

# progenitor



***Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc.***

*The Family History Place*

# NO VOTES FOR WOMEN NO CENSUS

## CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The names should be written in full.

dealt with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards		Whether Engaged, Unemployed, or Working in this House.		Whether Working in House.		NATURALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	
Personal Occupation.	Industry or Service with which worker is connected.	Whether Engaged, Unemployed, or Working in this House.	Whether Working in House.	(1) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town or Parish.	(2) If born in any other part of the British Empire, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State.	(3) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country.	(4) If born at sea, write "At Sea."
The entry should show the precise branch of Profession, Trade, Manufacture, &c.	This question should generally be answered by stating the industry carried on by the employer. If this is clearly shown in Col. 1, the question need not be answered here.	Write opposite the name of each person engaged in any Trade or Industry. If a person is engaged in more than one trade or industry, write the name of each.	Write the name of each person working in the house.	Write the name of the County, and Town or Parish.	Write the name of the County, and Town or Parish.	Write the name of the Country.	Write the name of the Country.
If engaged in any Trade or Manufacture, the particular kind of work done, and the details of the nature of the work, should be clearly indicated.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.	For every person for whom the name is given in the preceding column, it is required to be given in this column, the name of the house in which the person is working.
(See Instructions 1 to 9 and Examples of both of Schedules.)							

*No persons here*

*only women!*

*Not a female here*

Write here  
Declaring that  
I declare that

**CENSUS  
MEETING.  
APRIL 1st.  
TRAFALGAR  
SQUARE.**

**CENSUS  
MEETING.  
APRIL 1st.  
TRAFALGAR  
SQUARE.**

signature, or in charge of this dwelling  
filled up to the best of my knowledge and

***JUNE 2019***

# GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INC

Unit 4, 84 Smith Street Darwin Northern Territory Australia

Opposite the Chinatown Carpark

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**PATRON** - His Honour the Honourable Austin Asche AC QC

## HONORARY OFFICE BEARERS:

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Senior Vice President:	Dianne Tessmann
Vice President:	Julian Schuller
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Editor Progenitor:	Dianne Tessmann
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Auditor:	Angus Accountants

**MEMBERSHIP** - The membership year is from 1 July through to 30 June. Half year membership is from January to June.

**Joining Fee:** \$10.00 (for one address)

**Family:** \$48.00 for 1<sup>st</sup> person plus \$40 per additional family member at same address. Single: \$48.00

**Country:** \$33.00 for 1<sup>st</sup> person plus \$25 per additional family member at same address -  
includes 4 hours Research - available to those living beyond Batchelor in the Northern Territory  
and includes all States and ACT.

**Family Pensioner:** \$33.00 for 1<sup>st</sup> person plus \$25 per additional family member at same address.

**Single Pensioner:** \$33.00.

**Overseas:** AUD \$25.00 (Journal only)

**Visitors Fee:** \$20 per person

Donations to the Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Library fund over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

**Library Hours:** Saturday 1.00 pm - 5.30 pm  
Monday 9.30 am - 5.15 pm  
Tuesday 9.30 am - 5.15 pm

**Research Fee:** Please contact GSNT Inc

**Publications:** A list of publications for sale is available from the Secretary and on our website

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Full page for four consecutive issues -\$160 Full page for one issue \$50

Half page for four consecutive issues -\$100 Half page for one issue \$30

Members can advertise their research name free of charge.

## FRONT COVER:

### UK 1911 Census - Women

"On this day 2 April 1911 - thousands of women across Britain 'hid' from the authorities to avoid being counted in the 1911 Census.

The idea was that if women could not vote - they would not cooperate with the Government by being counted.

In cities all across Britain women gathered in secret 'safe' houses to avoid the count while in London, some Suffragettes hired the Aldwych skating rink so that they could skate through the night!

Women were encouraged to deface their census returns which they did in their hundreds so if you have a family member missing from the 1911 census returns - perhaps she was a Suffragette!

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## CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS

The Genealogical Society of the NT Inc has changed its email address to the following;

[committee@gsnt.org.au](mailto:committee@gsnt.org.au)

However emails sent to our old email address will be redirected.

## WEBSITE

The website for the Society [www.gsnt.org.au](http://www.gsnt.org.au) is at present not working.

## UNEARTHING OUR PIONEERS

By Judy Boland

The National Trust's Heritage Week in Darwin this year saw members of the Genealogical Society conduct a 'walk and talk' about our pioneers in the Goyder Road Cemetery.

The cemetery, when originally surveyed in 1869 encompassed 48 acres, but over the years, urban encroachment has meant that only about 2 acres remain.

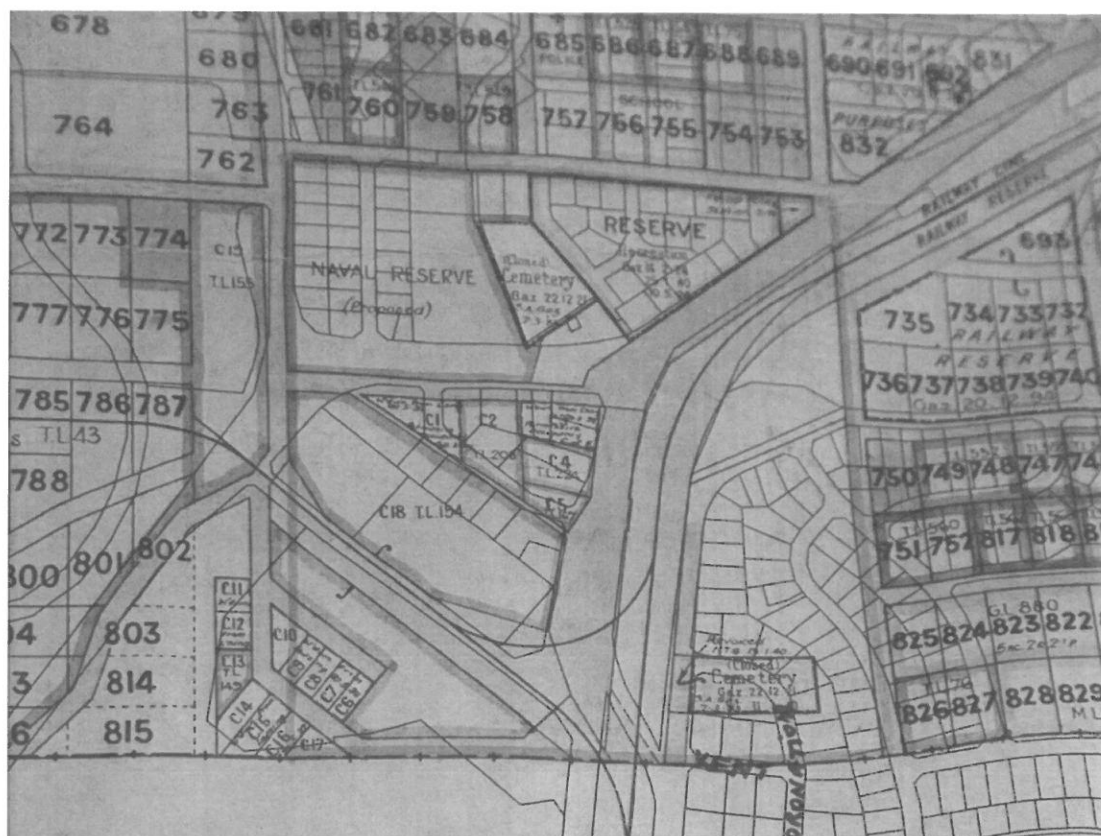
The original survey as shown by the area bordered pink in the map below, also included a burial site especially for 'Orientals' – This is shown as green in the lower right hand corner in the accompanying map; the area now recognised as the Armidale Street area.

The other green area in the upper centre as delineated on the map, is what is now known as the Pioneer Cemetery of Palmerston, commonly referred to as the Goyder Road Cemetery.

The 'walk and talk' was conducted on Saturday 11 May at 9.00am and Patsy Hickey and June Tomlinson explained that the ground penetrating radar searches had indicted some burials outside the existing fence line of the cemetery. It also identified burial sites for a large number of graves, for which there was no headstone.

Society members Dianne Tessmann, Judy Boland, Janet Leather and Eddie Weber provided moral support for Patsy and June.

Such was the interest shown by the 'walk' participants that Patsy and June were still answering questions and engaging in conversation more than half an hour after the scheduled finishing time.



*Area within the pink border, the extent of the original cemetery; the green area upper centre is what remains (Goyder Road Cemetery), whilst the green lower right is the site of the Oriental burial plot.*



*Dianne, Patsy and June explaining the layout of the cemetery.*



*One of the earliest graves, that of George Galbraith McLachlan who died in 1873.*



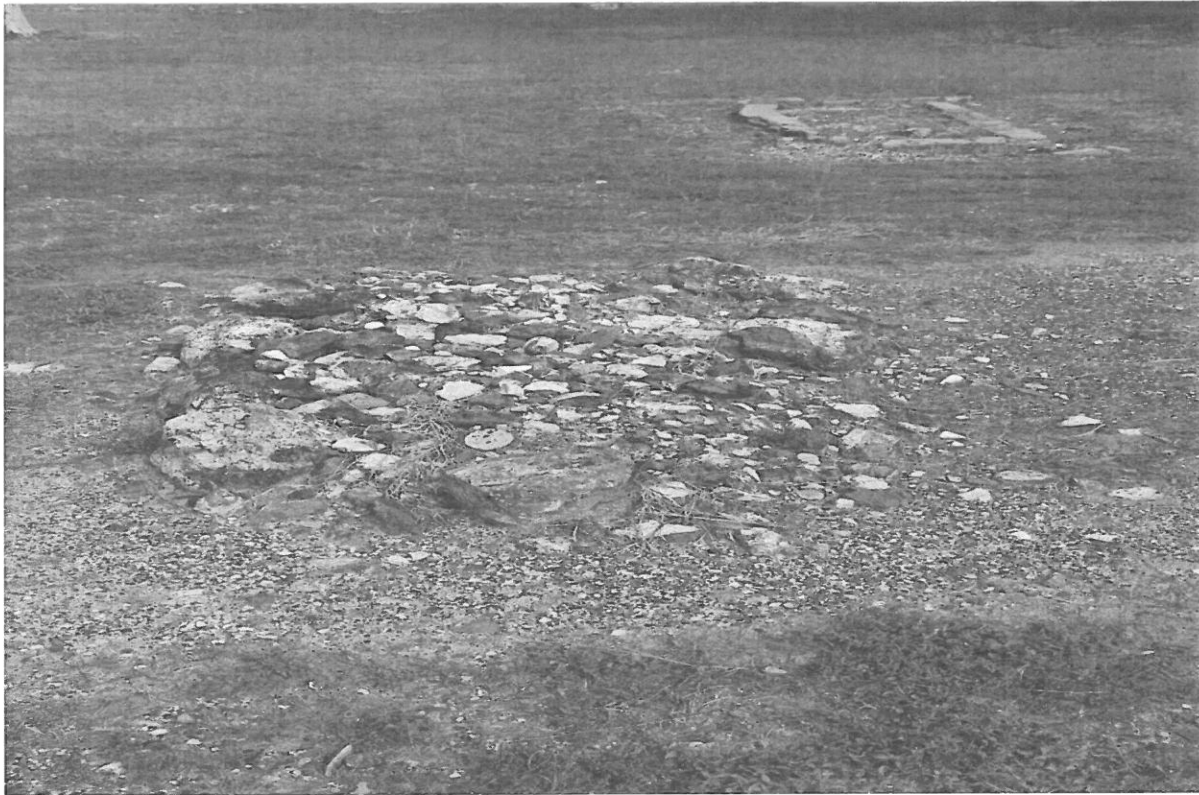


*Another early grave, that of Mrs Hannah Woods, one of Darwin's earliest nurses.*

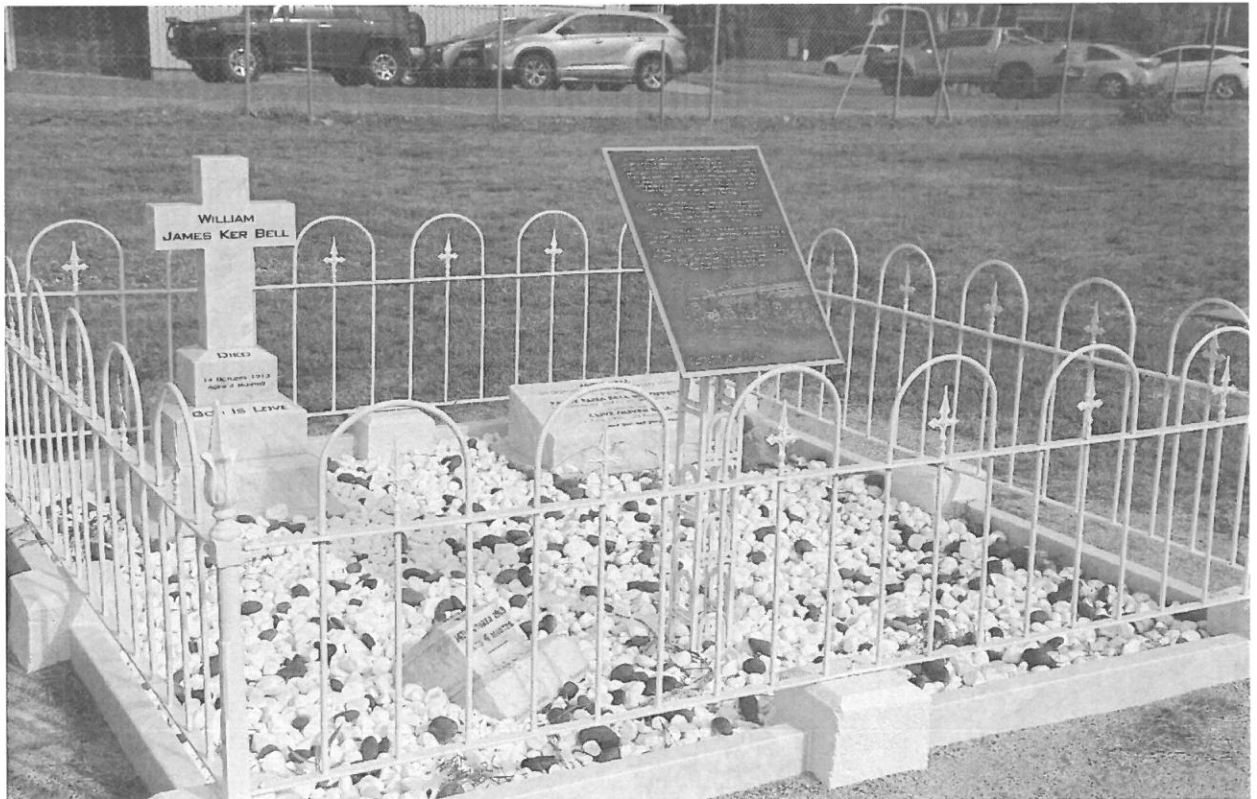


*The ornate tombstone of John Alfred Ensor who died in 1879. The cost of Ensor's tombstone was subscribed by his many friends.*

*The officers of the "Ocean" in the service of the A.S.N. Co., have testified their respect and esteem for their late brother officer—John Alfred Ensor—by erecting a very handsome tombstone in grey granite to his memory, in the Palmerston Cemetery. Northern Territory Times and Gazette (Darwin) Saturday 20 September 1879*



*The grave site of Mrs Mary Anne Garr who died in 1909.*



*The recently renovated graves of John Ker Bell and family members.*

Pioneer cemeteries would be of more value to present and future generations if gravesites were maintained and interpretive signage added thus preserving the history of the area.

In an ideal world, once a gravesite is 100 years old, it behoves the community to preserve it and add interpretive signage.

## FINDING LUKE by Mary Sutherland

For the last few years ,I have been collecting family history stories, -mine, and my husband's.

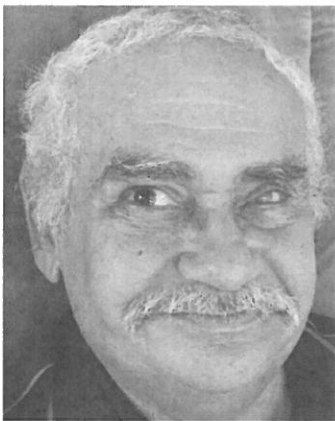
In researching my father's family, I discovered a Cornish family with many different practical skills, who were not particularly interested in recording their stories in writing.

My dad had a large collection of stories, which he told about how things were, as a sheep farmer and dog owner, but not much in the way of things like dates places, and provenance. Along the way, I discovered a British researcher, living in England, who had spent a great deal of time researching and writing up the prolific Morcom family, my father's Cornish migrant family, who had left Cornwall when there was a shortage of work, because Angas, and the British government, had advertised assisted passages to Australia.

One day, after Denys discovered that I lived in Darwin, and was interested in local history and stories, he asked me to see if I could find a stolen generation cousin, member of a distant branch of the Morcom family, who had originally emigrated to Charters Towers, in north Queensland.

He sent me the genealogy he had compiled for Albert Morcom, our cousin's father, who had, after years of travelling, settled in Borroloola, near the Macarthur River, and had lived there for some years, with Luke's mother Yima Dinjali. I've heard that Albert wanted to marry Yima, but at the time, it was illegal for a black person to marry a white person. Luke's father, Albert, registered the births of his two children in his name, and insisted that they be taken to the same place, after Yima died.

He took an interest in them both, writing letters to them at Garden point, Melville island, where Luke and his older sister, Flo, were taken.



Luke and Flo both grew up there. They both seemed to have enjoyed the garden point community where the nuns "grew them up" and were later fostered to Adelaide for extra education. Flo won a Commonwealth Scholarship, and studied nursing, and Luke took up football, as well as high school English.

### Flo Morcom

After graduating, Flo took up nursing, worked in the army, and also in Saudi Arabia.

Luke worked as a broadcaster with radio Larrakeyah, the local indigenous radio station, which works hard at connecting aboriginal people together across the Top End.

I met Luke, in 2017, and enjoyed breakfast and family history with him, not too far from where he was working at Radio Larrakeyah. I met Flo, some time after Luke died in January 2018, when she was on a quick visit to Darwin to see some old army friends of hers, and catch up with her nieces and nephews. We had lunch together, and she said she was thinking of retiring to Darwin sometime soon!





**Lieutenant Neil Stewart Boyle, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> AIF.**

**From Darwin to Gallipoli to the Western Front.**

**By Norman S Cramp.**

Neil Stuart Boyle, the son of James and 'M. Boyle', was born in Morven, Queensland, on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1886, one of three boys to James and his wife (Christian name unknown). He was educated at the Brisbane State School and later spent 14 months at the Victoria College, Wellington, New Zealand, where, it appears, he qualified as an 'Engineer'.

It is unclear as to when Neil arrived in the NT, but he is mentioned in the Darwin newspaper, the *Northern Territory Times and Gazette (NTT&G)* in January 1915, as being, along with his friend Jim McDonald who he served with at Gallipoli, Joint Honorary Secretary of the organising committee for the 1914 Pine Creek Boxing Day Sports meeting. He was also mentioned as having sung two songs at the social function following the 1915 New Year's Day sporting event in Darwin. It is most likely Boyle was employed in the private sector, as he is not mentioned in the Administrator's list of Public Servants who had enlisted up to, and including, 1917, although it is not clear in which 'Engineering' discipline (i.e.; civil, mechanical, electrical etc.) he was qualified and employed. However, it is most likely to have been civil/mining.

Boyle left Darwin aboard the S.S. *Taiyuan* on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1915, in company with Jim McDonald and John Beattie, all three of them destined for Gallipoli where Beattie was taken prisoner by the Turks. Boyle was twenty-nine years and two months of age and single when he enlisted at Enoggera, Brisbane on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1915. He was taken into the 1<sup>st</sup> AIF at the rank of Second Lieutenant (2/Lt.), having qualified for that rank on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1915, and was attached to the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. He embarked at Brisbane aboard HMAT *Ascauius*, disembarking at Alexandria, Egypt.

He embarked at Alexandria with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) for the Gallipoli Peninsula on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1915. He served at Gallipoli until 4<sup>th</sup> December 1915 at which time he was evacuated to Mudros, suffering from jaundice and malaria. He was admitted to the Blue Sister's Hospital, Timla, Malta, where he remained until 13<sup>th</sup> February 1916, when he boarded the Hospital ship (HS) *Simla* for Egypt. He departed Alexandria on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1916 to join the BEF, France, disembarking at Marseilles on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

Nearly two months later, he was taken ill with gastritis and diarrhoea, being admitted to the 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance on 13<sup>th</sup> May. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1916 and suffered his first wound, shrapnel in the toe, on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1916, although his military record also states that the wound was a gunshot wound (GSW) to the right foot. Regardless, the wound was serious enough for him to be evacuated to England for treatment and recovery. He was granted sick leave while in England and, after recovering sufficiently, was qualified as a bombing 'Instructor' at the Southern Command Bombing School, Lyndhurst in December 1916.

He remained in England until July 1917 when he proceeded to France to join his battalion. On 15<sup>th</sup> September that year he was attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> AIF Brigade Headquarters in Belgium where he remained until 29<sup>th</sup> September before returning to his battalion. He was wounded again on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of October (his military service records state both dates), this time with a GSW to the left foot. He was admitted to hospital at Etaples, and then Roules, before re-joining the battalion at Le Havre on 18<sup>th</sup> November.



SOME QUEENSLAND OFFICERS ON THE OTHER SIDE.

Seated: Lieutenant Cleary, Captain Walker, Lieutenant Kerr.  
Standing: Lieutenants Thomson, M.C., McIntyre, Clive Morcom, Boyle, and Wilsbire. Lieutenant Clive Morcom  
is in civil life a Brisbane dentist, son of Mr. W. Morcom.

**Lt. Neil Stuart Boyle is standing second from right.**

**(Source: NAA, Discovering Anzacs, Profiles, Neil Stuart Boyle)**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1918 he proceeded to England on leave, returning to the Western Front on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that month. In late April he reported sick to a Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) suffering from 'sores on penis'. He spent 6 days in hospital before, once again, returning to the front. In June 1918 he reported sick again, this time with a 'rash', (described as a 'maculo popular' in his service record), at which time he was diagnosed as having contracted syphilis. He was one of 'around 60,000 Australian soldiers [who] ended up contracting venereal disease (VD) by the end of the First World War'. He spent 57 days in the VD section, before re-joining the battalion on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1918.

His time in hospital being treated for VD would not only have been shameful and painful, it would have been financially damaging as well. The reason being, the Australian government had introduced special regulations in 1915, covering all AIF members, that stated, 'No pay will be issued while abroad for any of absence from duty on account of venereal disease'. Given Boyle spent nearly two months in hospital being treated for/convalescing from VD, his pay pack would have been 'skinny' by the time he returned to duty.

But return he did, being wounded for the third time on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1918 during an attack on enemy positions, this time suffering a wound to the head. The cause of the wound is unclear as one entry in his service record states 'GSW head', while another states he was 'wounded in the head by a piece of shell'. Regardless, he was taken to 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance, then to No: 61 CCS and, on 1<sup>st</sup> September to the 8<sup>th</sup> General Hospital at Rouen, where he died of his wounds at 4:20am on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1918, – at the age of 32 and just over two months from the end of the war! He was buried in the St. Sever Cemetery, Haute-Normandie.

Neil Boyle's war and life were over and perhaps that was a good thing - given there was no cure for syphilis at that time and given the 'societal norms of the day'. Although the spread of VD could have been (at least) arrested somewhat by the issue or purchase of condoms, it seems only a limited number were issued to the Diggers by the AIF. Given Boyle's rank and (probably) position in society (i.e. a professional Engineer) it is almost certain he would have been shunned and his life would have been one of pain, shame and misery!

Following his death, there was confusion aplenty regarding the personages of Neil Boyle and Percy Boyle, whose real name was Percy Spain, whether, or not, Neil's parents were alive and, if so, where they were residing and who would be the recipient of the war gratuity pension. As a result of this confusion, Boyle's considerable amount of personal effects (three separate shipments thereof) went missing, or at least were unclaimed, for some time which compelled Mrs. Boyle to write to the AIF in March 1919 advising his personal effects had not reached her at 50 Webb Street, Wellington New Zealand. Prior to that correspondence, Neil's brother, Lt. R.D. Boyle, wrote to the AIF on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1918 requesting his mother be awarded the war gratuity pension. In response, OIC Base Records wrote to Neil's brother on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1918, advising him that it was necessary for him, or his mother, to complete the 'prescribed form' so that the application could be processed.

Given this took place within months of Neil's death, the confusion surrounding his parents is interesting, albeit it would have been sad and stressful for his family. The confusion regarding his parents being deceased or alive appears to have come about due to another NT soldier and possibly a friend of Neil Boyle, Percy Spain, having taken the identity of 'Percy Vernon **Boyle**'. In January 1921, Base Records wrote to Neil's father, James, requesting evidence that either he, or his wife, were alive and still Neil's next of kin, which is incredible given the correspondence of 1918 and 1919.

Still, the confusion went on and in March 1921 the OIC Base Records wrote to Mrs. Elizabeth Spain, Percy's mother, requesting any item that may identify Percy Spain in an attempt to clear up the matter of misidentification. Mrs. Spain sent a photograph of her son, Percy, and that seems to have settled that part of the matter, along with a letter in March 1921 to the 'D.A.A.G. 5<sup>th</sup> Military District', advising that no soldier named 'P or P.V. Boyle, D.C.M., M.M.' could be identified as being 'identical with the late Private Spain'. Interestingly, Neil Boyle is not mentioned in any of this correspondence!

In December 1924, the Boyle's made contact with the AIF again requesting a copy, or copies, of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's grave register booklet. The AIF responded by advising there were no copies available free of charge, but they could be purchased for 3/- each! The Boyle's purchased two copies.

One last mystery regarding Neil Boyle's war service is that his service record shows his 1914-15 Star was received by his father, James, on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1921, however, there is no mention of his other two medals being received by the family. Neil was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal as his service record shows, but there is no record of them being issued. Perhaps his family just gave up asking?



Lt. Neil Stuart Boyle (Source: NAA, Discovering Anzacs, Profiles, Neil Stuart Boyle).



N S Boyle's grave at St. Sever Cemetery, Haute-Normandie, France. (Source: NAA, Discovering Anzacs, Profiles, Neil Stuart Boyle).

## VERNON LIONEL MARSH AND THE HMAT *BOONAH*.

By Garey Neenan

One hundred years ago the Great War was over, but one Territory soldier was about to face one of the biggest battles of his life. His name was Vernon Lionel Marsh.

Vernon Lionel Marsh was born in Darwin on 7 April 1900 to Cecil Henry Marsh and Belle (nee Kelsey). Vernon's grandfather, John George Kelsey, was an early Clerk of the Palmerston District Council and Kelsey Crescent and Kelsey Place in Millner are named in his grandfather's honour.

In 1995, Kelsey Place was renamed to Belle Place, after Vernon's mother following a petition from residents citing confusion between the two streets. Belle was a pioneer of early Palmerston and one of the first women in the Territory to vote.

Vernon attended Darwin Public School and was a member of the Darwin Cable Guard. He followed his brother Keith who had enlisted in late 1916 and enlisted in Adelaide five days after his 18th birthday, with his parents' permission, citing his date of birth as 7 April 1900.



(For Identification purposes the above space should be filled in personally by the Applicant.)

**CONSENT OF PARENTS OR GUARDIANS. (For Persons under 21 years of age.)**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I approve of the above application, and consent to the enlistment of my son for Active Service Abroad.

Statement regarding Death or Absence of either or both Parents.

Father's Signature C H Marsh

Mother's Signature Belle Marsh

OR

Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



He was assigned to the 6th General Service Reinforcements and after undertaking basic training, his unit embarked from Adelaide on board HMAT A36 *Boonah* on 22 October 1918. The HMAT *Boonah* was the last Australian troop ship to leave Australia for the war in Europe.

Carrying over 900 troops, the *Boonah* arrived in Durban, South Africa just days after the armistice was signed. As a result, the ship was immediately prepared for the return to Australia.

While tied up in Durban, local stevedores loaded supplies onto the ship and were billeted on the ship with the troops. Unbeknownst to those on the *Boonah*, the stevedores were infected with the Spanish Flu, or as we have known it from 2010, the H1N1 Swine Flu.

The flu was transmitted to the Australian troops and in the close quarters of the overcrowded *Boonah* on the trip back to Australia, the perfect environment existed for the flu to spread. Five days after the *Boonah* departed Durban, rough seas and cold weather ensured that the troops remained in close confinement and the first flu-like symptoms began to appear.

The first casualty was Sergeant Arthur Charles Thwaites (serial number 21044) who jumped overboard on the night of 9 December 1918. A later investigation by a Court of Enquiry found that he committed suicide by jumping overboard, most likely as a result of being delirious from the fever of the flu.

By the time the ship had arrived back at Fremantle on 12 December, more than 300 cases had been reported and Commonwealth immigration authorities refused to allow the soldiers to disembark, knowing of the global pandemic which was underway but which had until then spared Western Australia.

The ship anchored in Gage Roads of Fremantle and after some delays, approval was granted for nearly 300 of the sickest soldiers to be moved ashore to the Quarantine Station at Woodman Point, south of Fremantle. Three of the men died on the first day at the station and it took three days for 337 men to be brought ashore. The situation continued to deteriorate further with more dying and more than 20 nursing and medical staff becoming infected. By 20 December, Woodman Point was housing over 600 soldiers.

For those left on board the ship, conditions were believed to be deplorable. Authorities insisted on a seven-day incubation period with no new cases being cited to prove that the disease had burnt itself out. Unfortunately, new infections and deaths continued in the cramped and close living conditions, which proved to be the perfect environment for the flu to spread.

Public outrage grew against the refusal of the immigration authorities to allow all of the soldiers ashore with casualties growing each day.

*"How many cases of sickness and death are required to make the authorities do a commonsense thing?"*

*"Enough of this inhuman incarceration of soldiers in the disease-stricken cubby-hole of a floating hell."*

Wrangling between the State Minister for Health, Sir Hal Colebatch and the federal immigration authorities continued and tensions increased to the point that the Returned Servicemen's association made threats to storm the ship to return the sick men to shore.

After nine days of acrimony, and despite breaking quarantine regulations, the ship sailed east on 20 December, presumably to defuse the situation. Another 17 cases were discovered between Albany and Adelaide and the remaining men were disembarked at Torrens Island Quarantine Station, a similar facility to Woodman Point and just north of Adelaide. No further deaths occurred and after being given the all-clear, the remaining men returned to their homes.

A total of twenty-seven soldiers and four nurses at Woodman Point died of influenza during the crisis and are buried at the Woodman Point quarantine station, later to be interred at Karrakatta Cemetery.

The Spanish flu pandemic infected about 500 million people around the world between January 1918 and December 1920. In the absence of modern medicine, it is believed that between 50-100 million deaths were recorded, or around 4% of the world's population.

For Marsh, he ended up at Woodman Point and was released having been cleared to continue his journey home. He had escaped the flu and on 9 January and was entrained at Fremantle and transported to Adelaide for discharged on 23 January 1919.

He returned to the Northern Territory, living in Tennant Creek and working as a linesman before moving to Alice Springs where he managed the Memorial Club until 1951. He married and settled back in Darwin in the 1960's living in Fannie Bay and finally in Parap Road.



Marsh died on 22 October 1984, exactly 66 years to the day the overcrowded "*HMAT Boonah*" left Adelaide, and now rests in the Darwin General Cemetery in Jingili.

Marsh's headstone records his age in 1984 as 83 years making his actual year of birth 1901 and more importantly, making him underage at the time of enlisting. His enlistment record for WW2 also recorded his birth in 1901.

In the wake of the armistice of WW1, the *Boonah* incident, despite being recorded widely in the press around Australia, has gone relatively unnoticed.

In 2004, Ian Darroch published the book "*The Boonah tragedy*" detailing the incident.

As for the *Boonah*, she was sold to a German steamship company in 1925 and was taken over by the German Kriegsmarine (navy) at the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1940, she was torpedoed and sunk by the British submarine HMS *Narwhal* off the coast of Norway.

## BRUNETTE DOWNS STATION

Our Library was contacted by Craig Eibeck a Case Worker with the Congress Link-Up Service of the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress located in Alice Springs.

He sent us an email stating he was acting on behalf of a client who was searching for the grave of his great-great-grandmother Larry (Warramungu) McDougal. Craig listed other family members of Larry's family.

We originally thought Larry was a male, however we soon discovered Larry (Warramungu) McDougal was a female and in her early years had been the very efficient Head Stockman on Brunette Downs. Our research established Larry was an amazing person. After Larry ceased being the Headstockman she was still very involved in the day to day work on the station. The research broadened and we covered areas in the Northern Territory and Queensland.

We used multiple resources, within our Library, Territory Archives, National Archives of Australia, Northern Territory Library, TROVE (digital newspapers), published books and papers, a recorded interview with the son of a past owner, Centre of Indigenous Family History Studies, Police Journals, Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA), and Birth Death & Marriage Indexes. This list is not exhaustive.

Craig Eibeck received permission from the Congress to take Larry's family members back to the Station. The family wanted to see the graves of their ancestors and also wanted to erect a memorial stone should they find graves. Craig also contacted the Australian Agricultural Company Ltd (owners) and the manager of the station who agreed to his proposal.

*Below is a report by Craig of the journey to Brunette Downs Station.*

We arrived at Brunette Downs station at 12:00 pm and introduced ourselves to the staff at the Homestead and then found a site near the (dry) lake to camp for the night.

We were informed that as the station was currently in a drought, all the workers were out mustering cattle to transport them out of Brunette Downs and that the Manager was not at the station to talk to. As it was early afternoon, we decided to search north of the homestead for the graveyards.

It was exhausting work, walking through bushland, searching for graveyards. One was eventually found near a station homestead rubbish dump 1.3 km north of the Homestead.

The graveyard was unkempt, overgrown, but with a wire fence surrounding it. The clients paid their respects at the graves and discussed that it must be the graves of the O'Keefe and Turner families, as there were children's graves there, based on information provided by the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA).

Later in the afternoon, we discovered a young Aboriginal stockman who informed us that there was nobody staying at the nearby Aboriginal Community at Corrella Creek (50 km to the north), as they had all left the community and travelled to Katherine, N.T.

The young, Aboriginal stockman informed us that there was an elderly Aboriginal stockman named Tony Green living at the Brunette Downs staff quarters. He was said to have lived at Brunette Downs for much of the past 75 years. We were taken to see Tony Green and showed him the photo of the client's grandmother taken at the old Homestead with James White Senior.

Tony Green said that he had been born just after she died. He also stated that a few months before, (in early 2019), ten (10) people from the Tiwi Islands had travelled to Brunette Downs from the Top End with the same photograph, and had been searching for the same person's grave.

Tony Green then agreed to show us the grave of Larry Brunette. He also mentioned that we should talk with Johnny Rankine, an extended family member, who lived further east at Alexander Downs Station. We travelled behind Mr Green to a point 1 km east of the homestead. He pointed out an enclosed area some three hundred metres away in the bushes.

We walked through bushland and gibber stones to the graveyard. One of the graves had four (4) steel posts outlining the site, painted white at the top and decorated with rocks and painted shells that had been placed around the grave, most likely left by the Tiwi Islanders.

Although two of the clients were convinced that this was indeed the gravesite of Larry, due to the shells around the grave left by the Tiwi Islanders, one client still had doubts. The research had suggested that Larry's name was written on the grave, and there was no sign of any name plates in the cemetery.



The next morning finding more gravesites was unsuccessful.

Johnny Rankine told of how ten Tiwi Islanders had arrived to Brunette Downs four months earlier, however had not been allowed access.

The Tiwi Islanders had then travelled to Alexandria Downs and met Johnny Rankine who told them they were welcome to camp at Alexandria Downs Station for the night. The following morning, Johnny had taken them back to Brunette Downs and introduced them to Tony Green.

Tony had shown them Larry's grave and they had all paid their respects, placing shells around the grave, before travelling back to Darwin and the Tiwi Islands.



Research had shown that Larry's children had been removed approximately 1915 and sent to Cherbourg, Queensland, but that in the 1930's more children had been removed and sent to Darwin and the Tiwi Islands.

This information came from the Memoirs of James White who was the Brunette Downs Station manager from 1932 ~ 1935.



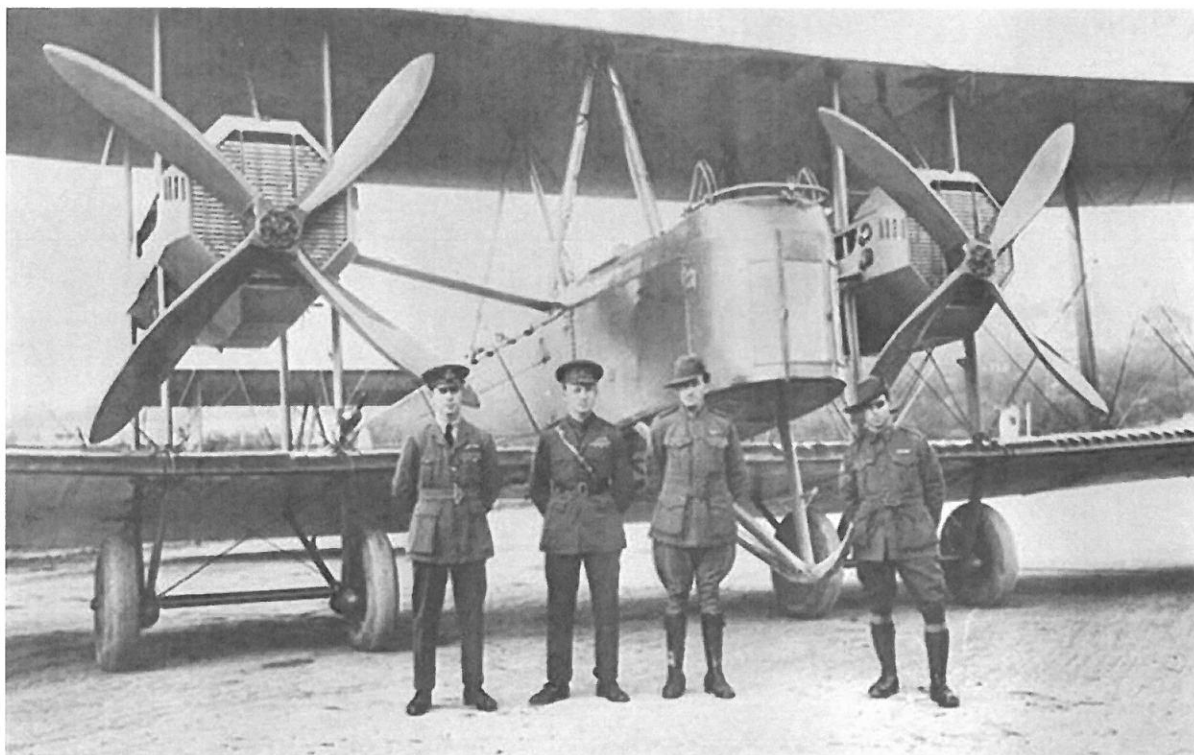
We think the above main grave with shells and stones 1 km east of the homestead is Larry's. There are several other graves in the area



Photograph of the graveyard 1.3 km north of the homestead.  
We think this may be O'Keefe and Turner family graves (including children).

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

BY VALERIE ASCHE AM



**The Great Air Race Crew 1919 – Ross & Keith Smith, James Bennett & Walter Shiers**

### **1. *The Great Air Race***

At the end of WW1 of 1914-8 there were many men who had trained as mechanics and pilots of aircraft, who could envisage the future air-trade and tourism around the world.

Billy Hughes, our Prime Minister, persuaded the Australian Government to donate a prize of 10,000 pounds, and be called *the Great Air Race*, to travel from England to Australia within 30 days. The flier/s must be Australian. There were 7 applicants, not all were eligible. One entrant did not leave until 1920 and took 6 months to arrive!

Ross Smith (pilot), Keith Smith (navigator), James Bennett and Walter Shiers (both mechanics) were experienced in their fields and excellent team members; they entered the race. The plane chosen was a Standard *Vickers Vimy* bomber because this plane had been used in June 1919 by Alcock and Brown in a non-stop crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. The Smith journey was divided into 4 parts; each part was carefully planned. For example, the 'Shell Marketing Co' was to provide fuel and oil at required depots on tabulated dates.

The route chosen was England, France, Italy, Crete, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, India, Burma, Siam, Federated Malay States, Dutch East Indies and Port Darwin. Weather was the main enemy – snow, ice, cloud, wind, volcanoes; and they had to fly in low altitudes to allow them to spot mountains and airstrips.

They had many near tragedies. Two were concerned with bogging in mud on the ground. The first was at Pisa in Europe; and the last bogging was at Surabaya nearer to Darwin in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). Here the plane sank in the mud on the runway. Over 200 local workers, slaved to dig out the plane

onto a bamboo matting platform which did not hold. After another 6 hours of hard labour, digging under a boiling tropical sun the plane was now put on a very long, donated, bamboo matting - some with protruding nails which punctured the tyres. The crew would never forget the hard work and the kind donation of mats from the inhabitants, often part of their house structure and bedding.

The final route is familiar to many Territorians; they skirted the coast of Bali and Lombok to Bima on Sumbawa to Timor. The Australian Government had arranged for a warship, the *H.M.A.S. Sydney* to patrol the sea between Timor and Port Darwin to show the way, and in case help was needed. Smith and team saw the ship and the sailors waving, noted that the *Vickers Vimy* was travelling at 75 mph and often as low as 3,000 feet.

The last landing before Darwin was at Atamboea of the Netherlands Indies. They sighted Bathurst Island lighthouse at 2.06 pm and then at 3 pm the Port Darwin landing strip. This strip had been prepared by Hudson Fysh, Paul McGinness and a small support team who had made the hazardous overland trip from Longreach, Queensland, to Darwin, in a Model T Ford, to undertake this strip preparation in a paddock, behind the Fannie Bay Gaol.

They had a welcome different from any other that they had received. They circled Darwin and came low enough to observe the crowds and the landing place. They landed on *Terra Australis* on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 27 days 20 hours after taking off from Hounslow, England. They had won the race against time with 52 hours to spare and received the 10,000 pounds. Honours awaited them. The Administrator, the Lord Mayor and about 2,000 citizens (most of Darwin) were near the landing strip. The four men stayed at Government House and were feted. They were amazed to receive old newspapers and best wishes for their proposed entry in the Great Race.

Some weeks later Ross and Keith Smith were knighted; the Smiths complained that Jim Bennett and Wally Shiers were equally entitled to receive this honour. The 10,000 pounds had been equally divided.

A plaque at 23 Giles Street, Fannie Bay marks the touch down site of the *Vickers Vimy* in 1919.

The Ross Smith Memorial at the end of Ross Smith Avenue beside the sea in East Point Road was unveiled on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1923 just a year after Ross's untimely death in a plane accident.

The Parap Primary School has named three of the school houses after the men of *the Great Race* – Smith, Bennett and Shiers.

Shiers Street in The Narrows goes from the overpass of Bagot Road to Wilmot Street.

A service is held on 10<sup>th</sup> December each year to commemorate the landing. The Fannie Bay History and Heritage Society now manage that memorial ceremony.

### ***Sequallae***

In 1922 Ross Smith and Bennett were killed when their plane crashed in England. They were exploring a world trip for the future.

Sir Keith Smith had a life-long role in the development of air transport, becoming a Director of QANTAS. He died in 1968.

Shiers enjoyed a long and varied career as an expert aircraft engineer. He qualified as a pilot and died in 1968.

Hudson Fysh has an Avenue named for him in Parap, NT. He was a founding Director of QANTAS; was

knighted later; and died in 2001.

The *Vickers Vimy* is on display at Adelaide airport, the home of the Smith brothers. The fame of this exploit kept the names Australia and Darwin to the fore in the exciting days of aviation development during the 1920s, 1930s and beyond.

In peacetime and war we have had great men and women to inspire us and make us proud to be Australian. A splendid part of that inheritance is the account we have here of an historic and legendary flight. It is part of us all, and our duty is to see that it is never forgotten by us or those who follow.

References: Ross Smith. *14,000 Miles through the Air*. 1922. MacMillan and Co, Ltd.

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