

Richard DALE

Born: 2nd March 1866, Padstow, Cornwall
Occupation: Seaman
Enlisted: Devonport: 1st August 1914 (Royal Fleet Reserve)
Unit: HMS Canopus
Rank/number: Petty Officer: No.133488
Death: Killed in action, 28th April 1915
Detail: Richard died onboard the battleship *Canopus*



as she bombarded the Turkish defences at Anzac Cove on Gallipoli. An enemy battleship, possibly the *Hayreddin Barbarossa*, fired an 11 ins shell 20 miles across the peninsular from the Dardanelles and raked *Canopus* with shrapnel, killing Richard. A year later Richard's son William, an RGA gunner, died in France 49

Age at death:

Military info:

Richard joined the Royal Navy in 1885 aged 19. He was 5ft 6ins tall, with brown hair, grey eyes and tattoos on both arms. He spent ten years serving as Able Seaman in a variety of ships. In 1895 Richard joined the Coastguards, reaching Petty Officer 2nd Class. When war came in August 1914 Richard, as part of the Royal Fleet Reserve, returned to sea in the old battleship *Canopus*, part of the Channel Fleet's 8th Battle Squadron. Later that year she was sent to the South Atlantic to join a small British force hunting the two powerful German raiders *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. Engine trouble kept *Canopus* at the Falkland Islands and early in November they heard the German ships had sunk the obsolete British cruisers *Good Hope* and *Monmouth* off the Chilean coast with the loss of 1,600 lives. But it was *Canopus* that fired the opening shot at the Battle of the Falkland Islands a month later when the Royal Navy avenged their comrades by sinking both *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. In February 1915 *Canopus* was sent to the Dardanelles. On 28th April, whilst shelling Turkish defences on Gallipoli, they came under fire from an enemy ship on the other side of the peninsular. *Canopus* captain, Heathcoat Grant, noted in his diary: "We had a somewhat close thing with the heavy stuff from our friend in the Straits, he had got the range and dropped one close enough to splinter us; my messenger had his collar ripped off." Richard was killed.

Grave/memorial:

Richard has no known grave, but is commemorated on Gallipoli's Helles Memorial, at St Petroc's Church, Padstow and on Padstow War Memorial.

Family info:

Father: William Dale, born Padstow, Cornwall in 1836. Labourer. Mother: Mary Davies, born Padstow in 1834. The couple married in 1853 and had 12 children. Wife: Mary Bray, born Padstow in 1876. The couple wed in 1894 and had 6 children. Son William is listed with Richard on Padstow War memorial.



This information was researched by Peter Smith, who is currently writing a book about Padstow's part in the Great War. Anyone wishing to correct errors or supply additional information can write to him at 24 Mallard Drive, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5PW. Also phone 01825 762226 or email smithpeter24@gmail.com

+Lest we forget+

