

Richard Frederick Baker



Private Richard Baker (also known as Richard Voller)

19th Battalion, AIF

Serial Number: 5422

Born: 1895, London, England

Died: 9 October 1917, Poelcappelle, Belgium

Richard Henry Voller was born in 1895 in London, England, the son of Frederick George and Edna Voller. He was educated at St Paul's Church of England School Burdett Road, Bow in London. He arrived in Australia in 1914. Voller stated on his enlistment papers that he was a telephone wireman and had served 12 months with the Territorial Army in England. Along with George Denny, he was presented with a wristlet watch at a public farewell held in Richmond NSW.

For an unknown reason, Voller enlisted under the name Frederick Richard Baker on 11 March 1916 at Cootamundra and was allotted to 2nd Battalion. In August, Voller arrived at the AIF camp at Liverpool and was allotted to the 14th Reinforcements, 19th Battalion and his army number was changed to 5422. On 22 August, he embarked aboard *HMAT Wiltshire*. On 17 September, during a stopover in Durban, South Africa Voller was charged with leaving a place of parade without permission and received a 24 hour detention. Three days later, he was

charged with disobeying a lawful command given by his superior officer and received a further 24 hour detention.

Voller disembarked at Plymouth on 13 October and after a period of training, proceeded overseas to France on 13 December. On 19 January 1917, Voller was charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline when he left the ranks without permission. He was fined 5 days' pay. In March, he was sent to signals school and returned to his unit on 14 April. The 19th Battalion took part in the second Battle of Bullecourt on 3-4 May. In August, Voller was in trouble again for being improperly dressed after repeated warnings. He was confined for 4 days. His battalion then took part in the Battle of Menin Road on 20-22 September and was at Poelcappelle from 9-10 October.

Voller was killed in action on 9 October. Although his parents were living in England, his personal effects were sent to Miss Mabel Mary Denny at Woollahra. He spent some of his early years in Australia with the Denny family on their farm, Riverleigh at Castlereagh. They were an English family who migrated to Australia about the same time as Voller. On 15 April 1918, the Australian Army in London received confirmation that Richard Frederick Baker was in fact Richard Frederick Voller.

Memorial Details:

- Dochy Farm New British Cemetery, Belgium
- War Memorial, Smith Park, Castlereagh

Sources:

- [National Archives Australia](#): B2455, BAKER R F
- Australian War Memorial First World War Nominal Roll
- [Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour](#)
- Penrith City Library Biography files
- *Nepean Times* (Trove)