1974: Lt.Cdr. M Godfrey, East Moseley, Surrey

ⁱⁱ The Rhodesia Regiment was disbanded in October 1900; some members joining the South African Constabulary, the remainder returning to Rhodesia. Ref: Drysdall, A. pg.3 col.1 para.2 and pg.56 col. 2 para.2.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Cape Town Highlands (The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn's Own) participated in this action. It seems likely that Doyle may have been seconded to or volunteered for the Rhodesia Field Force, and thereafter returning to The Cape Town Highlands, all of which would go to explaining his marriage in Kimberley and the QSA bars.

^{iv} The boy's name Villiers \v(i)-llie-rs\ is of French origin, and its meaning is "town-dweller". The name is considered to have a certain panache to it.

^v Detailing his death:

1. The death of a Robert V Doyle was registered at Surrey, N.E. (formerly the Kingston and Richmond registration districts) in the June QRT of 1936, age 58 years [Vol 2a pg. 160]
2. DOYLE, Robert Villiers of 11 Shakespeare-terrace, Richmond Surrey died 3 June 1936 at the Royal Hospital Richmond. Probate London 17 June to Edith Mary Argent spinster. Effects £291 5s
3. Robert Villiers Doyle, age unknown, was buried in Richmond Cemetery, London [Section B Grave 183] on 8 June 1936

^{vi} KAB MOOC NO 6/9/24161REF: 6452/56 DESCRIPTION: DOYLE, JULIA MARGARET. ESTATE PAPERS. 1956. Extraordinarily, the Death Notice has no date of death entered, just the age. It was filed in 1956, the presumptive date of death being November 1956. She was living at Oddfellows Hall, 86 Plein Street, Cape Town.

^{vii} KAB CSC 2/1/1/1431.692 DESCRIPTION: ILLIQUID CASE. RESTITUTION OF CONJUGAL RIGHTS. JOHN FREDERICK KIRSTEN VERSUS MABEL HELENA KIRSTEN, (BORN DOYLE).1942

^{viii} In the Death Notice of Julia Margaret Doyle, she is listed as being MABEL HELENA FORNESS