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A CONCISE BIOGRAPHY OF:

BRIGADIER

D. J. R. RICHARDS

A concise biography of Brigadier Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS, who served in the British army from 1910 until 1945, and who saw service in both the First and Second World Wars.
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A Concise Biography of Brigadier Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS

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Brigadier Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS, D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.*



*Above – A picture of Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS, as available on Ancestry.co.uk
This picture is undated, but because of the helmet, and the staff collar patches clearly visible, it is likely that this photograph was taken in India in 1942.
https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/82410246/person/42460150587/facts?_phsrc=tit14&_phstart=successSource*

Introduction

Brigadier Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS, D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.* (known throughout his career as John), was an officer in the Royal Regiment of Artillery from 1910 until 1945. Born in Oswestry, Shropshire, he joined the British Army in 1910, so saw service in the Great War. During the Great War, he served in France and Belgium for two periods, and was wounded twice, which left him with some permanent disabilities. In spite of this, he continued his career in the British Army and saw service in the Second World War. Starting the war in the United Kingdom (U.K.), he went to Norway in April 1940; after which he was a brigade commander, and then a divisional commander in Anti-Aircraft Command in the U.K..

As a consequence of the reorganisation of Anti-Aircraft Command in September 1942, RICHARDS moved to India to become a brigade commander. Ill-health led to his return to the U.K., but he recovered to be a commander of an anti-aircraft brigade from 1943 until his retirement in 1945.

Family Background

Darcy John Rigby RICHARDS was born on 5 November 1890 in Oswestry, Shropshire. His father was David Hesketh RICHARDS, who was aged about thirty-eight years when his son was born. His mother was Annie Louisa RICHARDS, who was four years older than her husband. Darcy John Rigby was the first and only child of the couple, who used the name of John during his life. His father's occupation was the manufacture of chemical fertiliser.¹ His parents had John baptised in Oswestry on 16 December 1890.

In the late Victorian and Edwardian eras prior to the First World War, education was very different to the modern system we see today, for example, children left local schools at the age of twelve years. It was common for middle class families to send their children, boys in particular, to a preparatory school, and then on to a public school where boarding was usual. RICHARDS received his early education at Brunswick Court School in Haywards Heath, Sussex, where he boarded, before going to Shrewsbury School.² He obtained a place at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich as a Gentleman Cadet, in 1908.

On completion of his training, he received a commission in the Royal Artillery in the rank of Second Lieutenant on 23 December 1910.³ When he completed his three-year probationary period, RICHARDS received promotion to the rank of Lieutenant on 25 December 1913. The Royal Regiment of Artillery at the time had three constituent parts, the Royal Horse Artillery (R.H.A.), the Royal Field Artillery (R.F.A.), and the Royal Garrison Artillery (R.G.A.). RICHARDS joined the Royal Garrison Artillery, which was responsible for the medium and heavy calibre guns of the Royal Artillery, coastal artillery, and anti-aircraft artillery as it developed. His first posting was to Shoeburyness in Essex, which was a training establishment during this period.⁴

The First World War

The Great War, otherwise known as the First World War, commenced on 4 August 1914 as far as the United Kingdom is concerned. As a serving Regular Army officer, RICHARDS knew that he was likely to see active service, but the circumstances of that were ahead in the future. In the event, he arrived in France on 30 October 1915 with his battery. He received promotion to the rank of Temporary Captain on 2 December 1915, but he was wounded on or before 3 February 1916. His wound was serious enough for him to be returned to the U.K. to convalesce. He returned to France on 17 May 1916 to continue service with the Royal Garrison Artillery.

¹ Source: 1891 Census via www.Ancestry.co.uk

² Source: 1901 Census via www.Ancestry.co.uk

³ Source: Army List. His service number was 6313, but it is not confirmed whether this Army number was issued upon commission, or circa 1920 when changes were made to the system of Army numbers for officers and other ranks.

⁴ Source : 1911 Census via www.Ancestry.co.uk

He served with XVII Corps, and on 16 June 1916, he received orders to form an ad-hoc battery with details from the 105th Siege Battery and 51st Divisional Heavy Trench Mortar Battery. His battery, called Richards Battery, had three, French, 220 mm guns, and RICHARDS organised it into four sub-sections with effect from 3 July 1916. He received reinforcements of one officer and twenty other ranks from the 60th Divisional Ammunition Column on 11 July 1916.

It appears that Richards Battery disbanded on or about 3 September 1916, when it is recorded that it expended its last five rounds on a German tombstone. RICHARDS was promoted to the substantive rank of Captain on 8 August 1916. RICHARDS was promoted again on 25 September 1916, when he became an Acting Major. His gallantry was recognised with the award of the Military Cross, which appeared in the London Gazette of 9 March 1917. His citation reads:

Capt. (Actg. Maj.) Darcy John Rigby Richards, R.G.A.

For conspicuous gallantry in action. He assisted to re-establish telephonic communication, and established visual signalling, which was used for important messages under a heavy fire. He set a splendid example throughout.

RICHARDS was wounded for a second time on or about 22 April 1917, which required him to be sent back to the U.K. again for medical treatment on 23 April. On being wounded, he relinquished the rank of Acting Major and reverted to his substantive rank of Captain. This was to prove the end of his active service during the Great War, but he received the Distinguished Service Order (D.S.O.) on 14 August 1917. His citation reads:

Capt. (A./Maj.) Darcy John Rigby Richards, M.C., R.G.A.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. The battery was under heavy shell fire, and an ammunition dump close to one of the gun pits was set on fire. In answer to a call he brought his battery into action and fought his guns, knowing the dump was likely to explode, which it did, while the guns were in action.

In addition to his two gallantry awards, RICHARDS was mentioned in despatches on 14 December 1917. At the end of the war, he received the 1914 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Between the Wars

RICHARDS took time to recuperate from his wounds. Following the Great War, there were a number of officers that had serious injuries resulting from the war, however, provided that a medical board assessed them fit enough for Army service, they could continue their career. RICHARDS was one of those officers considered able to continue serving in the Regular Army. On 7 October 1919, RICHARDS commenced an appointment as an Adjutant. An officer who held the appointment as an Adjutant fulfilled a key role in any artillery regiment (then known as a 'Brigade'). An Adjutant (who usually held the rank of Captain) was the commanding officer's senior staff officer, responsible to the commanding officer for the organization, administration, and discipline of the battalion.

In the field, he was also the battalion operations officer, responsible for drafting daily orders and the writing of the battalion war diary. His operational functions were:

- To record the Commanding Officers verbal orders and in writing,
- To implement the Commanding Officers orders, plans and policies,
- To organise the battalion office.

In this last function, the Serjeant-Clerk and two clerks assisted the Adjutant.⁵ When the commanding officer attended order groups at brigade headquarters, or he held his own order groups the adjutant would usually attend. The Adjutant would often accompany the commanding officer on visits, meetings, and conferences.

On 30 September 1920, RICHARDS relinquished the appointment as Adjutant, and went to France to become an Instructor in English at a French Military School. His appointment as an Instructor lasted from 1 October 1920 until 30 April 1923. He returned to the U.K. and on 17 June 1923, he was posted to the War Office on a temporary basis as a General Staff Officer 3rd Grade (G.S.O. 3). RICHARDS left the War Office on 20 January 1925 to attend the Staff College as a Student on the Staff Course. To train selected officers for staff duties, both the British Army and British Indian Army opened staff colleges, the British Army Staff College being located at Camberley, Berkshire, and the Indian Army Staff College at Quetta. For an officer to gain entry to one of the two staff colleges, his commanding officer had to recommend him, and he had to pass an entrance examination. The competition for the places at a Staff College was stiff. One officer described a view probably held by many when he said, '*I had to get p.s.c. or my chances of advancement are nil*'. Immediately after the Great War, places at a Staff College were allocated by nomination. Many officers had held staff appointments during the war successfully, but they had not passed the staff course. They were prioritised for courses after the war.

In 1921, examinations were introduced, that covered political, economic, historical, and strategic imperial issues. In the mid 1920's, there were between six and seven-hundred applicants, meaning there were nine applicants for every place. The candidates achieving top marks were awarded a competitive place, with a few others allocated based on nominations by the Army Council. The Army Council would examine the officer's personal file, which was anonymised for the process. In 1926, there were four-hundred and forty entrants for the examination, competing for twenty-two places at Camberley for British Army officers. There were also ten places available for nominated officers. Twelve places by competition were available to officers from the Indian Army, Dominions, and the Royal Air Force, with six available by nomination. Plans were discussed to increase the number of candidates at the Staff Colleges, but limited accommodation prevented this.

⁵ The British Army spelt this rank as Serjeant, i.e., with a 'j', until 1946, when the more familiar use of the 'g' (as used by the Royal Air Force) came into effect.

The Staff Course at both Camberley and Quetta lasted two years, with each college having a Junior and Senior Division. The course was geared towards the staff requirements of the inter-war Army, equipping the students to undertake staff roles within the Army, so much was based upon learning Army regulations, situational appreciations, operational orders, loading tables and some tactical awareness. On the successful completion of the course, an officer had the letters *p.s.c.* placed after his entry in the Army List, this being seen as a prized achievement and as a passport to promotion to the rank Lieutenant Colonel and possibly beyond.

Usually within the next twelve months, a successful officer was posted to a staff role (e.g., Staff Captain, Brigade Major or General Staff Officer) for a period of up to four years, although they might change staff roles within that period. The commandant of the Staff College at Camberley was a Major General, with two Colonels as Chief Instructors. There were fourteen instructors, all of whom held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (either substantive, brevet or local) and a Wing Commander from the Royal Air Force. There was also an Adjutant appointed. The students were usually Captains or Majors in the Army, with about eight to ten years' service in the Army. Usually about fifty students came from the British Army, with ten from the Indian Army, two from the Canadian Forces, two from the Australian Army, one from the South African Army and two from the Royal Air Force.

RICHARDS was one of the successful applicants, and successfully completed the Staff Course. The course finished in December 1927, and he had to wait until 1 March 1928 before he received a posting in which he assumed the appointment as Brigade Major, Air Defence Brigade in Aldershot Command. Brigadier (Temporary) E. F. SHERWELL, C.M.G., D.S.O. commanded the brigade at this time. During his time as Brigade Major, RICHARDS was promoted to the substantive rank of Major with effect from 1 January 1929. He received further promotion, becoming a Brevet Lieutenant Colonel on 1 July 1932. A brevet rank allowed the holder to wear the insignia of the higher rank when appointed to a staff role, but operationally (and in respect of pay and allowances) they were treated as if holding their substantive rank.

RICHARDS relinquished his role as Brigade Major, Air Defence Brigade, in Aldershot Command, on 29 February 1932, having completed the usual four-year term on the staff. He returned to Regimental duties until 1 April 1935, when he was appointed as a General Staff Officer 2nd Grade (G.S.O. 2) in India. This appointment began a period of three years' service in British India. RICHARDS vacated the appointment as G.S.O. 2 on 8 March 1936, and he was posted to an artillery regiment stationed in India. On 5 June 1937, RICHARDS received promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and assumed command of III Field Brigade, stationed at Kirkee in India. The regiment comprised the 18th (Talavera) and 62nd Field Batteries, and the 65th and 75th Howitzer Batteries. Between 4 April 1938 and 28 July 1938, RICHARDS was specially employed when he officiated as the Commanding Officer of the Poona Brigade Area in India. For the duration of this appointment, RICHARDS held the rank of Local Brigadier. After completing this period specially employed, he returned to Regimental duties in India.

The Second World War

As Europe edged towards another major conflict in early 1939, RICHARDS returned to the United Kingdom, where on 5 June 1939 he received promotion to the rank of Colonel; his seniority dating from 1 July 1935. He assumed the appointment as one of two General Staff Officers 1st Class based at the Headquarters of Anti-Aircraft Command. When RICHARDS arrived at the headquarters, Anti-Aircraft Command was in a period of massive expansion to meet the anticipated threat of large German air raids on British cities and towns. This made it a busy time, even more so when the Government gave the order to mobilise the Territorial Army on 24 August 1939.

On 22 April 1940, RICHARDS assumed command of an anti-aircraft brigade based in the United Kingdom, and he was promoted to the rank of Acting Brigadier. The next day, RICHARDS sailed for Norway on being appointed to become the Air Defence Commander for Aandalnes in Norway. This port was the base for 'Sickle Force,' an ad-hoc formation of two brigades of the British Army landed to advance towards Trondheim in support of the Norwegian Army in consequence of the German invasion of Norway. RICHARDS found the situation confusing, as the circumstances developed rapidly and there were many changes in decisions regarding which troops to deploy and where. Originally, it was planned to send the 82nd (Essex) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment and 156th (East Lancashire) Light Anti-Aircraft Regiments to join Sickle Force.⁶ Instead, the 82nd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment was sent to Narvik, with the 260th (London Transport) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery from the 84th (Middlesex, London Transport) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment being sent to Aandalnes. The 168th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery arrived at Aandalnes on 19 and 21 April 1940, with the 260th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery arriving on the same dates, or shortly afterwards.⁷ The 168th L.A.A. Battery landed with four, 40 mm Bofors guns, but with only two Predictors. One troop moved forward to the front line straight away, some seventy miles up the valley. They met the troops of Sickle Force moving back down the valley.

The guns were set up on the hillsides where they were singled out for attack. The 260th H.A.A. Battery had significant problems. It was equipped with eight, 3" anti-aircraft guns, but six of these and all the battery's transport was lost when a torpedo sank the ship in which they were loaded. The two remaining guns were damaged when they were unloaded at Aandalnes. This meant the battery was unable to provide any anti-aircraft cover for Aandalnes. Both anti-aircraft batteries were evacuated on 30 April.

When he returned to the U.K., RICHARDS resumed command of the anti-aircraft brigade he had previously left to go to Norway. He remained in command until 31 December 1941, during which time, having served six months in the rank of Acting Brigadier, he received promotion to the rank of Temporary Brigadier with effect from 22 October 1940.

⁶ See: The War Office, *Operations in Central Norway – Supplement to The London Gazette of Tuesday 28th May 1946, Annexure I*, (London, The London Gazette, 29th May 1946)

⁷ ROUTLEDGE, Brigadier N. W., O.B.E., T.D., *The History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery – Anti-Aircraft Artillery 1914 – 55*, (London, Brassey's, 1994)

On 1 January 1942, the General Officer Commanding 1st Anti-Aircraft Division based in London, Major General Robert Frederick Edward WHITTAKER, O.B.E., T.D., T.A., transferred to become the Major General, General Staff at the Headquarters, Anti-Aircraft Command. The Commander-in-Chief of Anti-Aircraft Command, Lieutenant General Frederick Alfred PILE, Baronet, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.*, selected RICHARDS to replace WHITTAKER in command of the 1st Anti-Aircraft Division.⁸ RICHARDS gained promotion to the rank of Acting Major General with effect from 1 January 1942 on taking up his new appointment.⁹

The 1st Anti-Aircraft Division provided the anti-aircraft defence for the City and County of London, a significant responsibility as the capital still housed the seat of British government, and was being subjected to regular attacks by the German air force. The division covered a wide geographical area across London, with gun sites located at various locations. This made command and control difficult, as many of the gun sites were in effect independent units, although linked into the fire control system used in Anti-Aircraft Command. By September 1942, due to the nature of the air attacks on the United Kingdom, General PILE decided to reorganise Anti-Aircraft Command. The intention was to reduce the command structure and to better align the command with the Royal Air Force Groups in the U.K.. The twelve anti-aircraft divisions were disbanded, with seven anti-aircraft groups formed to replace them. This reorganisation left five divisional commanders without commands, and as the junior of the Major Generals in the command at that time, RICHARDS relinquished command of the 1st Anti-Aircraft Division on 30 September 1942 and also relinquished the rank of Acting Major General.¹⁰

Although he remained an Army officer, RICHARDS was left without employment. The War Office decided to post him to India, as there were no suitable vacancies in the U.K.. His next appointment was as Commanding Officer, 36th Indian Infantry Brigade. He assumed command of the brigade on 30 October 1942, being regranted the rank of Temporary Brigadier. The 36th Indian Infantry Brigade had been raised in July 1941 as part of the 26th Indian Division, and it comprised one British battalion and two Indian battalions.¹¹ These were:

- 1st Bn. The North Staffordshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's),
- 8th Bn. 13th Frontier Force Rifles,
- 5th Bn. 16th Punjab Regiment.

The brigade was based in Bengal when RICHARDS arrived, and was undertaking a series of brigade and divisional exercises to prepare for operational deployment to the Arakan. The brigade enjoyed Christmas 1942, although Japanese air raids began soon afterwards.

⁸ PILE was knighted as K.C.B. on 1 July 1941, promoted General on 25 December 1941, and raised to G.C.B. on 1 January 1945.

⁹ See: [The London Gazette, Supplement 35418, Page 273](#)

¹⁰ It appears that RICHARDS reverted to the rank of Colonel, as he was regranted the rank of Temporary Brigadier on 30 October 1942.

¹¹ KEMPTON *Part II Brigades* p.42 gives RICHARDS as brigade commander from the date of formation in July 1941, but this cannot be the case.

On 12 January 1943, the brigade moved to Diamond Harbour, to replace another brigade from the division which was moving further forward. The brigade then underwent a two-week intensive period of anti-malarial treatment in anticipation of active service in the near future. In March 1943, the brigade received orders from the divisional headquarters to move forward, but at this point, Brigadier RICHARDS suffered a stroke. Lieutenant Colonel L. C. BULL, the commanding officer of the 3rd/16th Punjab Regiment assumed command, and RICHARDS was evacuated to hospital.¹²

RICHARDS returned to the U.K. and was adjudged fit to resume operational command. A vacancy existed as the commanding officer of the 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade, to which RICHARDS was appointed in April 1944. The brigade sailed for North Africa, and it arrived at Algiers in May that year. By the time of its arrival, the campaign in Tunisia was coming to a conclusion, so there was no operational requirement for the brigade. RICHARDS based his brigade headquarters in Algiers, with the 62nd (Northumbrian) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment and the newly arrived 72nd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment under command. Batteries were deployed in Algiers, Djidjelli and at Bougie.¹³ RICHARDS was Mentioned in Despatches in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in Tunisia on 11 November 1943.

The German and Italian troops in Tunisia surrendered on 13 May 1943, with the Allies commencing preparations to invade Sicily. The 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade was not required for service in Sicily, but with the Allies invading Italy in September 1943, the 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade was deployed to the Italian mainland to provide anti-aircraft cover for the 8th Army. The brigade landed at Bari in late December 1943, with the following units under command:

- 62nd (Northumbrian) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 85th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 104th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 34th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 72nd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 422nd Searchlight Battery, Royal Artillery,
- 184th 'Z' Battery, Royal Artillery,
- 51st Anti-Aircraft Operations Room.

The 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade came under command of 8th Army, and he took over the responsibilities of the 62nd Anti-Aircraft Brigade, which was being redeployed. The task allocated to the 25th Brigade was to defend the key port of Bari, the smaller ports of Barletta and Manfredonia, and Brindisi.¹⁴

¹² LAWFORD, Lieutenant Colonel J. P. & CATTO Major W. E. (ed.) *Solah Punjab – The History of the 16th Punjab Regiment* (Aldershot, Gale and Polden Ltd., 1967) p.238.

¹³ ROUTLEDGE, Brigadier N. W., O.B.E., T.D. *The History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery – Anti-Aircraft Artillery 1914 – 55* (London, Brassey's, 1994) p. 185.

¹⁴ ROUTLEDGE, Brigadier N. W., O.B.E., T.D. *The History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery – Anti-Aircraft Artillery 1914 – 55* (London, Brassey's, 1994) p.290.

The Luftwaffe continued to attack the port of Bari to disrupt Allied supplies, with most raids occurring at night. The German aircrew dropped strips of foil to confuse British radars, and in response, the brigade set up a decoy site outside of Bari.

The brigade continued in this role until January 1945, when it came under the command of Allied Force Headquarters. During late 1944, with the Allies enjoying air superiority over Italy, and with a desperate need for reinforcements for the infantry units, the establishment of the British anti-aircraft formations in Italy began to be run-down. The 64th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment moved to Vis on the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia to support the British forces operating against German forces in that country. In July 1944, the 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade assumed additional responsibility for the port of Taranto in southern Italy, taking over the 69th (Royal Warwickshire Regiment) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, and the 22nd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. In addition, the 89th (Tees) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment came under command to enhance the defences of Brindisi. On the debit account, 104th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment returned to the U.K. in July 1944, and the 89th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment was placed in suspended animation in September 1944, as was the 106th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. The 72nd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment disbanded in October 1944, to provide reinforcements for the infantry units in the theatre.

By November 1944, as the front-line ground to a halt on the Gothic Line in northern Italy, the order of battle for the brigade had changed to:

- 59th (The Essex Regiment) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 61st (Middlesex) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 64th (Northumbrian) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 69th (Royal Warwickshire Regiment) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 31st Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 34th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery,
- 400th Searchlight Battery, Royal Artillery,
- 567th Searchlight Battery, Royal Artillery.

By late-1944, the Luftwaffe was a rare sight over Italy, with the Allies enjoying air supremacy over the battlefield. The Italian Government was regaining control from the Allied Control Commission of areas of southern Italy, so the need for anti-aircraft defence in that area was minimal. Therefore, in December 1944, the Headquarters 25th Anti-Aircraft Brigade relinquished command of all units and moved to Salerno where it disbanded in February 1945.

Now aged fifty-four years' of age, Brigadier RICHARDS, was unlikely to gain another appointment. He had been made supernumerary to the establishment on 31 December 1943, although retained on the Active List. He returned to the U.K. and retired from the British Army on 29 April 1945, on completion of thirty-five years' service. For his service in Italy, he was mentioned in despatches on 19 July 1945, and on 14 May 1948, he was awarded the Legion of Merit, Degree of Officer from the United States of America.

His citation reads:

Brigadier D. J. R. Richards, D.S.O., M.C. Royal Artillery British Army.

For exceptionally meritorious conduct on their performance of outstanding services as Commander 25 Anti-Aircraft Brigade in the antiaircraft defences of Algiers, Algeria, and vicinity, May to December 1943 and of Bari, Italy and vicinity January to July 1944. Having both British and American anti-aircraft units under his command, the great majority in Algiers being American, Brigadier Richards successfully coordinated American and British personnel and equipment into integrated and highly effective antiaircraft defences, and won the high regard of American personnel for his superior professional ability, enthusiasm and understanding. He took particular interest in the American units arriving in Algiers mastering the specialized A.A. techniques in use in this theatre and in perfecting their combat training. This initial training and supervision was reflected in the high combat efficiency exhibited by many of these units after leaving 25 Brigade. Brigadier Richards' services were of outstanding value to the American units concerned and to the Allied cause.¹⁵

Retirement and Death

Following his retirement, RICHARDS moved to Shropshire, and lived at Twyford House, West Felton near Oswestry, then moving in the 1950s to Cwypm Mill, Llandulas in North Wales. He had married Margaret BRIDGEWATER on 5 April 1918 at St. John the Evangelist Church, Knotty Ash in Liverpool. They had three children, David Richards M.C., Jean Richards M.B.E and Richard (Dick) Richards. In retirement RICHARDS was active as Chairman of his local Conservative Party Association, as a magistrate, and as one of the founders of the North Wales Model Engineering Society. He pursued a lifelong interest in model engineering, building from scratch a considerable number of working steam locomotives at 3½" & 5" gauge. Brigadier John RICHARDS died on 12 December 1970 in Sheffield, Yorkshire, at the age of eighty years. At the time of his death, he was living at 26, Tipton Crescent Road, Sheffield.¹⁶ He left an estate of £16,886.

¹⁵ Source: Document WO/373/148 via The National Archives.

¹⁶ This address is a large house with six bedrooms, so it is possible that it was either a care or residential home, or it was owned by one of his children with whom he was living following the death of his wife the previous year.

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