

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I

31552 PRIVATE

C. TOMBS

N.Z. CANTERBURY REGT.

17TH FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 43



*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte C. Tombs is located in Front Row (Left Hand Side)
Grave Plot # 24 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)*

(CWGC Reference - Grave # 69)

Charles Tombs was born on 26th November, 1875 at Sefton, New Zealand, the son of Job & Elizabeth Tombs.

Charles Tombs married Eliza Alice Pound on 11th December, 1899 at Ashley Bank, Nth Canterbury. Charles & Alice had 4 children - Charles (born Blenheim, 22/10/1901); Arthur (born Blenheim, 26/4/1903); William (born Seddon, 29/6/1906) & Ronald (born Seddon, 8/3/1908).

Eliza Alice Tombs, wife of Charles Tombs, died in 1910.

He was a 40 year old, widower, Chainman with Public Works Dept. from Blenheim, New Zealand when he enlisted on 26th July, 1916 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 31552 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister-in-law – Mrs R. Register of Arthur Street, Blenheim, New Zealand. Charles's children were aged 14 years, 13 years, 10 years & 8 years.

Mrs Maud Register was appointed by Charles Tombs to be guardian to his four children whilst he was on Active Service. Mrs Register was approved to be paid the Separation Allowance from 25th July, 1916 that was usually entitled to the wives of members of the N.Z. Expeditionary Force as she was the Guardian of Pte Tombs' four children.

Private Charles Tombs embarked with 19th Reinforcements Canterbury Infantry Battalion, C Company from Wellington, New Zealand on 15th November, 1916. Two Ships embarked that day - HMNZT (68) *Maunganui* & HMNZT (69) *Tahiti* – carrying a total of 2,036 men. Pte Tombs had been admitted to the Hospital's Ship – Transport 69 for 8 days with Bronchitis from 4th December to 12th December, 1916. He disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 1917.

Private Charles Tombs was marched in to Sling Army Camp, Wiltshire on 29th January, 1917.

Private Charles Tombs was admitted to No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital, Codford, Wiltshire on 8th February, 1917 with asthma (slight) & later reported seriously ill with Bronchitis.

Private Charles Tombs died on 17th February, 1917 at No. 3 New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Bronchitis.

A death for Charles Toombs, aged 41, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Private Charles Tombs was buried at St. Mary's New Cemetery, Codford.

Private Charles Tombs was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to his legal next-of-kin – Charles Tombs (eldest son) (July, 1921 & November, 1921).

The CWGC lists Private Charles Tombs, 31552, as the son of Job and Elizabeth Tombs. Born at Sefton, Canterbury.

(18 pages of Pte Charles Tombs's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

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Pte Charles Tombs

Newspaper Reports

PERSONAL NOTES

Mrs R. Register has received a cablegram notifying the death, from an acute attack of bronchitis, at the general hospital at Codford, England, of her brother-in-law, Private Charles Tombs. Private Tombs left Marlborough with one of the later drafts, and was taken ill on arrival in England. He was sent to hospital, but gradually grew worse and eventually succumbed. The late soldier was linesman in the employment of the Public Works Department, and, previously to enlisting, was stationed at Ward. He was a widower, and leaves four children, who are being cared for by relatives.

(Marlborough Express, Volume LI, Issue 44, 21 February, 1917)

ROLL OF HONOUR

NEW ZEALAND CASUALTIES

Reported died of sickness; Pvt. C. Tombs

(Marlborough Express, Volume LI, Issue 45, 22 February, 1917)

Private Charles Tombs has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Private C. Tombs' Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery (below)



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)