





# Shellharbour Remembers

## LEST WE FORGET

### THE WARATAHS



The Waratahs at Jamberoo 1915

A feature of the recruiting campaign was the various marches converging on Sydney from remote country areas, and snowballing as men joined up on route.

Alan Clark in his book 'The Waratahs - South Coast Recruiting March 1915' gives this account of part of the journey from Kiama to Albion Park.

*The escort to Jamberoo included members of the Mounted Police, the A Squad of the Illawarra Light Horse under the command of Captain Theodore Grey and the cadets under Sergeant Booth.*

*On the road from Jamberoo to Albion Park a milk wagon containing empty cans and carrying a number of school children, had a hair raising time when trying to pass the Waratahs. The four horses were startled by the noise of the band and the flags flying in the breeze. The horses dashed at a great pace and travelled a quarter of a mile before halted by the driver.*

*The Albion Park community gathered in the lowlands of the town and waited for the Waratahs to come around the heights of Mount Terry. The Mounted Police led the party, followed by the Light Horse and the Waratahs themselves.*

Bert Weston recalled his memories of the Waratahs arrival at Albion Park in a letter to The Sun Herald 7 October 1990.

*'One such trek The Waratahs started from the far South Coast and was two hundred strong when it finally reached the Agricultural Hall at Albion Park. Hay was supplied to fill sleeping bags, and the district turned up in force to provide a hot meal and a few items for the concert afterwards. Then, following a recruiting speech, a couple of volunteers came forward and marched out next day. The members of that march were kept together in one unit and suffered dreadful losses in France.'*

*'As a schoolboy, I remember when they [the Waratahs] reached our town of Albion Park. With only 60 more miles to go, they were a weary band clad in dusty civilian suits. Their first move, after unloading their gear from the accompanying truck was to be marched to the nearby Macquarie Rivulet for a skinny dip clean up. Quartered for the night in the Agricultural Hall, they filled their hessian sleeping bags with hay donated by the local farms and partook of a hearty meal supplied by the local ladies, which was followed by a concert and recruiting speeches. Several local lads came forward and volunteered to join up, and left with the march next morning.'*

*'Albion Park baker, Mr Lowe, cooked the meat in his oven and took it, still hot in time for dinner, to the showground. Then the ladies took over, and mentioned as carvers were Madams Collins, Lowe, O'Keefe, Chapple, Gower, Harris. Mrs Slusher was in charge of dispensing the vegetables, and many other district ladies assisted in the serving the meat.'*

*'The ladies were left to clean up, as the Waratahs and local men assembled at the hall to hear recruiting speeches, delivered by Inspector Anderson and Sergeant Tidmore. This was followed by a pianoforte solo from Miss Timbs, who started with a National Anthem and the Marseillaise.'*



Albion Park Showground in later years, 1973

They arrived at The Front in July 1915 during one of the most devastating months of the war, when 5,300 Australians were killed in Pozieres, France. What followed was the bloody Battle of the Somme. Fifteen of the 31 Illawarra Waratahs who embarked were either killed in action, or died of wounds.



William (Frank) and Elizabeth Slusher c.1905. Mrs Slusher helped serve the meal to the Waratahs at Albion Park Showground.



Henry Marshall Timbs joined the Waratahs March at Albion Park 1915



Albion Park Showground Pavilion 1900-1910

*'Recitations were given by Mr WJ Healey and Miss Fleet. There were songs from Gertrude Cor, and the Waratahs went on stage to sing a chorus. The night was far from over as the floor was cleared for the dancing, which was enjoyed until midnight.'*

There was an effort to keep the Waratah men together when they went overseas, many left together on board the Makariri and served together as the 16th Reinforcements for the 1st Battalion on the Western Front.





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### THE RED CROSS



Red Cross Nurses c. 1915  
Eva, Miriam and Beatrice James of Dunmore

The Australian Red Cross Society was established just after the outbreak of WWI in August 1914. By the end of the year, the society had well over 300 branches throughout New South Wales.

By 1917, the local Kiama branch of the Red Cross had over 300 members. Volunteers organised comfort parcels that were sent to service men overseas at war. Thousands of women donated their time and contributed to the movement by making thousands of knitted socks, vests, mittens, treats, sending books and blankets. All comfort parcels were packed and sent to headquarters located in the capital cities throughout Australia, and from there, to Britain or the front. A total of 395,695 food parcels and 38,329 clothing parcels were sent to Australian soldiers from volunteers of the Australian Red Cross Society during the war.

Many Shellharbour women assisted the Red Cross.

Eva, Miriam and Beatrice James lived at Rosemont farm, Dunmore. Their brother, Cubitt William (Will) Arnold James served in the war. The James girls were members of the local Red Cross and supported the war effort by knitting socks and beanies for the troops overseas. The girls' Aunt, Mary James, of Clover Hill farm, Macquarie Pass, assisted the war effort by making hundreds of pairs of woolen socks on her Victoria Automatic Sock Knitting Machine, now part of the Shellharbour City Museum collection.



The Thomas Family inside their home at 'Clover Hill', 1915.  
Mary and May Thomas with their children Ralph (b. 1897),  
Harold (b. 1898), Ann (b. 1900), Cecil (b. 1910), Devonshire  
(b. 1914), Don (b. 1915). (Cp. p. 100)



Albert Leslie Bursill, 1915

### FROM THE FIGHTING LINE

One of the first letters 'From the Fighting Line' to be published in the Kiama Independent was from Private Albert Leslie Bursill of Shellharbour, whose parents had been cabled with the news that their son had been wounded.

Letter dated 14 April 1915

'Dear Mother, Just received a letter from you dated February 22 and as this is the only opportunity I will have for about another week I am making good use of it. We are in the middle of the fighting here; had two days and nights in the trenches and are spelling for a day or two now.

'One wants to be in the trenches here to understand what real war is like. We were opposed by the Prussians the other night and by Heavens we shook them up a bit. It is rifle and machine gun fire all the time with a few shells bursting occasionally... The line of trenches runs about three hundred miles long and we are only forty yards away from the Germans. It is funny to see chaps sleeping in the daytime here (not allowed to sleep at night) and shells and rifle bullets buzzing all over the place and such an infernal row all the time, and yet we sleep like logs; also sit down and play cards or chew biscuits when we are not on watch.

'Generally in the daytime it is very quiet as all the troops are asleep but at night the real fighting takes place. We see a good lot of aeroplane guns here every day. There are about a dozen between German and our planes being shot at by air guns... The Germans have been absolute brutes destroying all the line buildings and churches all the fine old historic places have been blown to atoms.

'We had a terrible long march from the trenches the other night, I must have been fully ten miles from there to this place... I thought I would never be able to go another yard, after each step it was cruel. I do not feel so good to go back in the trenches at all and am quite used to living on bully beef and biscuits. Had a bath and clean clothes today so feel happy.'

Two months later letters from Major Colin Dunmore Fuller were published with the permission of his sister Edith. Colin Fuller was the son of George Laurence Fuller of Dunmore House, and commanded the 6<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment, attaining the rank of Colonel, and by order of His Excellency the Sultan of Egypt, was awarded the Order of the Nile.

### COMING HOME

Bert Weston recalled, 'The first local soldier to return from overseas for discharge after stopping a bullet in the plumber's shop (with Bob Parkinson) and what a welcome he received.

He stepped from the evening train to find the station yard crammed with horses drawn vehicles and two motor cars in one of which he headed a mile long procession to the local hall where tables loaded with edible ammunition awaited the attack.'

Letter dated 25 June 1915

'It is not five weeks since we landed and we have made no progress to speak of. The Colonel has not yet returned and I have heard nothing of him; once anyone leaves here either wounded or sick we hear nothing of them until they are returned for duty.

'The regiment's casualty list now totals 72 so you can see we are having a rather trying time. The regiment came out of the trenches last Saturday (June 19) for a crack, after doing 28 days straight off. But the spell is not what it is cracked up to be for we have been digging trenches every night since, starting at 8pm and knocking off at 4am. We are putting a new line out in front and while doing it the Turks have pretty well left us alone with the exception of Tuesday night when they made a very faint attack with a small party.

'We got seven of them killed and I think we must have wounded a fair number and we were extremely lucky only having one wounded. It is surprising the narrow escapes one has. I have had bullets and shrapnel all around me and last Wednesday morning about 10.30am I was sound asleep in my dug out when a big 6 inch shell landed about 10 feet from me but luckily it buried itself well before exploding and all I got was to be pretty well covered with earth and watered from my sleep. It is funny also how the bursts anywhere close gives you a shock and after that you don't seem to care, but whenever you start shelling you get a start.

'We are getting plenty of bully beef and biscuits and the other day a man managed to buy a pound of butter (Italian and more like axle grease than butter) for 3/6. However, bad and all as it was, it soon disappeared. I also got a case of condensed milk - a delightful prize, but we appreciated it all the same. Black tea gets monotonous after a time. One great trouble is to get water, we have to carry it about two miles and it is not very plentiful, two water bottles per day, a lot of it is brought by a steamer from Alexandria.

'It is getting very hot just like the middle of summer at home, and although right on the sea, we get no sea breeze. We have a swim when we get the chance and we also wash out our clothes in the sea... All our sleeping valises have gone and the only things I possess are a change of underclothing, a spare pair of boots and pants and two rugs... I am splendid myself, and have lost very little condition.'

'Headwards a long series of speeches by the mayor, stationmaster, headmaster, postmaster, bank manager and storekeeper plus thanks from Bob and his father must have left the warrior wishing that he was back in the front line.'

'The same welcome was turned on as others returned and the war years rolled on, and culminated in a mighty general welcome to all when the war ended and the troops came home.'

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wailia RSL Sub-branch | Albon Park RSL Sub-branch | Tongarrua Heritage Society  
Weston, B 1995, Albon Park Saga, Tongarrua Heritage Society



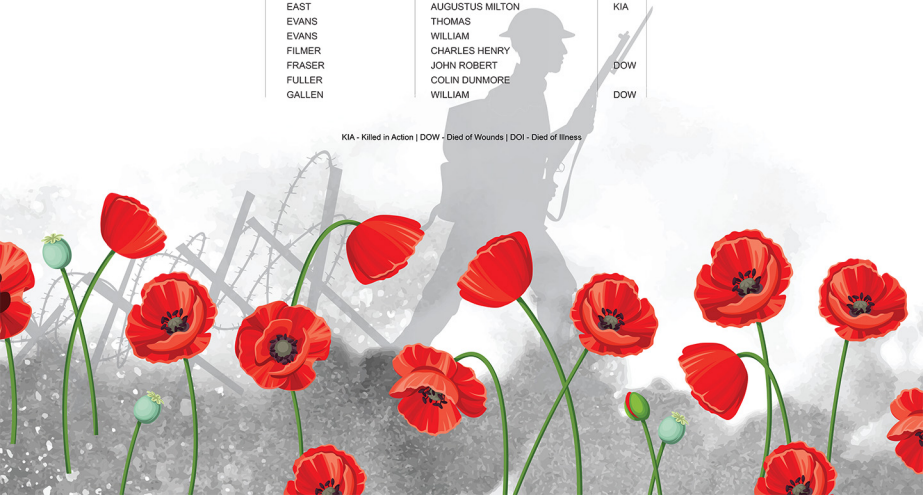


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## LEST WE FORGET

| SURNAME               | FIRST NAME                |     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| AITKEN (ALIAS MILLAR) | ARCHIBALD                 | KIA |
| AITKEN                | FRANCIS WILLIAM           | KIA |
| AITKEN                | JAMES LIDDELL             |     |
| AITO                  | WILLIAM                   |     |
| ALLEN                 | KEITH WICKHAM             |     |
| ANDERSON              | KENNETH PRIMROSE          |     |
| BATEMAN               | CHARLES DAUBENY           |     |
| BENNETT               | FREDERICK HENRY           | KIA |
| BENNETT               | FREDERICK CHARLES WILLIAM | KIA |
| BOLES                 | CECIL BADEN POWELL        |     |
| BOYCE                 | REGINALD WILLIAM          |     |
| BUCHANAN              | JOSEPH                    |     |
| BULLOCK               | EDWIN JAMES STANLEY       |     |
| BURNS                 | GEORGE EDWARD             | KIA |
| BURNS                 | LEONARD JAMES             |     |
| BURSILL               | ALBERT LESLIE             | KIA |
| CALMAN                | ROLANDE MONARO            |     |
| CHAMBERLAIN           | WILLIAM ARTHUR            |     |
| CHAPPLE               | WILLIAM WALTER STANLEY    |     |
| CHOPIN                | CHARLES FREDERICK GILES   | DOW |
| COMAN                 | WALTER FRANCIS            | KIA |
| COUCH                 | ARTHUR BARRY              |     |
| COUGHLIN              | MICHAEL                   | KIA |
| CRAIG                 | ALBERT JOHN               |     |
| DALEY                 | BETRAM WILLIAM            | KIA |
| DAWES                 | FREDERICK WILLIAM         |     |
| DAWES                 | HOLLIS ROY                | KIA |
| DAWES                 | WALTER LESLIE             | KIA |
| DENNISS               | WILFRED FRANCIS           | KIA |
| DUNSTER               | WILLIAM DARCY             |     |
| EAST                  | WENTWORTH LINCOLN         | KIA |
| EAST                  | AUGUSTUS MILTON           | KIA |
| EVANS                 | THOMAS                    |     |
| EVANS                 | WILLIAM                   |     |
| FILMER                | CHARLES HENRY             |     |
| FRASER                | JOHN ROBERT               | DOW |
| FULLER                | COLIN DUNMORE             |     |
| GALLEN                | WILLIAM                   | DOW |

KIA - Killed in Action | DOW - Died of Wounds | DOI - Died of Illness





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## LEST WE FORGET

### SURNAME

HAMBLY  
HARPER  
HARRIS  
HEALEY  
HEALEY  
HORNIMAN  
HORNIMAN  
HORTON  
HUNTER  
JAMES  
JAMES  
JONES  
MACFARLANE  
MARTIN  
MARTIN  
MATTINSON  
McCABE  
McCABE  
McLEOD  
McLEOD  
McNULTY  
MEARS  
MISSINGHAM  
MOIR  
MOLONEY  
MOLONEY  
MOORE  
MOORE  
MORRISON  
MOSS  
MOURELL  
NEALE  
OLDFIELD  
OLIVER  
PARKINSON  
PEARSON  
PERROTT

### FIRST NAME

EDWARD EDWIN  
CHARLES  
CLAUDE EVERETT  
PHILLIP PATRICK  
WILFRED CHARLES  
LANCELOT VICARY  
ROBERT GEOFFREY  
SAMUEL  
GILBERT FRANKLIN  
RICHARD HENRY  
CUBITT WILLIAM ARNOLD  
ROBERT DAVID  
EDWARD MACFARLANE  
JAMES CHARLES  
JOHN THOMAS  
STANLEY CHARLES  
CHRISTOPHER  
GREGORY MATHEW  
DONALD CAMERON MONROE  
GEORGE ANGUS  
CHARLES ALBERT  
GEORGE HENRY  
WILLIAM STANLEY  
TOM BALLANTYNE  
JAMES WILLIAM  
WILLIAM JOSEPH  
CLIFFORD ARTHUR  
THOMAS HUBERT  
MILTON JAMES LESLIE  
RICHARD HENRY  
ALFRED  
ROBERT NORMAN  
EDWIN JAMES STANLEY  
ARCHIBALD CECIL  
ROBERT ROXBY  
WALTER  
JOHN BEATTY

DOW

KIA

KIA

KIA

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## LEST WE FORGET

| SURNAME   | FIRST NAME           |     |
|-----------|----------------------|-----|
| PERRY     | FREDERICK WILLIAM    |     |
| PRICE     | ROBERT WILLIAM       |     |
| RAFTERY   | ALLAN FRANCIS        |     |
| REA       | EMANUEL HAROLD       | DOI |
| REA       | ROBERT CHARLES       |     |
| REA       | SYDNEY BERNARD       |     |
| REDDALL   | JOHN ERNEST          |     |
| REED      | MICHAEL JOHN         |     |
| REID      | ROBERT WEST          | KIA |
| ROGAN     | HENRY LOUIS          |     |
| ROGAN     | SELWYN JAMES         | DOI |
| ROGERS    | CECIL WILLIAM        |     |
| RUNDLE    | ARCHIE               | KIA |
| RUTLEDGE  | WILLIAM HENRY        |     |
| SLUSHER   | PATRICK FRANCIS      |     |
| SMALL     | JOSEPH GEORGE        |     |
| SPILLANE  | CHARLES JOSEPH       |     |
| STEWART   | CHARLES              |     |
| TAYLOR    | GEORGE               |     |
| THOMAS    | ALBERT               |     |
| THOMAS    | RALPH WILLIAM HASLEM |     |
| THOMAS    | WALTER JOHN          |     |
| THOMPSON  | WILLIAM DAVENTRY     |     |
| TIMBS     | HENRY MARSHALL       |     |
| TIMBS     | PATRICK FRANCIS      |     |
| TUNKS     | DAGWORTH EDWARD      |     |
| TWADDELL  | HAROLD WILFRED       |     |
| UDEN      | PERCY                | KIA |
| VIDLER    | WILLIAM DIXON        |     |
| WALKER    | PERCY OWEN           |     |
| WALKER    | SIDNEY ALBERT        |     |
| WALLACE   | LESLIE HERBERT       | DOW |
| WATSON    | FREDERICK WILLIAM    | KIA |
| WEBB      | HENRY GUNNING        |     |
| WEIR      | JAMES ALEXANDER      | KIA |
| WHITFIELD | KENNETH ROSS         |     |
| ZIEMS     | HENRY SELWYN         |     |
| ZIEMS     | CHARLES VIVIAN       |     |

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