

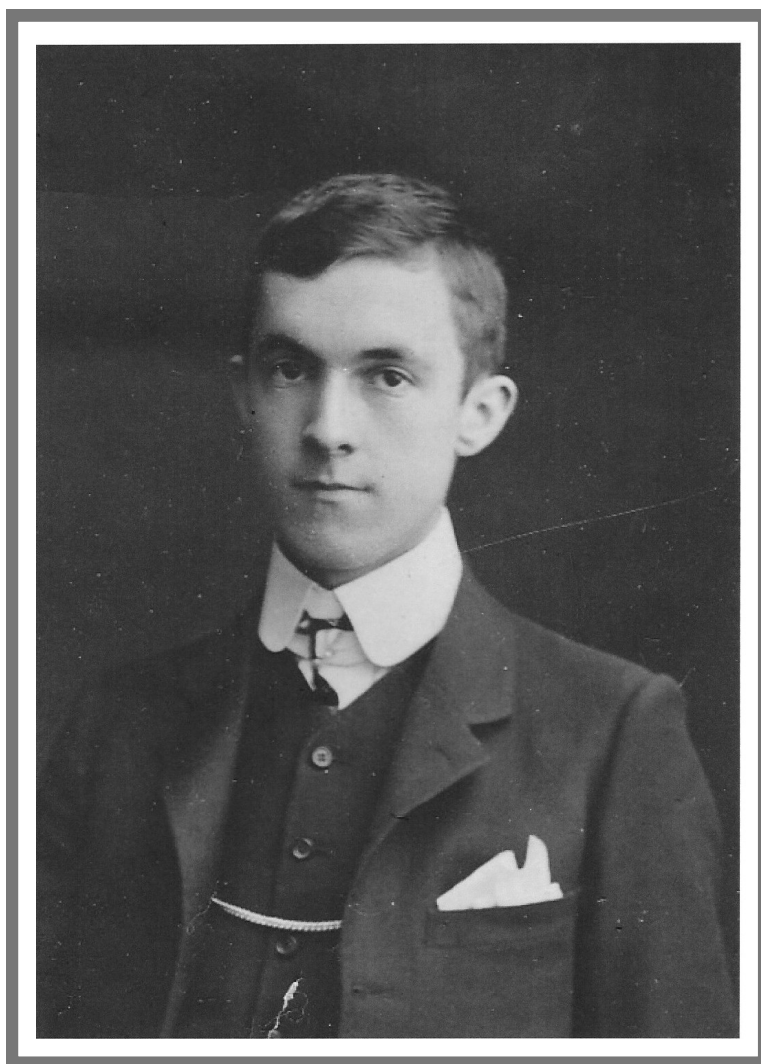
Stories from the Honour Boards

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 47

ALRIC GRIFFITH OXLEY

1886-1959



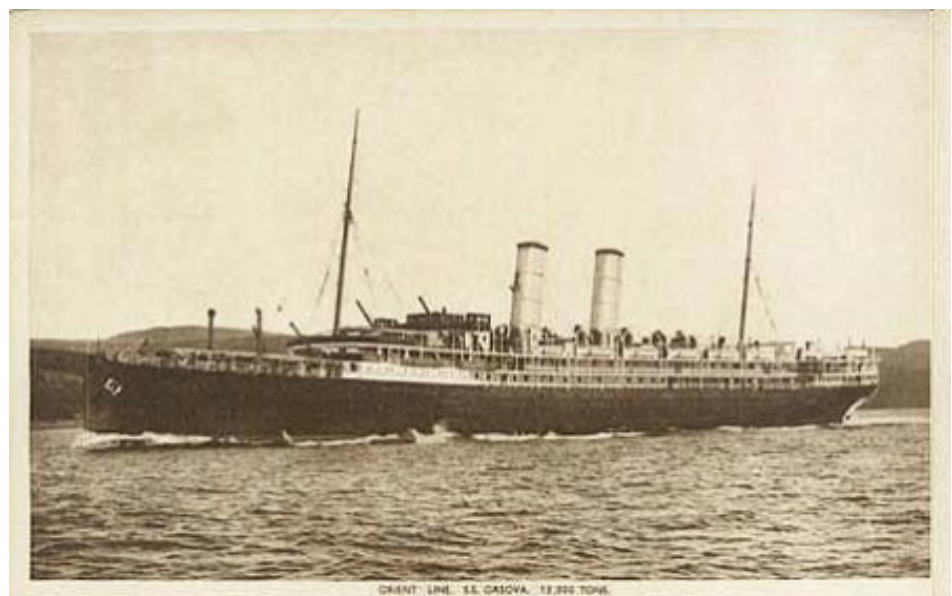
This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

©Saint Andrew's Uniting Church
Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
2015

Private Alric Griffith Oxley

The seventh of ten children in the family of Henry James Oxley and Alice née Griffith, Alric Griffith Oxley was born in Brisbane on 25 February 1886. His father was an accountant, community worker and finance company director and was prominent in the work of Wharf Street Congregational Church where Mrs Alice Oxley's father, Rev Edward Griffith was Minister. The Oxley family lived at Eagle Junction. Alric attended Brisbane Grammar School from February 1900 to October 1902 when he sat the Junior Examination conducted by the University of Sydney passing in French, Latin, Greek and Algebra. He worked as a clerk in Brisbane before enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on 7 June 1915.

Private Alric Griffith Oxley was assigned to the Australian Medical Corps, 2nd Australian Stationary Hospital with Regimental Number 1657. He had reached the age of 29 years 4 months when he enlisted, stood 5 feet 10 inches (178 cm) tall and weighed 133 lbs (60.3 kg). He was of dark complexion with brown eyes and dark hair. His unit embarked from Sydney on board His Majesty's Australian Transport *Orsova* on 14 July 1915.



HMAT Orsova

Six months later, Alric's younger brother Lyulph¹ also joined the Australian Army Medical Corps in the AIF in the Great War of 1914 – 1918.

Private AG Oxley served in the AAMC for four years tending sick, dying and wounded soldiers. He served at Mudros on the island of Lemnos, at Tel-el-Kebir, Port Said and Moascar in Egypt, at Mahamdiya on the Mediterranean and El Arish, a large village on the coastal route across the Sinai Desert about forty-five miles south west of Gaza.



*Watering station, El Arish.
World War I*

The work of the Army Medical Corps included diverse operations such as casualty clearing stations, field ambulances, stationary hospitals, general hospitals, hospital ships, sanitary sections, infectious diseases hospitals, convalescent depots, and even sanatoriums.² Men for hospital treatment came at first from Gallipoli to Lemnos and Alexandria. The large Australian auxiliary hospitals in Egypt continued to receive the sick and wounded from the battlefields of Palestine and Europe throughout the war years.

¹ See *Stories from the Honour Boards*, Booklet No 46

² Medical facilities for long-term illness most typically associated with treatment of tuberculosis

Private AG Oxley's work took place near an Egyptian city on the eastern side of the Suez Canal, Al Qantarah El Sharqiyya or Kantara, as it was referred to by the Allied troops. It was the site of the Canal Defences and Headquarters Eastern Force during the latter stages of the Defence of the Suez Canal Campaign and the Sinai Campaign of 1916. It became the main supply depot for all British, Australian and New Zealand operations in the Sinai from 1916 until final demobilization in 1919. A massive distribution warehouse and hospital centre was located in the town that supplied and supported the numerous units in the area. Private Alric Oxley embarked per SS *Essex* at Kantara on 15 June 1919 for return to Australia.



El Qantara (Kantara) El Sharqiyya beside the Suez Canal

His medical report on 30 July after disembarkation on 28 July stated 'no wounds or disabilities'. He was discharged in Brisbane on 28 September 1919. For his war service Private Oxley was awarded three medals – the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Alric Griffith Oxley married Evelyn May Stephens, the eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs A G Stephens of Myrniong, Bowen Terrace, New Farm on 13 April 1932. The ceremony took place in Saint Michael and All Angels' Church, New Farm. No children were born to the marriage. Alric died on 12 October 1959 at the age of 73 years. His widow Mrs Evelyn Oxley reached 92 years of age and passed away on 6 August 1975.

Select Bibliography

The Golden Book, Brisbane Grammar School Archives

National Archives of Australia, military records

Wharf Street Congregational Church Year Books, 1909 – 1920, Saint Andrew's Uniting Church Archives

Donald C Cowley, *Untiring Zeal*, unpublished, Toowong, 1993

The Brisbane Courier, 31 July 1916, page 11; 13 April 1932, page 16

The Sydney Morning Herald, 29 July 1902, page 7

First World War Embarkation Rolls, Australian War Memorial

Acknowledgement

Prue Galley kindly provided the photograph of her great uncle on the front cover.



Lest we forget