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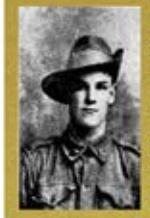
035 01 088 S 117 55 380 E

15, Dvr H A SKINNER, 43 Bn



Harold Austin Skinner was the youngest of three South Australian brothers to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force [AIF]. Following in the footsteps of his older siblings L/Cpl Charles Skinner MM and Pte Roderick James Skinner, Harold, born in 1897, enlisted in February 1916 after his brothers had already left for the war. All boys were born in Penola to parents James Skinner and Annie Brodie. James was one of the original pioneers of Coonawarra, working around the district as a coach driver and gardener before taking up a fruit block there.

Educated at Penola Public School, Harold was an orchardist in one of the richest fruit and wine growing regions of the state. Posted to the 43rd Battalion, he embarked at Adelaide in June 1916 with the 1st Line Transport. At a farewell given by the local community at the Coonawarra hall, he was presented with a leather wallet and a silver-mounted pipe.

Two days after embarkation, he fell ill and was hospitalised with the troopship's medical officer diagnosing measles. HMAT A7 docked at Albany on 7th July, 1916. He was landed and admitted to the quarantine station, remaining in isolation for a month before he was discharged on 28th July, 1916. He rejoined his unit in Egypt, arriving there too late to see action.

Initially posted to the 10th Battalion, Charlie Skinner was taken on strength of the 17th Battalion. Married to Valerie May Wolfe Armstrong, he left behind his wife and baby daughter Eva May. He was awarded the Military Medal for his actions at Mont St Quentin on the 31st August, 1918. He returned to Australia in December 1918.

Rod Skinner was posted to the 16th Battalion and served on Gallipoli until evacuation and in France. He returned to Australia in 1919.

When the Soldiers Memorial Hall was opened in Coonawarra in 1922, Harold's mother Annie was invited to conduct the official duty. She was also patron of Skinner House when the house system was introduced to Coonawarra Primary School in the early 1930s.

Tragically, in 1934 James Skinner was found hanged in his fruit shed. He was 65.

Pte Harold Skinner - James Skinner, standing left with children Charles and Harold. Front from left are Owen, Rod and Dave.

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035 01 051 S 117 53 363 E

R/4D618, Nurse N M SAW, QAINSE

Nellie Mabel Saw was born in Albany on March 4th 1890. She was the second daughter of pioneering families Thomas Henry Saw and Eliza Cooper. A well-known and greatly respected merchant in the town, Thomas was a draper, grocer and seed merchant, his business in central York Street promoted in many early photographs. He was council auditor for the municipality and several community organisations for many years and held positions of office at the Mechanics' Institute and the Albany Literary, Scientific and Debating Society. His father, Thomas senior had built the original section of Ye Olde Narrapin Inne at Annaduke in 1856.

Eliza Cooper's father was manager of the Albany Co-operative Store. Her brother William ran a dairy and apiary at Strawberry Hill to later settle in Bow River where he and Herbert (Bert) Thomas Saw, Nellie's older brother, pioneered the Nornalup district.

Nellie trained at the Perth Public Hospital and was nursing there when war broke out in 1914. Research indicates that on 24th December 1915 she, with seven other Western Australian Medical Corps embarked at Fremantle on the troopship Kanowna for brief period, she was sent to Egypt joining her sister Lucy Hilda Saw there. With a posting to the 26 General Hospital in Etaples, Nellie spent six months tending the flood of casualties arriving from the Somme. Suffering exhaustion and debilitated by respiratory infection, she was invalided back to England. Making a slow recovery, the urgency for nurses was so pressing that she resumed duty but was not fit to return to France. Attached to Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service [QAIMNS], she continued to work at military hospitals in Sheffield until deteriorating health forced her return to Australia. She disembarked at Fremantle in February 1918.

Nellie died of tuberculosis on 31st March 1919 in Albany. She was buried with military honours. Public grief for this popular young nurse was expressed with an immediate proposal to raise funds for a graveside memorial. The impressive column of local granite was unveiled in the Methodist section of the cemetery on 17th December, 1922.

In 1921, a ceremony to open Albany's second tribute to the fallen took place. The first tree of 112 planted on the Middleton Road Avenue of Honour was dedicated to Nellie Saw and marked the head of the avenue near Campbell Road. Only one tree at the original site of the avenue survives today and can be located by two plaques placed at the site.

Nellie Saw's sisters Lucy Hilda and Violet Fenchwood. Lucy also nursed with the QAIMNS in WWI.

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035 01 050 S 117 53 364 E

5350, Spr H W JOB, 2nd Tunnelling Coy

Sapper Herbert William Job was one of Australia's phantom soldiers, his war fought in the secret and subterranean environment inhabited by the military miners. Hidden from observation, the tunnellers' work was critical to the success of a number of battles on the Western Front, their contribution evidenced by the devastation visible on the battle scarred landscape.

Born in Sandhurst, Victoria in 1877 to Thomas Job and Elizabeth Ann Philp, Herbert came to Western Australia in 1901, disembarking at Albany to make his way to the goldfields, working as a farmer in Kalgoorlie. His older brother Frederick had arrived seven years earlier and settled in Boulder. Enlisting for the Boer War in February 1902, Herbert was posted to the 4th Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse, after the war returning to Australia via Albany in July that year.

Marrying Ellen Gordon Taylor in the Phillips River district in 1906, the couple located to farm at Bonnie Rock, Yilliminning east of Narrogin, raising their four children Jessie, Gordon, Ethel [Betty] and Mary Jane. A popular figure in the community, Herbert actively promoted local issues associated with agriculture and more broadly the development of the area, becoming secretary of the Bonnie Rock Progress Association and a foundation branch of the farmers' union. He also played lacrosse for the Australian imperial team.

In 1916, he was posted to the Second Tunnelling Company, the continued exposure to poisonous gas and shelling in France causing immediate and lifelong suffering.

Returning to Australia in May 1919, Herbert continued to farm at Boundain until the 1930s when ill health forced his retirement to Albany.

A 2nd Tunnelling Company Christmas card.

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035 01 060 S 117 53 341 E

4500, Pte J E ORR and 4499, Pte G W ORR, 28 Bn

Enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force together, brothers John [Jack] Ernest Orr and George Wood Orr were posted to Western Australia's 28th Battalion. They embarked at Fremantle with the 11th Reinforcements in March 1916, bound for the battlefields of France.

Sons of Robert Orr and Mary Ann Drapes, Jack and George were born in South Australia as were the other children to settle in WA, Edward [Ted], Robert [Bert] jr, Wilfred [James] and Annie [May] . Moving to Western Australia at the turn of the century, the farming family established themselves on the property Fair View, about 3 miles north east of St Paul's Anglican Church at Arthur River.

Robert Orr sr died in January 1906, losing his two infant granddaughters, Mabel Annie on New Year's Eve 1905 aged almost two and Hazel, aged three months just weeks later in 1906. All are buried in the church cemetery at Arthur River. In 1909 the widowed Mary Ann married William Stephens on the Arthur River property of her eldest son Ted, Williams was a bricklayer and Methodist lay preacher from Narrogin. The wedding made news because both bride and groom were over 60! Just a week earlier, Mary Ann's youngest son George had married his hometown sweetheart, Catherine Nordstrom. The couple's two children and Ellen before Sarah Ewart in Vancouver Street. Charlotte had married John Samuel Ewart, a settler in Albany.

Mary Ann died on 11th March 1938, the loss of her sons agonisingly prominent in the inscription of their mother's headstone.

Brothers John, Walter and George Orr

One of the earliest cemeteries to be consecrated in Western Australia, the first burials took place on the lower section of this site in 1840 including that of colonial surgeon Dr Alexander Collie; his remains exhumed from Albany town lot 5192 and reinterred while lot 5115, between York Street and Stirling [Collie] Street was the first recorded burial site for the New South Wales penal outpost, lot 5192 behind the Albany town Hall was later used, remaining the burial site of respected Noongar elder, Mokare. The first in a series of cemetery walk trails, gravestones have been chosen from a historical, military and social perspective to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC and reflect upon the lives of those touched by war.

An Albany History Collection Project

Albany Memorial Park Cemetery near the site of Alexander Collie's grave, ca 1950.

1

035 01 026 S 117 53 238 E

2949, Pte T E QUARTERMAINE, 92 LHR

Born into one of the most well-known pioneering families associated with the Katanning district, Thomas Edward Quartermaine was the son of William Charles Alfred Quartermaine and Elizabeth Smith. Tom's grandfather Elijah, had arrived in Western Australia in 1838 with his wife Eliza (nee Dickenson) and their first child who was born at sea, Charles. Working around the Avon Valley in the 1840s, he secured a leasehold of about five miles north-west of Katanning. Finding an abundance of feed and water in the area, he moved stock down from Beverley and by 1851, was grazing sheep on the Yowangup property. Yowangup (pronounced yar-rup) was named after a natural spring which fed fresh water to the stock.

A homestead was built on the property in 1870. Listed on the state heritage register, the property was one of the first established in the Katanning area. It is also the burial place of Elijah Quartermaine – and the birthplace of Tom – both events taking place in 1868.

When Elijah died, part of the Yowangup landholding was inherited by Tom's father William. In 1906 William sold the property and moved to Albany.

Enlisting at Blackboy hill on April 1916, Tom 27, a member of the 10 Light Horse Regiment, 21st Reinforcements. He had been billeted at the Claremont showgrounds prior to embarking from Fremantle in August 1916. With the Light Horse in Egypt, Tom, at least, he was plagued by ill health. Debilitated by dysentery, illness and fever, a tumour was found in his chest in 1917. He remained in the Middle East until his return to Australia in 1919.

Never to marry, Tom died at his sister's home [Mrs Cull] on Middleton Road in 1958, his death notice reading "A patient sufferer at rest". Maude Quartermaine married Ivon Cull in 1911.

The headstone of Pte T E Quartermaine

2

035 01 019 S 117 53 273 E

29587, [illegible] TURNER, [illegible] Australian [illegible] Brigade

Walter [illegible] was a three month [illegible] before he arrived with his battalion in [illegible] Australia. Boarding the [illegible] in London on 8th June, 1916, Walter, Alfred Turner and Elizabeth [illegible] Anne [illegible] Seoul, he was plagued by ill health. Debilitated by [illegible] illness and fever, a tumour was found in his chest in 1917. He remained in the Middle East until his return to Australia in 1919.

Never to marry, Tom died at his sister's home [Mrs Cull] on Middleton Road in 1958, his death notice reading "A patient sufferer at rest". Maude Quartermaine married Ivon Cull in 1911.

The memorial headstone of Gnr Walter Turner

3

035 01 025 S 117 53 347 E

6/3411, Cpl E NEILSON, 1st Battalion, Canterbury Infantry Regiment

Born in 1889 near Greymouth on New Zealand's South Island, Ernest Neilson was the eldest of eight children born to Christina [nee Fraser] and John Neilson. Working for Gladstone Siding ironmongers Ogilvie and Co, the 25 year old Marsden bushman enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in August 1915, signing up at the Trentham military training camp in Wellington. His Danish father by this time had settled in Western Australia, purchasing a property at Rocky Crossing, 5 ½ miles northeast of Albany to run an orchard.

In April 1916, Ernest embarked at Port Said for France, troops moving into the French Flanders sector in readiness for the ensuing campaign on the Western Front. He was promoted to lance corporal at the end of 1916 and corporal in July 1917. On the 12th of October in a major offensive launched by Australian, New Zealand and British Fortes to take the German stronghold of Passchendaele Ridge, Ernest Neilson was killed in action. The appalling conditions, uncoordinated artillery support and communications failures resulted in the allies' inability to hold the ground seized during the assault.

Tragically Christina, despairing of her [illegible] son being at war and with the [illegible] death of another [illegible] son eighteen months [illegible] Crown at Messines [illegible] 1916. An inquest concluded that the deceased came to her death by drowning while in a fit of despondency." [Western Mail, 1916]

Ernest Neilson is buried at Tyne Cot Memorial Cemetery, his name eternally inscribed on his mother's headstone in Albany

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035 01 029 S 117 53 349 E

9096, Gnr G L VIENET, 2 DAC

On the 21st of November 1915, the transport HMAT Port MacQuarie A39 called at Albany for the purpose of landing two sick men. They were taken to the forts then admitted to the base hospital. Three days later Private Gabriel Louis Vienet passed away from complications associated with measles and pneumonia.

Born in 1892 at Mount Morsier, Victoria, Lou as he was affectionately known, was the fourth of thirteen children born to Charles [Edward] Vienet and Elizabeth Georgina Rynikec. Edward Vienet was a vigneron and had established a vineyard at Waurn Ponds near Geelong in 1894. He was a committeeman on the Geelong and Western Vine and Fruit Growers Association and exhibited award winning wine at local shows. A three year failure of vine crops however, rendered him insolvent in 1903. Placed under added financial pressure from adverse judgements in the courts, Edward died suddenly in 1904, leaving his wife and nine children. His tenth surviving child was born just four weeks after his death.

With immediate help came from the community, the distressing situation brought Elizabeth to seek assistance, requesting that her four youngest children be boarded out. The eldest child, a daughter was 15 at the time. That the children were not neglected proved problematic for state authorities and it wasn't until the secretary of the Protestant Orphan Asylum learnt of the dire situation, that relief came. Six of the children were cared for by the association over a period of [illegible] years, all [illegible] went [illegible] to the [illegible] Tech for academic awards. In 1907 Elizabeth married Francis Bonney.

[illegible] to the [illegible] in July 1915, posted to the 2nd Australian Divisional Ammunition Column [DAC], embarking at Melbourne on 16th November. Two of his younger brothers also enlisted in the AIF. Sgt Edward Charles Vienet MM [489] was posted to the 6th Battalion and left from Albany with the first convoy of transports on 1st November 1914. A Gallipoli veteran, he was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in the advance at Pozieres in August 1916. Seriously wounded almost six weeks later, he returned to England. He was discharged in 1917 for employment as an Australian munitions worker. Cpl Henry Alexander Vienet [6025] was posted to the 2nd Australian General Hospital, Special Reinforcements when he enlisted in May 1915. He was attached to the Field Ambulance at Gallipoli then taken on strength of the 6th Battalion in France in 1916. Severely wounded on separate occasions, he was invalided to England in 1918. He returned to Australia in 1919.

Lou Vienet died in Albany on the 24th of November 1915 and was buried that afternoon with full military honours. Archdeacon Thomas Louch officiated at the graveside. In a marked expression of public sympathy, large crowds gathered on the streets and at the cemetery to observe the solemn occasion. A strong detachment of wounded soldiers also paid their respects to the 23 year old soldier, marching in the procession.

Pte Gabriel Louis Vienet

5

035 01 086 S 117 53 383 E

3/1811, Sgt Maj C D MACKENZIE

Enlisting in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in December 1915, Charles Duncan Mackenzie was posted to the New Zealand Medical Corps where he was appointed staff sergeant-major on the hospital ship Maheno. When the vessel docked at Albany en route to New Zealand in 1916, tragedy struck when the New Zealand soldier drowned in Princess Royal Harbour.

Charles Mackenzie was born in Edinburgh, Scotland to John Mackenzie and Janet Macintyre in 1882. A steward to governor-designate Lord Liverpool, he came to New Zealand with the vice-regal entourage in 1912, becoming head house steward at Government House in Wellington.

Joining the Maheno on its second commission, Charles embarked at Wellington on 26th January 1916, bound for the military hospitals in Egypt. Carrying more than 50 nurses in addition to her usual complement of staff, the vessel was considered one of the most advanced hospital ships in service. Fitted out with funds raised from a public appeal by the governor, the Maheno boasted eight wards, two operating theatres, anaesthetising, sterilising and X-ray rooms, a laboratory, dentistry and [illegible], a steam disinfector, [illegible] lifts [illegible] making her [illegible] at a time. Once [illegible] peed, the vessel had accumulated [illegible] 7 August [illegible] first chief [illegible] Kerr died [illegible] Mahenui [illegible] was [illegible] next voyage. [illegible] age in camp, would be made [illegible] Somme as [illegible] crossed [illegible] July to October, [illegible] the hospital ship made her way home carrying more than 370 wounded soldiers.

Delayed at Albany because of a coal strike in the eastern states, Charles Mackenzie had come ashore with five other non-commissioned officers, spending an evening at the home of local builder and contractor, Harold Wiley. With the intention of returning the men to their ship in his small motor launch, Harry Wiley left the Deepwater Jetty after midnight. Twenty yards out from the jetty, the boat was swamped and capsized. All but Charles made it back to the jetty, his body recovered by a local diver two days later.

The R.M. Maheno, Hon. Graham

Regimental Sergeant Major Charles Duncan Mackenzie was buried on 13th December 1916. His funeral with full military honours, drew large crowds along the streets of Albany and at the cemetery.

The N.Z. Hospital Ship Maheno

6

035 01 087 S 117 53 381 E

165, Spr L G WHITE, 1 LHF

Leslie Gairdner White was born at Inverell, New South Wales in 1895. He was one of two children born to Samuel George White and Sarah Emma Leslie. His parents had spent many years in the Inverell district with Samuel being the manager of Burnett's Beaulieu vineyard and a baker, pastry cook and confectioner of the Australian Bakery in Byron Street.

Educated at Inverell District School and Valentl College, Les was for many years in the school cadets. He was employed as a senior clerk in the municipal chambers and was a serving senior cadet with the 5th Light Horse, a Citizens Military Force [CMF] unit, when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in August 1914. Posted to the 1st Light Horse Regiment [1 LHR] A Squadron, he travelled to Sydney training at the light horse camp at Rosebery Racecourse. Raised from New South Wales recruits, the 1 LHR was one of three regiments comprising the 1st Light Horse Brigade, the first mounted formation committed by Australia to the war.

Embarking at Sydney on the 20th October 1914, the troopship HMAT Star of Victoria made for Albany to assemble with other transports, the first convoy. She carried more than 500 troops and an almost equal number of horses.

When [illegible] arrived in Albany, he was sick with typhoid. He was [illegible] and taken to the Albany Hospital for treatment. Despite the [illegible] medical care he received, all efforts to save him failed when [illegible] he contracted meningitis and died on 12th November. He was 19. Notified of her son's critical state of health, Sarah left for Albany. News of his death was broken when she reached Adelaide.

In the Albany Advertiser, it was noted that "the young sufferer displayed great fortitude in his painful illness". Trooper White was buried with full military honours on 13th November, the funeral procession pausing for a service at Scots church in York Street. While the nature of Les' death prohibited the return of his body to Inverell, the possibility of exhumation six months hence was favourably discussed.

An only son, Trooper Leslie White was understood to be the first casualty of the 1 LHR.

The Star of Victoria at anchor in Albany, 1915.