

Randolph Gordon RIDLING, AM **New Zealand Rifle Brigade**

Randolph Ridling was born in 1888, in Auckland. He was educated at Auckland Grammar School and attended Auckland University College before becoming a teacher. He was teaching at Pukekohe when war broke out and he enlisted in 1915. Within a month he was promoted to Warrant Officer and shortly before sailing for France was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant.



Severely wounded in France in 1917, Ridling was evacuated to England. After a long convalescence he returned to duty at Brocton Camp in 1918. Unable to return to the front because of his unhealed wounds, he became a bombing instructor. On 19 April 1918 a recruit dropped a grenade in the throwing bay after pulling the pin. Lieutenant Ridling picked the man up and started to carry him out of the bay, but the bomb exploded, wounding Ridling severely and the recruit lightly. Lieutenant Ridling was awarded the Albert Medal for his gallantry in saving the life of the recruit.

The last six months of Ridling's Army career were spent as an Education Officer in the newly formed Army Education Corps. After his discharge from the Army he continued his university education and also continued to teach. He was employed by the Department of Education as a supervisor and inspector before being appointed Director of the Wellington Technical College in 1931.

In 1971, it was announced that living holders of the Albert Medal should exchange their medals for George Crosses. Ridling asked the Queen if he could retain his medal because of its sentimental value to him, and his request was granted. After a distinguished career, Randolph Ridling died in 1975 at Wellington, aged 87.

