

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 136

ARTHUR GEORGE MOFFREY 1877 - 1959



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Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Sergeant Arthur George Moffrey

Arthur George Moffrey was born on 18 October 1877 at Chelsea, Middlesex, England, son of Arthur John Moffrey, a carpenter and Mrs Esther Moffrey née Wilson. He was baptised in the Church of England Parish of St Luke in Chelsea on 9 December in that year. His circumstances during his boyhood, youth and early adulthood are not known. By the year 1913 however he had migrated to Queensland, had become an accountant and he was working as a bookkeeper at Gunalda in Queensland.

At the age of 37 years Arthur George Moffrey enlisted at Chermside to serve overseas in the Great War on 31 August 1915. His experience and clerical ability as well as his previous service in the Royal Field Artillery from 1899 to 1903 were to be used to advantage in the base depots of the Australian Army in Brisbane, England and France. With regimental number 5383, Private Moffrey was appointed to Number 1 Depot at Enoggera Camp. On 16 January 1916, he became a probationary sergeant and worked with various units of the 25th Battalion at the Enoggera Depot.

At Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Brisbane on 4 March 1916, Quarter Master Sergeant A G Moffrey married Miss Janet May Bell, a milliner, the youngest daughter of Robert and Margaret Bell née Rae. Both bride and groom were 39 years of age. The Bell family lived at 72 Leichhardt Street, Spring Hill. Robert Bell was a builder. Mrs Margaret Bell and her daughters Jane, Jessie and Janet May were communicant members at Saint Andrew's Church.

Cover Illustration: *Miss Janet May Bell and Quarter Master Sergeant A G Moffrey were married in Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church on 4 March 1916 at about the same time as this photograph was taken.*

(Photo courtesy John Oxley Library)

For Janet Moffrey the year 1916 brought sorrow as well as joy. On 8 August, just five months after their wedding, Janet Moffrey's new husband sailed with to England and on 10 October Janet's father, Robert Bell, died at his Leichhardt Street home.

Sergeant Moffrey embarked with reinforcements for the 25th Battalion from Brisbane on board HMAT¹ *Itonus* and joined the 7th Training Battalion at Rolleston in England on 18 November 1916. Early in 1917, he crossed to France to work in the Australian Divisional Base Depot at Havre. He was transferred to the base depot for the 41st Battalion in November 1917. While on leave in England in February 1918, he was paid as a private. His rank often changed. He served in base depots as extra depot corporal, extra depot sergeant, acting sergeant and sometimes private. On his return after a short time in hospital with a thumb infection he was appointed to base depot at Rouelles where he remained till the end of the war.

In 1919 AG Moffrey was appointed to the Australian Army Pay Corps as extra regimental corporal, temporary corporal and finally sergeant. He returned to Australia per HMAT *Runic* in December 1919.

The Bell family home at 72 Leichhardt Street became Arthur and Janet Moffrey's home. Arthur was occupied as a salesman, later a clerk. Mrs Janet Moffrey was active in the work of the Women's Guild at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church. They had one son, Arthur Rae Wilson Moffrey. He and his wife Beryl later managed a guest house in Maroochydore for some years.

1. His Majesty's Australian Transport

Following the death of Mrs Janet Moffrey in 1949, Arthur Moffrey moved to a house at 58 Leichhardt Street Spring Hill which he shared with his son Arthur and daughter-in-law Beryl who had concluded their responsibilities at the North Coast. Arthur George Moffrey died at the age of 81 on 26 August 1959.

References

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Lest we forget