

## **Remembering the sacrifices of those with SC connections who served their country 100 years ago.**

Published in the Timaru Herald 25 August 2018

**By Teresa Scott**

### **Lieutenant Alexander Reuel LIVINGSTONE, No.12553**

Alexander Reuel Livingstone, known as Ruel, was born on 25 September 1893 at Timaru, the fifth surviving son of Thomas and Mary Ann (née Potts) Livingstone. Thomas and Mary Ann were married in 1874 in Ireland and their first child was born in 1875 in New Zealand. Ruel was educated at Timaru Main (albeit briefly), Christchurch Normal, High Street Dunedin and West Christchurch schools, then Lyttelton District High School and a year at Christchurch Boys' High School. As his father Thomas was a police sergeant and later detective, the family was often on the move. He was stationed at the Timaru Police Station from November 1886 until about 1900. Reuel Livingstone, a schoolboy, was fined 5 shillings in 1910 at Christchurch, for riding a bicycle at night without a light.

At the time of enlisting – 10 July 1915 - Ruel was a farmer, of Hawke's Bay, and single. After a short time working in Christchurch he had gone farming. He stood at 5 feet 10½ inches tall, weighed 172 lbs, and was in good condition, apart from needing to have some teeth stumps extracted and having slight varicocele. He nominated his father as next-of-kin, and gave his parents' address for last address. He had already served with Canterbury Coastal Defence; and he was a troop leader in the CYC (Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry), sometimes acting as second in command of the Canterbury Mounted Regiment. There he was regarded as a very capable and efficient officer. After enlisting Alexander was drafted into the Non-Commissioned Officers class. In time he was to receive his commission as a second-lieutenant. Non-Commissioned Officer A. R. Livingstone, of the Eighth Reinforcements, Mounted Rifles, C Squadron, was temporarily appointed sergeant in August 1915. Two months later, while encamped at Tauherenikau, the Eighth Mounteds drew their horses and QMS. A. R. Livingstone was appointed regimental quartermaster-sergeant with headquarters staff. Three weeks afterwards on being appointed second lieutenant on probation he was transferred to later reinforcements – Eleventh Reinforcements, Mounted Rifles. At Featherston Camp in February 1916 he was transferred from D Squadron, 11th, to 2nd Reserve Squadron. This was followed by a posting to the Twelfth Mounted Rifles.

A notice in the New Zealand Gazette No 54 of 4th May 1916 signalled the approval of the appointment of Second Lieutenant Alexander Reuel Livingstone to the New Zealand Military Forces. In March 1916, at Featherston, A. R. Livingstone had passed and obtained marks required in special examinations for first appointment to a commission. He embarked from Wellington on 6 May 1916 as a Second Lieutenant with the Twelfth Reinforcements, New Zealand Rifle Brigade, destined for Suez, Egypt. After his arrival in Egypt (22 June 1916), he was posted to the Canterbury

Mounted Rifles and was involved in every engagement there. As of 7 February 1917, on the Field of Honour, he was again promoted – this time to the rank of lieutenant. For two and a half weeks in June 1917 he was detached to the School of Instruction. On 19 July 1917 Lieutenant A. R. Livingstone was wounded by a bomb from a Tank. He was admitted to hospital in Egypt suffering from this bomb wound to his buttock. On 14 August he left hospital and returned to his unit.

Lieutenant Alexander Reuel Livingstone was first reported wounded – a severe case, then reported missing, on 25 November 1917. Soon it was confirmed that Lieutenant Alexander Reuel Livingstone had been killed in action on 25 November 1917 in Palestine. His body having been found, a report of burial at Palestine on 21 December 1917 was made. As at December 1917 the Christchurch Boys' High School Roll of Honour stood at 663, 94 of whom had made the supreme sacrifice, and three were missing – one of them being Reuel. His brother Eric Joseph Livingstone, who was in camp when Reuel was killed, was also killed in action, in 1918; another brother Robert Heaton Livingstone was wounded and invalided back to New Zealand before joining the Royal Flying Corps; and yet another, Thomas McClelland Livingstone, served with Australian forces in World War I; a fifth brother, Henry Gillies Livingstone, was stationed as adjutant to the CYC, as of 1917.

*This is part of the SCRoll project. You can find SCRoll stories, hosted by the South Canterbury Museum, at [museum.timaru.govt.nz/scroll](http://museum.timaru.govt.nz/scroll)*