

Alfred William LINE (1892-1960)

Alfred William Line was born on the 29th August 1892 at Bozeat, Northamptonshire, the son of Thomas Partridge Line and his wife Rose Ellen Drage. We know that at the time of the 1901 census he was living in the household of his Grandfather, John Drage (aged 57) at No 78 Mile Street, Bozeat, aged 8. The family have always maintained that his father Thomas Partridge Line had left his wife Rose and children for Liverpool, but no suitable entry for a Thomas Line born Bozeat is recorded in that census. Resident at the same time were her Grandmother Sarah Unknown, Rose Ellen Line his mother daughter of John and Sarah Drage, Arthur W Drage his uncle; and Alfred's brother Harry Bertram aged 7, and his sister Edith aged 6 months.

We know little of his life, his future wife Mabel Florence Burrows was to make a recorded tape of her life and refers briefly to the early years. It is understood that on the 16th May 1911 when he was 18 years and 260 days old (being No 5875994) (his trade unreadable) he joined the Northampton Regiment of the regular army on a short service agreement. It is not known whether he chose to join or was transferred in apparently 1914 from the Northampton Regiment to the Cameronians known as the Scottish Rifles, the County Regiment for Lanarkshire. We do know that a friend Frank was also in the Cameronians, so perhaps the regiment had visited Northampton to recruit young soldiers. As a non-conscript, he was a regular soldier, and the regulars in that Regiment, were placed in the 1st or 2nd Battalion. It is, however, clear from Mabel's memoir that at the beginning of the First World War he was sent to Malta and later brought back to fight in France. This confirms that he was a member of the 2nd Battalion, for the 2nd Battalion were sent at the commencement of war to Malta and were moved to France in September 1914.



THE CAMERONIANS (SCOTTISH RIFLES)

"The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was an infantry regiment of the British Army, the only regiment of rifles amongst the Scottish regiments of infantry. It was formed in 1881 under the Childers Reforms by the amalgamation of two other regiments - 26th Cameronian Regiment and 90th Perthshire Light Infantry. The regiment saw service during the Second Boer War in South Africa, and raised 27 battalions during the First World War. The 1st Battalion saw action in Burma during the Second World War, while the 2nd Battalion was in Europe. The 6th, 7th, and 9th Battalions also served in Europe (the 5th and 6th with the 52nd (Lowland) Division, and the 9th with the 15th (Scottish) Division. In 1948, along with every other regiment of line infantry, the Cameronians was reduced to a single battalion. Under the reforms of the army in the 1966 Defence White Paper, which saw several regiments amalgamated, the Cameronians chose to disband rather than amalgamate with another regiment in the Lowland Brigade. The 1st Battalion, The Cameronians was disbanded on 14 May 1968 at Douglas Castle, near Douglas, South Lanarkshire in the presence of the Duke of Hamilton. Its recruiting area in Lanarkshire and Dumfries and Galloway taken over by the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Regimental Headquarters finally closed in 1987. However, the name of the Cameronians continued through the Territorial Army, with two companies of the 52nd Lowland Regiment badged as Cameronians. One company was disbanded in 1992, and the other was rebadged as the King's Own Scottish Borderers in 1997." *Note also:* "In 1983, the South Lanarkshire Council stepped in to save the Cameronian Museum (*located in Hamilton, Lowe Parks Museum*), not only from closure, but saving the collections from being dispersed. The Council provided a caretaker and cleaner to ensure that the separate Cameronian Museum remained open as the MOD withdrew support. Soon after, recognising that the museum also needed curatorial input, the Council upgraded

WWI Medals awarded to A W LINE



Victory Medal
Era: ww1

The Victory Medal 1914-1919 was also authorised in 1919 and was awarded to all eligible personnel who served on the establishment of a unit in an operational theatre.

The 1914/15 Star, The British War Medal & The Victory Medal combined were known as 'pip, squeak and Wilfred' after the popular cartoon books of the time. 6,334,522+ awarded in total.



British War Medal
Era: ww1

The British War Medal 1914-1920, authorised in 1919, was awarded to eligible service personnel and was also awarded to civilians. The basic requirement for army personnel and civilians was that they either entered a theatre of war, or rendered approved service overseas between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918.

Service in Russia in 1919 and 1920 also qualified for the award (During the 'North Russia Intervention' following the Russian Revolution of 1917, some 6000 British troops served). 6,390,000 silver and 110,000 bronze awarded in total, the Bronze version was generally awarded to the Malay, Chinese & Indian labour battalions.



1914 Star
Era: ww1

The 1914 Star was instituted in 1917 for service ashore in France and Flanders between 5 August and 22 November 1914. In 1919 a clasp bearing the above dates was authorised and given to those individuals who had actually been under fire between the prescribed dates, popularly known as the 'Mons star' there were 378,000 awarded in total.

The 1914/15 Star was instituted in 1918 and awarded to those individuals who saw service in France and Flanders from 23 November 1914 to 31 December 1915, and to those individuals who saw service in any other operational theatre from 5 August 1914 to 31 December 1915.

A person who served during the period of 05/08/1914 and 31/12/1915 would have been awarded one or the other of the 'stars' (ie either the 'Mons' star which has '1914' on the scroll OR the 1914-15 star which has '1914-15' on the scroll, NOT both. 2,366,000 awarded in total.



Alfred also had a clasp and clasp & roses attached to the 1914 Star

Alfred William LINE
2nd battalion Cameronians
(Scottish Rifles)



World War Two Service



PRIVATE
ALFRED WILLIAM LINE
W243605

SERVICE	AUSTRALIAN ARMY
DATE OF BIRTH	29 AUGUST 1892
PLACE OF BIRTH	BOZEAT, ENG
DATE OF ENLISTMENT	21 JUNE 1940
LOCALITY ON ENLISTMENT	PERTH, WA
PLACE OF ENLISTMENT	PERTH, WA
NEXT OF KIN	LINE, MABEL
DATE OF DISCHARGE	19 MAY 1944
POSTING AT DISCHARGE	29 GARRISON BATTALION



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Department of Veterans' Affairs

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Summary Of Record Information

First Names	Last Name	Application Number
ALFRED WILLIAM	LINE	KB00114200

Names are only recorded in capitals

See legend for application code details

Aged (Years)	Date of Death	Suburb
68	25/04/1960	PERTH

Grave Location			
KARRAKATTA	ANGLICAN	ZT	0499
<i>Cemetery</i>	<i>Area or Denomination</i>	<i>Section</i>	<i>Gravesite</i>

Grant Number	Grant Status	Expiry
K0100142	CURRENT	21/06/2030

At today's date

Legend for Application Numbers	First Character	Second Character
	<i>Guildford</i>	<i>Burial</i>
	<i>Karrakatta</i>	<i>Cremation</i>
	<i>Midland</i>	<i>Mausoleum</i>
	<i>Pimmaroo</i>	<i>Memorials & Ashes registered from Outside Crematorium</i>
	<i>Fremantle</i>	<i>Memorial Only</i>

The details listed for the Application Number shown above are from the database records of the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board, Western Australia and are current as of 31 October 2005.

To order a photo of the gravesite or memorial, please use our [Photo Service](#) facility.

the caretaker post to curator and also created a full time receptionist post. The Council also took over maintenance of the Riding School, housing the Cameronian display and paid for rates, heating and lighting, repairs and metered water charges. In addition, out of hours call-out for emergencies was provided. The council has continued to support the Cameronian collection in the period since 1983”.

With this knowledge, (which ideally should be checked, however regimental records were largely destroyed and it might now prove impossible to find his service record, apparently successful in only 1 in 10 cases) - it is possible to follow the 2nd Battalion's progress during the war, and for the record their exploits are described in the following paragraphs. In the event, he survived the war, and left the Regiment at date unknown. Mabel had known him ever since she was 15, around 1910, he had been introduced to her at that time by her best friend who was his sister Edie at which time he was already in the army and visiting for his Grandmother's funeral. They didn't meet again for another 3 years although they wrote to one another during this period. She didn't see him again until just before the 1st World War when he returned on leave before being sent to Malta, he returned once more on leave before being sent to France with his battalion. Then during a seven day leave, he asked her to marry him. Mabel felt she was too young, and they decided to leave it for a while, and in the meantime she found another young man. She was also doing war work at the gas works, on one occasion she fell off one of the ladders and hurt her arm quite badly and ended up wrapped in bandages. Alfred's mother (Rose Ellen Line nee Drage) came to see her, wrote to her son about her accident, and offered her money, she felt obligated and on a later leave when Alfred once again proposed marriage, she finally accepted him. Just before her marriage in 1917 she had moved with a friend to a position cleaning wagons on the railways. She had a good time, and even travelled to the Crystal Palace by car on occasion to see her brother George who was in the Navy.

On the 4th August 1914 Britain declared War on Germany and the 2nd Battalion of the Cameronians landed in Malta that very same day to remain there for about a year, for on the 15th September 1914 they were transferred to the 8th Division located in France (this division was formed between Sept and Nov 1914, and had arrived in France on 5th November 1914 and were to serve in France and Flanders for the duration of the war) where the 2nd Cameronians formed part of the 23rd Brigade. They remained with this division for most of the war, up and until 3rd February 1918 when they were transferred to the 20th Division. During their time with the 8th Division, that division was involved in the following battles in France and Flanders, Battle of Neuve Chapelle 10-13 Mar 1915. [The Battle of Neuve Chapelle is one of The Cameronians' proudest battle honours. Under very heavy fire the men charged the German trenches and continued to do so despite immediately suffering heavy casualties. This however came at a price; of the battalion that had gone into action some 900 strong on the morning of the 10th March only 143 remained at the end of the battle on the 14th March - see *extracts at end of biography*]. Battle of Aubers 9 May 1915, including the attack on Fromelles and the attack at Rue du Bois. Actions of Bois Grenier 25 Sep 1915. Battle of Albert 1-13 Jul 1916, including the capture of Montauban, Mametz, Fricourt, Contalmaison and La Boisselle. German retreat to the Hindenburg Line 14 Mar-5 Apr 1917. Battle of Pilkem 31 Jul-2 Aug 1917. Battle of Langemarck 16-18 Aug 1917.

Promoted to Corporal and finally granted leave, Alfred married his longtime sweetheart Mabel Florence Burrows the marriage taking place on the 28th August 1917 at All Saints, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire.

On the 3rd February 1918 the Battalion transferred to the 20th Division as part of the 59th Brigade, where they remained until Armistice Day, the 11th November 1918. During this period the 20th Division was involved in the following battles - Battle of St. Quentin 21-23 Mar 1918. Actions of the Somme crossings 24-25 Mar 1918. First Battle of Bapaume 24-25 Mar 1918.

On the 11th November 1918 the day that Armistice was declared, the 2nd Battalion Cameronians left the 20th Division, and apparently were not transferred elsewhere, it would seem that they had truly earned a respite and were presumably returned directly home to Lanarkshire.

Demobilized, he returned home to Wellingborough, to meet his wife, still working on the railways. She took time off and they had a holiday together, returning to live with her mother and father in their home until they found rooms in Newcomen Road, where the landlady lived with just her son. Mabel went back to work on the railways and Alfred found work at the Wagon Works until some reason

unknown, it closed down and he then worked for the Council, and finally settled into working in Market Gardens where he remained until they went to Australia.

Whilst at Newcomen Road, Mabel became pregnant, but the landlady suffered from nerves and was not keen on children, so she and Alfred had to move. Mabel's friend who she worked with took her home to her mother who offered them two good rooms in her house at West Street where their daughter Florence Ellen Line was born on the 10th July 1922.

Sometime later, Mabel's friend Ada's husband Frank, a fellow comrade, who had also served in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) came to Alfred, to suggest that they emigrate to Australia. Wages in England were poor, they had been lowered during the war, and Alfred suffered from Rheumatism, so Alfred was very interested. The next day the two men visited the emigration centre to find out about it, but in the end Frank and his wife decided to remain in England, whilst Alfred decided to go with his family.

At that time Mabel was undertaking cleaning in a Solicitors Office, and they were very concerned to hear of her husband's plans. They strongly suggested that Alfred should go ahead of them to Australia to see what it was like, leaving her and her baby behind. But Alfred was adamant that they should all go together, and didn't heed the advice.

The family finally left England on the "Esperance Bay" on the 19th December 1924, the journey taking exactly a month and they arrived at Fremantle a month later on the 19th January 1925. On their arrival they were placed in the special immigrant home, a building built like a barracks. Here they were given advice, and some training, they were also given 3 meals a day. The first three days, they had to pay for the meals, but after that it was free.

ESPERANCE BAY

The "Esperance Bay" was built in 1922 by Vickers, Barrow for the Commonwealth Government Line as the "Hobsons Bay" and was a sister ship to the famous "Jervis Bay". She was a 13,837 gross ton ship, length 549ft x beam 68.2ft, one funnel, two masts, twin screw and a speed of 15 knots. There was accommodation for 12 government sponsored 1st class passengers and 720-3rd class. There was also refrigerated cargo space for 360,000 cubic feet of frozen meat. Launched on 4th October 1921, she sailed from London on her maiden voyage to Brisbane on 28th February 1922. In 1928 she was sold to the White Star Line, registered at London, managed by the Aberdeen Line and continued on the London - Australia service. Rebuilt in 1931 to 14,198 tons and with single class accommodation for 512 tourist class passengers. After the financial collapse of the Kylesant shipping organisation, to which she belonged, a new company, the Aberdeen & Commonwealth Line was formed in April 1933 to take over the remaining assets. The ships were then managed by Shaw Savill & Albion Line, but retained the green hulls and colours of the Aberdeen Line. In 1936, the original "Esperance Bay" was transferred to Shaw Savill Line and renamed "Arawa" and the "Hobsons Bay" was renamed "Esperance Bay". In September 1939 she was converted to an Armed Merchant Cruiser at Brisbane and Cape Town and in 1941 was fitted out as a troop ship. Reconditioned after the war to 14,343 tons, she resumed the London - Southampton - Malta - Port Said - Aden - Columbo - Fremantle - Melbourne - Sydney emigrant service. On July 6th 1955 she arrived at Faslane for breaking up. [*North Star to Southern Cross* by John M.Maber] [*Great Passenger Ships of the World* by Arnold Kludas, vol.2, p.174] There is a good photo of this ship in *Great Passenger Ships of the World*, vol.2. - [Posted to The ShipsList by Ted Finch - 28 July 1998]

Normally, immigrants would remain in the home for only a short period, but their young daughter only 19 months old caught measles. So Mabel his wife remained there for 6 weeks until her daughter was better, while Alfred had to leave after three weeks to start work in the bush, some 200 miles away. Measles at that time was quite dangerous, and quite a few children caught it and died. Fremantle at the time was a fairly pleasant town, although Perth was better and had some really good shops. Alfred traveled by train, which went very so slowly enabling anyone to hop on and off at will.

When young Florrie had recovered, Mabel set out to rejoin her husband. She arrived at a place unspecified by train and from there had a further 21 mile journey in a bumpy old lorry, arriving at Northcliffe, which at that time consisted of numerous tin shacks. They then had a further 3 miles to reach the camp, where there were about 20 families all scattered and living in tin shacks. They had

been advised how to make bread, ointments - lard and sulphur, boracic ointment. In the shacks they had bread ovens, which were very good. When they first entered the bush they had no meat for three weeks, but once they were settled, they used to send for a months supply of tinned meat and other necessities in bulk. All the fresh goods used to come from Pemberton. Alfred appears in the Australian Electoral Rolls, a Groupie at Group 100, resident at Northcliffe in 1925 and is still there as a Labourer in 1931 two years after his wife and daughter had returned to England.

The men were given work clearing the trees in order to make the land suitable for dairy farming, but in the end the ground was found to be unsuitable for that role, and was turned into wheat. As a result, the land couldn't accommodate the number of families intended and some of the families no longer required were forced to find other work.

Alfred finally found work constructing the new railway at Pemberton, and the family settled into their new accommodation, a tent. There were about 5 families camping together. To cook, they used to dig a hole, burn a log, and then place the ashes in the hole, the camp oven was then placed on the ashes and more wood was finally piled on top. This was about 1925, for young Florrie was about 3 years old. Alfred also earned money by mending shoes, sending to Perth for the leather he used. He got this work, because the man who used to do the shoes was often drunk, and people became frustrated at not getting their shoes repaired when they wanted them. At the same time, it was also possible to make additional money by clearing blocks of land.

There was one place where they were camped and there was a snake heading for the tent, because they liked the blankets, these snakes could kill so Mabel chopped its tail off. Florrie had friends to play with, their neighbour in the camp alone had 3 children, and there were others including some Scots people. The weather was warm, and spring in Australia was lovely, but in October the Equinox i.e. the autumn, it was very rainy, and of course you had to cook in the rain, which wasn't very pleasant.

When the shops were finally built they only had 3 miles to visit Northcliffe for provisions. There was quite a group of Irish, English and Scottish people. In due course they would often meet with others at the newly created cafe in Northcliffe.

At one time when Mabel (accompanied by her daughter) was working as a domestic in a bush boarding house, and they needed to go to Pemberton, like everyone else they would hang on to the side of the engine, and when coming back they used to sit where the timber was usually stacked.

Finally all the jobs come to an end, and Alfred decided to move back to Northcliffe on his own. Mabel was left to her own devices and learned of a man and his wife (Mr & Mrs Norderson) who kept a boarding house for about 8 boarders. Mrs Norderson was ill, and she was asked if she could help look after the boarders for a period of 3 weeks.

The Nordersons then moved and took another boarding house some 10 miles away along the railway line where the lumberjacks came for their meals. Nan and Florrie went with them, and were provided with her own little hut to live in; Alfred used to return by train at weekends. Mrs Norderson used to do the cooking and Mabel did waiting and washing up for the lumberjacks. It was a good time, although mosquitoes were a nuisance, and there was also the continuing problem of snakes.

Unfortunately, unlucky in most things he did, and with Australia in recession, Alfred finally decided, that he should take the opportunity (as he had promised his father-in-law) to send his wife home, there being better opportunities for the education of their daughter, and he promised that he would follow in due course, but Mabel herself states that it was his intention to have them return to Australia once he had found a good position, and made a good home for them.

Mabel and her daughter duly returned to England in 1929 and they sailed from Fremantle in the "Jervis Bay". There were stowaways on the boat, who were discovered and put to work. But the stowaways played up and threw the crockery overboard, and set the boat on fire. An elderly lady sleeping near Mabel first smelt the fire, and the crew was able to put it out with a hose. The stowaways were then placed in a cell, and finally removed from the boat when they reached Columbo, Ceylon.

The 'Jervis Bay' (13,837 GRT) was one of five 'Bay' cargo-passenger vessels built for the Commonwealth Government in the early 1920s primarily for use on the UK-Australia service to encourage and assist trade and immigration to Australia. 'Jervis Bay' was built by Vickers at Barrow in Furness. In September 1926 'Jervis Bay' became the first ship on the UK-Australia route to be equipped with a short-wave radio transmitter, a self oscillator type using two Marconi T250 valves enabling the ship to be in constant radio contact. These vessels were sold in the late 1920s and operated by the Aberdeen & Commonwealth Line. Following the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, 'Jervis Bay' was converted as an Armed Merchant Cruiser (AMC) at St Johns, Canada and used for patrol and convoy escort duties by the Royal Navy. The ship had been strengthened during her construction to carry eight six-inch guns. On 5 November 1940, 'HMS Jervis Bay' was sunk in the Atlantic by the German pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer' after the convoy 'Jervis Bay' was escorting came under attack. 'Jervis Bay' turned toward the "Admiral Scheer" and diverted her fire while the 38 ship convoy HX84 which included the cargo liner 'Rangitiki' escaped. Her captain E.F.S Fegan (a former commanding officer at the RAN College at Jervis Bay) was killed and the ship sank with the loss of 198 men. Fegan received a posthumous Victoria Cross for his actions during this engagement. Five ships from the convoy were sunk by the Scheer but most were able to escape. One merchant ship, the Swedish registered 'Stureholm' turned back and was able to rescue 65 officers and men from the 'Jervis Bay'. A model of the ship can be seen in Victoria Museum, Australia <http://museumvictoria.com.au/collections/items/374027/steam-ship-model-s-s-jervis-bay>

They went ashore at Colombo, Ceylon, and went on a coach tour. They also visited Malta, and visited the shops and bought lace. The ship was to be sold, and the quality of food was not as good as that on the boat when they had left England. Florrie also got prickly heat, and had to be nursed. The journey took 16 weeks due to delays arising from dealing with the stowaways, a man who committed suicide by jumping overboard and the monsoons, and they finally arrived at Southampton, in July and came by train to live with Mabel's brother Arthur and his wife Florence in Wellingborough.

The first letter Mabel received from her husband when she landed in England, told her that he was out of work. Alfred was to be out of work for a very long time, despite traveling all over the place to try and find work. In the end after 13 months he finally found work as a lumberjack but in the course of this work twisted his back, and as a result was in and out of hospital. He was unable to send her any money and she needed to work. In the event, for her story you will need to read her biography.

We know that he was one of 6000 British immigrants plus Australian returning servicemen, targeted by the Western Australian Government to settle and farm land north of Perth. The main cost of traveling to Australia would be paid for by the Government, assisted by monetary contributions from both the Commonwealth and Great Britain. The initial proposals appeared very attractive, they would be set up in groups of 20 families (they were called 'Groupies', who would work together to clear the blocks of land and establish dairy farms to feed the growing population of Perth, each family would be given 160 acres of land, and after 25 acres of that land had been cleared (which could take over 6 months), they would be permitted to own the land and given some money towards the setting up of their farms. Full details of the proposals are now set out on the Internet, and what looked on paper as a fine idea, rapidly became a total failure. The trees were both huge and hardwood and only basic cutting tools were available. The animals they were given to start the farms had insufficient pasture, and the soil was not very suitable for pasture or growing crops. If they actually produced anything at all, the railway had not yet been constructed to the areas occupied by the immigrants and thus transportation was difficult if not impossible. In a short time, the majority of the emigrants had given up in despair and were looking for other work. On top of all this the 1929 recession came as a final straw and those few farmers left, just as in America, were driven in desperation from their land - unemployment in Australia actually rose to 28% by 1931. A few links on the internet relating to this disaster appear below:-

<<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/history/verbatim/stories/s101045.htm>> Stan Dilkes aged 83 talks about his experience as a Groupie at Bridgetown. Radio National Sat 12/2/2000 on Verbatim.
<<http://historis.50megs.com/brewster/3.htm>> The life story of Frederick Edward Wood, an English ex-serviceman in WWI who emigrated just like Alfred with his family, and suffered the same experience. The similarity of their early days in Australia is remarkable.

<<http://www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/articles/sanders.htm>> which includes an accurate and historic comments on the whole disastrous affair, started in good faith by Premier of Western Australia - James Mitchell, see documentation item (2).

Whilst Alfred wrote to his wife, none of his letters survive. We do know that she was very put out by the fact that he didn't send for her, and it seems that Mabel may have thought that Alfred had deserted her and their daughter, for there was nothing during a period of about five years. It is only today (2005) when we discovered that the very years where there was no communication, was apparently according to Florence their daughter, those same years that he was in the Australian Army.

We know that Alfred, served in both World Wars, and he is recorded as joining the Australian Army on the 21st June 1940 at Perth, being Army No. W243605. In his Mobilization Attestation Form, the following information is given, at this time he was aged 47 years and 10 months, his trade being that of a labourer and resident at 11 Nash Street, Perth, married with his next of kin as Mabel Florence Line his wife, residing at 74 Milbrook Street, Gloucester in England, and religion Church of England. His service record advised that he had been on active service with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) during the period 1914-1919, and remained on the British Army Reserve until 1923.

Medically graded Class B, he was allocated to the 10th Garrison Battalion, but within 2 months became ill, requiring hospital treatment for a short time, transferred to Y Company, obviously very unwell he became ill once more in June 1941 and was repeatedly in Hospital and finally transferred to the 29th Garrison Battalion until final discharge on the 5th June 1944 (Certificate of Discharge dated 23rd May 1944) following further illness in January and May 1944". It is known that the 10th and 29th Garrison Battalions consisted of retired ex-servicemen who were in charge of internment camps (that is aliens now resident in Australia who had to be interred for the safety of that Country), Rottnest Island just off Perth where German and Austrian prisoners were housed was one such camp.

During the war, when his daughter was to marry, her intended bridegroom, Sidney George Keeling, set out to find her father, as it only felt it right that he should be informed of the marriage. Florence in fact married Sidney on the 19th June 1943 at All Saints Church, Gloucester. In the event, it took some time, but the Salvation Army finally managed to trace Alfred, and he and his family were re-united at least by letters. Interestingly, whilst he wrote a number of letters to the family, including some special ones to his newly found grandchildren Christine (born in 1944) and Peter (born in 1949), they offered no real information of his circumstances or what he was doing and thus we are left with a gap in his life.

A newspaper cutting indicated that he died on his way to the Anzac Parade (held on the 25th April) 1960 in Perth. At the time he was unidentified and bore both his First World War and Second World War Medals. We know that he had been awarded the following medals from his service in World War I: The Victory Medal, The British War Medal and the 1914 Star Medal, this latter supplemented by the later award of a clasp 41105 plus clasp and roses 4047e. This cutting was sent from an unknown source (no one ever found out who sent it) to his wife Mabel Line who was then living with her daughter's Florence and family in York, England.

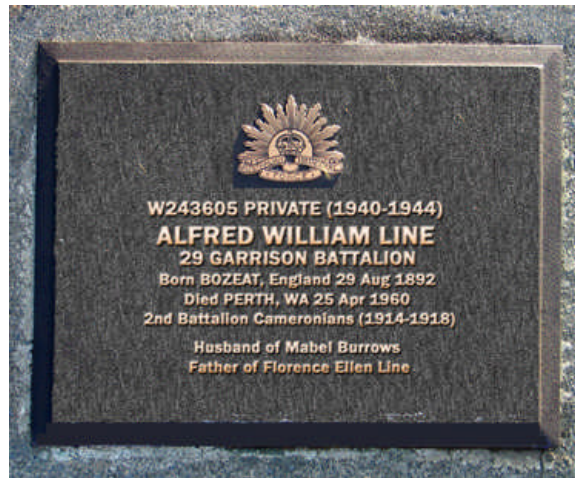
*The text reads: "**Veteran Named.** An Anzac veteran who died on his way to the memorial march on Monday was identified by police yesterday as A. W. Line (68). He collapsed near the intersection of William and Aberdeen Streets. Central police regard the identity as provisional as they have been unable to trace Christian names or any address for the man, or any relatives. He was wearing medals for service in both World Wars. Police wish to interview anyone who knew Mr. Line well."*

Having identified Mr. Line, one wonders where were those normal possessions, such as the personal letters from England, his medals etc., that would have given some information to enable the authorities to formally contact his family in England, even if only to seek payment for a funeral.

It might be interesting to know if anything further appeared in the Newspapers about this event, or whether anyone turned up at the local police station.

The next we learn is that he was buried in a pauper's grave in the Anglican Section of Karrakatta Cemetery being gravesite ZT 0499. It was only in the year 2005, that his granddaughter Christine

was to purchase the grave being grant number K0100142, which grant expires on the 21st June 2030, with the intention of placing a gravestone to his memory. In 2012, his great grandson Justin Audcent finally paid for and arranged to place a memorial stone and plaque on the grave, the cost being reimbursed by Alfred's daughter Florence Ellen Keeling, known as Jean who was now aged 90.



Note following:-

RECOLLECTIONS OF IRENE READ (NEE DOBBINS) OF THE 1920s AND 1930s By Irene Sorensen

London, England: mid-1920s

William Dobbins was a young returned soldier from the 1914-18 war. He married and had two daughters. I was one of them, Irene Read, nee Dobbins. Nell was my older sister.

Unemployment was rife in London and the governor of WA, James Mitchell, had a grandiose scheme to open up the south west of WA for farming, claiming it was the 'land of milk and honey'. Hundreds of people believed him and set out to make their fortunes. My father was one of them! We set sail on SS Beltana in August 1926 and arrived at Fremantle in November.

'The Group Settlements', Witchcliffe

On arrival we were allotted 64 acres of virgin bush and loaned money to stock the farm, to be paid back when the farm was productive. The only accommodation was in humpies until small, unlined weatherboard cottages were built. There was no water or electricity and my Mum had to cook over an open fire. Eventually Mum got a stove. We had a well and a windmill for water and used hurricane lamps for lighting. Mum used to iron our clothes with a flat iron heated on the stove. We didn't have many clothes to iron but our grandmother would sometimes send us a 'parcel' from England with dresses for Nell and me, which I'm sure she bought at the flea markets, but to us they were "new". She also sent us a doll each year – our very first toys.

I remember my father clearing the bush with a horse with a big log attached to a chain to drag the trees into a heap for burning. Then came the ploughing and seeding. I can still see my Dad behind a single furrow plough pulled by the same old horse – then he would walk along the furrows with a bag over each shoulder containing seed and fertiliser, spreading it by hand. When the crop was ready Dad would cut it with a hand scythe and my sister and I would follow with the horse and cart and toss the hay up onto the cart with pitchforks, to be taken to the shed and put through a chaff-cutter to be used for fodder.

By this time we had acquired several cows, pigs and chickens. The paddocks had to be fenced and Dad and I used to use a crosscut saw to cut logs ready to be split for fence posts. My Dad and my sister milked the cows and the cream was separated and sent to the butter factory at Brunswick. My job each day was to dismantle the separator and clean the many discs ready for the next milking. We got a cheque every month, which was our only income. Once a month we would harness up the old horse and cart and go into 'town' – one shop and one pub, to cash the cheque and buy groceries.

It was on one of those trips that I experienced a lot of 'firsts': I saw my first plane, my first car, heard my first radio and got my first pair of shoes! They were black with two straps across the instep fastened by two buttons and I had to use a button hook to do them up.

The groupies had built a hall that was used for social occasions and church services – it's where I was christened at age six. The hall was also used for movies. It was only silent movies in those days but even though I couldn't read the captions it was very exciting to see 'moving pictures'.

My sister and I attended a one room school taught by one teacher, regardless of grade, by name of Barney Clarke. We had to walk barefoot across the paddocks the two and a half miles to school. Sometimes if the old horse wasn't needed on the farm we were allowed to ride it bareback – two up to school where we would tether it with a nosebag on until home time. Although we were not well-dressed, neither was anyone else so we didn't feel out of place.

We sometimes had bacon that Dad cured in a homemade smoke house; as we had no refrigerator, all our meat was smoked. Mum used to make her own bread after we got the stove. I can still see a big bowl of dough sitting by the fire overnight to rise.

People were leaving in droves – it was a disaster from the start. Finally my father decided to throw in the towel and leave before we all starved to death. Sir James Mitchell has a lot to answer for!

We moved to Margaret River where my young sister, Jean, was born in 1933. Then on to Perth and into furnished rooms. After moving to the city we landed right in the middle of the Great Depression of the thirties. Jobs were at a premium, but the Government decided to build the Canning Dam. My Dad got a job there and we all moved into tents on site. The conditions of employment were that one would work for six weeks at a wage of £2/5/- and then 'stand down' for six weeks so that someone else could have 6 weeks work. While on 'stand down' we were given 'sustenance' of £1/5/- per week per family. We would get a ride to Perth to cash our sustenance cheque and Mum would carefully write a list of groceries. Nell and I would trot off to John Wills – the only shop that would cash the cheque. After buying the groceries there was sometimes three pence left over and Nell and I would be allowed to buy three pennyworth of boiled lollies!

Because we were living in tents my little sister was two years old before she walked as we couldn't put her on the ground. Times were very hard for my parents- and everyone else- but I remember my childhood as the happiest days of my life, because I had no real concept of what my parents really suffered.

But all good things must come to an end – the dam was finished and everyone was looking for work again. Then the depression ended, just in time for the beginning of World War Two, and the world went mad.

In my almost 80 years I have travelled the world many times over and have come to firmly believe that we are now living in the best country in the world – truly a 'land of milk and honey', brought about by pioneers like my parents and others like them.

Odd notes on THE BATTLE OF NEUVE CHAPELLE – March 1915

In which Alfred LINE served in the 2nd Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) and was one of the 143 survivors out of 900 men in the Regiment.

A Poem - Burnley Great War Poets Unknown Burnley Soldier Lad

In the deeds of deathless glory
Deeds that won the Empire fame;
"Cameronians" Scottish Rifles,
Played their part and made their name.

Blenheim, Lucknow and Corunna,
Spion Kop their story tell;
But the greatest deed of valour
Fatal charge at Neuve Chapelle

Just a prayer before the action,
Valiant warriors humbly bow,
"God of Masses, God of Battle,
Lord of Hosts be with us now."

Help us in the coming conflict
Guide and guard us in the fight;
Take and keep us in Thy power,
God above defend the right.

Rising from their supplication,
Strengthened by a Grace Divine;
Conscious that their cause is Righteous,
Hearts of steel, they form the line.

Swiftly at the charge advancing
"Mid'st a storm of shot and shell,
Rushed the gallant Scottish Rifles"

On the foe at Neuve Chapelle.

Forward, forward nobly dashing,
Thro' a withering hail of lead;
Right and left the men are falling,
Leaving names of heroes dead.

Sprayed with shrapnel, wreathed in gun smoke
Dauntless thro' that blasted hell,
Dashed the fearless lads in khaki
On the foe at Neuve Chapelle.

Stabbing, guarding, thrusting, parrying
Hacking thro' their foes and way;
Wounded, battered, grim and gory,
Still they cheer amidst the fray.

Just a remnant still they rally
Fairly charge to each attack
Step by step their crimson bayonets,
Force the stubborn foeman back.

Foeman's ranks are pierced and broken
Routed, lost, they turn and flee,
British Steel and British courage
Gain a glorious victory.

Bravely they have fought and vanquish
Foes whose barbarous deeds repel;
Won the field of fame and honour,
Bloody field of "Neuve Chapelle."

Cameronians "Scottish Rifles,"
Gallant heroes where they lay
Few of them that saw the sunrise
Lived to see the close of day.

Neath a foreign sky they're sleeping
History will proudly tell,
How they carved their way to glory
Death and Glory, Neuve Chapelle

Neuve Chapelle 2nd Battalion War diary for March 10/11th 1915.

At 2am marched across country to sign post
corner – Single file - formed up in trenches as
in map "A" by 5.30 am - guns started, finished
at 7 am.

Bombardment of enemy trenches (wire cutting)
7.30 to 7.45 am. 7.45 to 8 bombardment of
first line enemy's trench - 8.5 A & B Coys left
trenches and advanced on enemy front line in
quick time - A Coy MAJOR EDE L. HAYES - B
Coy CAPT FERRERS - C & D Coys then
occupying trenches vacated by A & B

B Coy reached the first German trench with
very little opposition - not so A Coy who met
with a heavy rifle & M.G. fire - the German wire
too was not well cut in front of this Coy by the
Guns. A Coy experienced a heavy enfilade
fire as the Bn. on its left - the 2 / Middx - could
not get forward altho' making three gallant
attempts. About 70 prisoners gave
themselves up in the first line trenches. By the
time the first line had been reached Lt Col.
W.M. BLISS & the ADJT. CAPT GRAY-
BUCHANAN were killed close together
practically leading the first line.

C & D Coy followed A & B at a short interval
and the whole regt went on taking the German
2nd line - the regt had now arrived at points 21
q 82 & the right flank advanced past 41 as far
as 18. the line now held 18, 41, 82 q 21 9.30
am, our guns now shelled 18. Heavy German
rifle & machine gun fire came from 22. The 2/
Middx were now able to advance and our
gunners had cleared 22 - the whole line was
now able to advance - the Bn occupied 53 &
19 - The Bn reached this point before our
scheduled time - the (our) gunners opened fire
on this line but fortunately the Bn retired before
any material damage was done - they
occupied a position 18, 65.

At 2.15 p.m. MAJOR CARTER-CAMPBELL
who by this time was the only officer left
except 2/Lt. SOMERVAIL - was hit in the head
& the Bn reoccupied 19, 53. Where the 5th
Black Watch were digging trenches. Very
heavy M.G. from direction of Pt 5 began & was
finally silenced by our machine guns time
about 4 pm. The night of the 10th/11th was
spent in trench 19. 53 and defended house 19.
A hot meal and tea & ample rations were
brought up Lt & Qr Master GRAHAM About 8
pm. the Sherwood Forresters came through
the Bn advancing to a night attack. The night
of 10th/11th was spent in digging & improving
defenses of house.

At 5.30 am. C Coy occupied position 55. 19
The remainder of the Bn stayed where they
were heavily shelled with high explosive "Blk
Marias" & shrapnel - very few casualties not
worse than 2 or 3 men hit with shrapnel
bullets. The night of 11th/12th was spent in the
same position. The Bn again had a hot meal
from the cookers brought up with great
difficulty as the road was blocked & being
heavily shelled.

On the morning of this day - the Bn was in and
about Pts 19. 55. 53 The subjected to heavy

shell fire during the day - but did not suffer much 4 or 5 casualties only About 4 pm MAJOR CARTER-CAMPBELL was wounded & 2Lt SOMERVAIL, assisted by REGTL SGT MAJOR CHALMERS assumed command of the Bn at the time MAJOR CARTER-CAMPBELL was wounded - he was on his way from the 2/ W. Yorks Regt. where he had been making arrangements for a night attack. He was to have commanded both Bns. This command then devolved on MAJ INGPELL 2/ W. Yorks. About 8 pm the Bn formed up in the road at about pt 65 facing South. The Bn formed the advance guard & moved by 29.50. 31. They moved across country & joining up with 2/ Devons & formed a preparatory formation for a night attack. The night attack however did not come off - about 4 am 13th the night operations were cancelled.

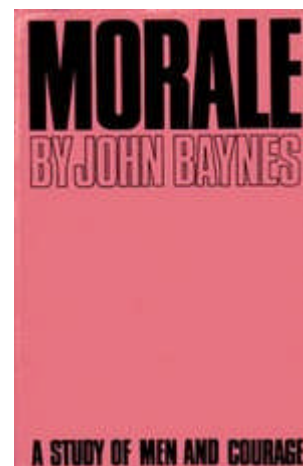
Extract from General Sir John French's Address to the 2nd Cameronians after the battle of Neuve Chapelle, 10th March 1915:

'I come here as Commander-in-Chief of this Army to express to you my heartiest gratitude for the splendid part which you took at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. I know what awful losses you suffered; I know the gallantry you displayed on that occasion has never been surpassed by a British soldier. You came up against the enemy's wire, and although the artillery was unable to get at it, you showed the utmost bravery and gallantry. I deeply regret the terrible losses you suffered on that occasion. No less than 22 officers were killed or wounded; the officer commanding your splendid Battalion, Colonel Bliss, being included amongst the losses. Everyone in the Regiment will deeply regret this loss. I do not mean to say it was too much - I want you all to realise that, I am sure your officers will always lead you on, it may be to die, but follow them right gallantly, I know you will. I am sure at the same time you will all feel what your officers have done for you, leading you as they have done; but still at the same time the officers on their part felt they had splendid and gallant men who would follow them anywhere and had every confidence in them. That is one great thing, the mutual confidence which exists between leaders and men. I cannot say more.'

[Morale, by John Baynes](#)

August 16th, 2010

“This book is an attempt to fill a gap,” [John Baynes](#) writes in his introduction to [Morale](#), his classic study of the 2nd Scottish Rifles in the [Battle of Neuve Chapelle](#) in March 1915. “In all the mass of histories, studies, memoirs, biographies and novels which have been published about the First World War little has been done to investigate the most interesting field of all—the morale of the front-line soldier.”



Had Baynes attempted a sweeping study of morale in general, or even morale in combat, or even of morale in combat on the Western Front, I doubt that anyone would remember his book. But Baynes recognized early on that “the subject is too big”:

I decided that I would rather stick to something small and try to get near the truth, and being a Regular serving officer in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) I naturally chose to study my own Regiment. I decided to look at one battalion in one battle—the 2nd Battalion at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, 9 to 15 March 1915. This battalion, which always referred to itself as the 2nd Scottish Rifles and did not normally use the name Cameronians, started the battle about nine hundred strong on 9 March. Six days later it came out of action. By this time the hundred and fifty men left were commanded by the sole surviving officer, a 2nd Lieutenant.

In approaching his subject, Baynes is guided by Edmund Blunden's admonition in his poem, "Victorians": "... read first, and fully shape/The diagram of life which governed them." The officers and other ranks of the 2nd Scottish Rifles, as he carefully pieces together the "diagram" of their life, are particular, not representative men. He begins by introducing us to the battalion as it stood, garrisoned on Malta, at the start of the war. It numbered about a thousand officers and men—large enough a unit to be self-sufficient by the standards of the day, small enough for there to be a strong level of familiarity among the members—fewer than thirty in total—of the officers' mess, among the NCOs—roughly fifty—and among the men in each of the four companies.

The battalion was somewhat exceptional in that it came late for a Regular Army unit to the front, having spent some

years in the relative isolation of Malta. The men averaged over five years' service. The routines of garrison life—the day in, day out grind of inspection, drill, and firing practice—was certainly monotonous and unwelcoming to the imagination, but as Baynes shows, it was remarkably effective in reinforcing the men's "bloody-mindedness":

When using the term I do not mean a surly refusal to do what is ordered but a refusal to give way to conditions which might be expected to make a man sour. It has an element of rebellion in it, of course, but the

rebellious is not so much against authority as against difficult circumstances. As things get worse the man with this quality becomes more determined to stick them out.

The battalion's six days in the Battle of Neuve Chapelle put its bloody mindedness to an exceptional test. After marching up to the front trenches through the night of 9-10 March, it stood, waiting, for over two hours, until the artillery fell silent and the attack began. It was a classic example of the disastrous tactic of sending hundreds of men clambering over the top:

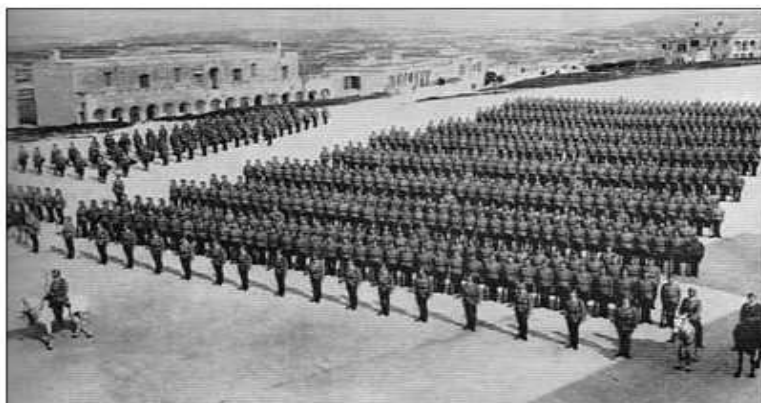
Almost at the same moment came another noise: the whip and crack of the enemy machine-guns opening up with deadly effect. From the intensity of their fire, and

its accuracy, it was clear that the shelling had not been as effective as expected. Worse than its lack of effect on the enemy was the fact that it had scarcely touched the wire. Instead

of being broken up, the wire and the thick hedge looked just the same as they had before the bombardment.

The attack began at 8:05 AM. By 9:30 AM, all but two officers were dead or wounded, and over thirty of the NCOs. Three hundred fifty or so of the other ranks were killed or wounded. They had managed to advance about a three hundred meters.

Further assaults during the day were able to secure the German's front line of trenches, but progress stopped after that.



The 2nd Scottish Rifles on parade in Malta in 1913.

By the afternoon of 12 March, General Haig, then commanding the First Army, issued orders to “push through regardless of loss, using reserves if required.” Unfortunately, the 2nd Scottish Rifles had no reserves by then, and as Baynes remarks, “From here the story of the battle becomes a sorry tale, except for the courage, willingness, and effort of the soldiers who tried to do the impossible.” On the night of 14-15 March, 2nd Lieutenant Somervail and one senior NCO led one hundred forty-three men back to their billets.

Baynes completes his account of the battle and his assessment of its significance (he calls it “a failure but not a waste” in that it demonstrated the combat integrity of the British forces in the first major offensive action after the stalemate of the previous fall) by page 91 of the book. Then the most interesting material begins.

Over the next seven chapters, he focuses on the battalion and the various factors that reinforced—or undermined—its ability to remain intact, on duty, and engaged in the battle for over four days after losing over three-fourths of its men. He describes the officers, who sat roughly half-way up the social and economic hierarchy of the Regular Army. They came from upper middle class families and good schools but not great wealth. They believed in sport and maintaining existing values and social distinctions. They were not bullies or martinets, however, and the worst thing one could say of a fellow officer was that he didn’t take care of his men.

The NCOs and other ranks came from poor working class areas in Glasgow and the surrounding Lanarkshire. The Army was generally considered a step up in the world:

One could almost say that for them the whole of their lives had been a conditioning for the trenches. As children

they had learnt to live happily with so many of the things that made life at the front unbearable for those reared in gentler surroundings. Cold, ragged clothes, dirt, lice and fleas, bad food, hard beds, overcrowding, rats, ugly surroundings; these were nothing new to someone whose boyhood had been passed in a Glasgow slum.

Duty in the Army brought order and cleanliness to his life, a healthier diet, and regular exercise. The Army—particularly in the person of his Sergeant—was interested in him: “people cared whether he wore his uniform correctly, whether he progressed in his training, and whether he was a credit to the Regiment.” The Regiment, in fact, was, according to Baynes, “the quintessence of the morale of the pre-1914 Army.”

Discipline and drill were also significant factors. Maintaining a marksman’s rating was one of the few ways in which a private could make a little more money, and hours were spent every week in “pokey drill”—loading and unloading dummy rounds to increase firing speed. Many British Army regulars achieved such a rate of fire that the Germans believed their battalions were equipped with dozens of machine guns (they averaged two guns per battalion, in fact).

The strength of the class system prior to the war was another factor. The officers and men of the 2nd Scottish Rifles came from a world in which class structure and the inherent right of the more privileged to command those in the lower classes was accepted. Many writers have argued that the experience of combat on the Western Front, particularly the relentless years of futile “over the top” attacks, ultimately undermined this acceptance, leading to strikes and the rise of the Labour Party afterwards. But in the early days, when the battalion marched into its first battle, class

was, Baynes argues, a greater factor in morale than religion, morals, or patriotism.

Since its first publication in 1967, [Morale](#) has come to be recognized as an essential text on its subject. Although only reprinted once, in 1987, you can find it cited in numerous articles in British, American, Canadian, French, and even Israeli military journals. To use it as a guide for dealing with the morale of combat troops in other situations, though, is, I think, a mistake. One could never—should never—attempt to reproduce the factors that enabled the 2nd Scottish Rifles to remain intact through devastating losses.

What makes [Morale](#) a book worth rediscovering is not its value as a source of instruction but its high merit as an attempt by one author to deeply understand his subject. Although examining the battalion's morale provided Baynes with the motivation to undertake this book, I would argue that its greatest value is in offering an exceptional example of reconstructing, in Blunden's words, "the diagram of life" which governed a particular group of men in a particular time and a particular situation. This is the kind of history that helps remind us that, as David McCullough puts it, people in that past "didn't live in the past": "They lived in the present. It is their present, not our present, and they don't know how it's going to come out. They weren't just like we are because they lived in that very different time. You can't understand them if you don't understand how they perceived reality and you don't understand that unless you understand the culture." And for understanding the culture of the Regular British Army at the start of the First World War, I can recommend no book more highly than John Baynes' [Morale](#).