

Private Humphrey James BOWKETT :

Regimental No. 40767

1st Bn. Canterbury Regiment. Enlisted 1st Nov. 1916, Timaru. Discharged 6th Feb 1918.

Service records available elsewhere. Interred RSA section of Geraldine Cemetery. Buried 28 June 1957.

Jim was born 5 Nov. 1892 in Geraldine. He was the son of Thomas BOWKETT & Sarah CLEAVER, who arrived in NZ on the steam ship 'Columbus' in 1874, having married a few months earlier in Coventry. Thomas was born 1848, at Helston, Cornwall. He was a coach builder in Timaru until 1885 when he & his wife & family moved to Geraldine. At a later date Thomas moved back to Timaru where he set himself up in partnership in a finance company which was known as Starr-Bowkett.

During WWI Thomas's son Humphrey James, (Jim) served in the NZ Army. He spent 5 months in France & Belgium. He endured the horrors of the trenches at Passchendaele where in October 1917, he was wounded & gassed. He was then discharged & spent a few months in hospital, first at Abbeville, France, then at Bathurst in England. He returned to NZ in early 1918 & in 1921 married Euphemia Davidson, (Phemie) McPherson at St. Paul's, Highfield, in Timaru. They later moved to Geraldine where Jim set himself up in his own tailoring business. They had three children & Jim continued in tailoring for all of his working life. He was a foundation member of the Grande View Golf Club which was close to his home in Gresham Road. He died in June 1957.

His son James Alexander Bowkett, was born 17 Nov. 1921, in Geraldine. He served in WW2, first of all in the Army but was then transferred to the Navy where he later trained in the Fleet Air Arm in the USA. He was however not suited to this service so returned to the Royal Navy & served in the Atlantic, the North Sea & the English Channel. Later he served in the Pacific & he was there when the War ended in 1945. On returning to NZ he gained a BA degree at Otago University, then taking up primary school teaching. He had a successful career in this profession, his last position being principal at Ngongotaha Primary School in a Maori community, where, due to his efforts he had a health clinic named after him. He died in 2007 & was buried at Awahou, beside Lake Rotorua.

Joan Margaret Bowkett, Jim's sister, was born 1925, in Geraldine. She became a nurse & later was a theatre sister at Green Lane Hospital in Auckland. She was assisting when open heart surgery was first done in NZ by Barrett-Boyes. She married twice & died in Perth Australia, in 2009, her daughter & son having moved to this city several years earlier.

Joan's sister, Georgina Marion Bowkett, was born June 1929, in Geraldine. She became a Home Science Teacher in Christchurch. She married a local man, Peter Barnes, a civil engineer & they later moved to Wanganui where he was responsible for water & drainage for this city.

Jim, Joan & Marion all married & had children.

Private Humphrey James Bookett.

Regimental No. 40767

1st B.N. Canterbury Regt.

Enlisted 1.11.16 Timaru.

Embarked Wellington 15.2.17

Disembarked UK 26.4.17

Marched to Slings " " "

Left for France 26.5.17

Marched into camp Etaples 28.5.17

Joined Battalion (Passchendale) 19.6.17

Wounded in Action (chest) 12.10.17

Adm. S.A. Gen Hospital Abbeville 13.10.17

Adm. N.O.1 NZ Bathurst 30.10.17

Discharged unft. 6.2.18.

Placed on NZ roll N/R 17/1127923?

Interred in the RSA section Geraldine Cemetery
28/6/57

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family history booklet.

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