SMITHFIELD HONOUR ROLL

ADAMS Arthur Russell

Russell's father Alexander Adams came from Hawick, Scotland in the ship "Albatross" in 1851, with his father John, as a 9 year old. Alex began farming with his uncle James Turnbull at "Whyte Bank" Smithfield. James left Alex his entire estate on his death.

Alex was Chairman of the Smithfield Institute in 1876 and 1877. He married Alice Kelly, on 13th April 1882 daughter of William and Elizabeth Ann (nee Gould of Gould's Creek). Alice was born at the homestead in 1859.

They lived in "Whyte Bank" where Alex grew mainly cereal crops. The property had a frontage to the Main North Road and went back to the foothills with a rough road past the farmhouse and stables leading on up to One Tree Hill.

They had the following children;

1. John   b. 16 Jan 1883 at Smithfield

2. William Kelly   b. 30 Aug 1884 at Smithfield

3. Isabell Turnbull   b. 4th June 1886 at Smithfield

4. Alexander Douglas   b. 6 Dec 1887 at Smithfield

5. Elizabeth Gould   b. 4 March 1890 at Smithfield

6. Arthur Russell   b. 28 Sept 1894 at Smithfield

7. Jean Alice   b. 9 Dec 1896 at Smithfield

Russell as Arthur was known, was a 20 year old farm labourer when war broke out in 1914. His mother Alice had to give written consent on December 17th 1914 for Russell to enlist in the AIF.

Russell enlisted on 26th November 1914 and was posted to "C" Squadron 11th Light Horse Regiment on 16th February 1915. He was promoted to Sergeants on 20th March 1915. On the 27th April 1915. he joined the Regiment in Queensland. He sailed with the Regiment on HMAT A7 "Medic" from Brisbane on 2nd June.

Russel landed in ANZAC 26th August 1915 and transferred to 9th Light Horse Regt. He was evacuated from Gallipoli on the last night.

Soon after rejoining the Regiment in Egypt on 3rd March 1916, he was promoted to S.Sgt. Major.

- Promoted to T/R(training?)

- Sgt.Major and posted to 4th Training Regiment on 24th November 1917.

- Reverted to S.S.M. on rejoining Rgt. On 22nd April 1918.

- Joined cadet school Zeitoun 25th June 1918. (Imperial school of Instruction at Zeitoun, Egypt, where emerging tactics were taught to NCO's and officers).

- Commissioned 23rd October 1918.

- Reporting back to Rgt. At HOMS on 7th November 1918 and posted to "S" Squadron.

Russel later took part in the latter part of the Sinai operations and NEKL raid. Was in the 3rd Gaza fight and all patrols out from Fara from April to October 1917. Took part in all Beersheba operations as a Squadron Sgt. Major. He was not wounded.

His Officer's Remarks were as follows –

"He was commissioned after operations ceased (Lieutenant). Showed tact and energy as a group leader. Good instructor, fair disciplinarian, physically fit. As an N.C.O. he did very good work in the field and in administration"

The formation of the 4th Light Horse Brigade, and the 11th Light Horse Regiment as part of it, was announced on 11 February 1915. Two squadrons of the 11th Light Horse were subsequently formed in Queensland, and a third in South Australia. It sailed from Australia in two contingents in June 1915. The first contingent was landed at Aden on 12 July to reinforce the British garrison there against a predicted enemy attack; they re-embarked on 18 July without having seen action.

The regiment was reunited in Egypt on 23 July 1915 and began training as infantry, having been ordered to leave its horses in Australia. A month later it deployed to Gallipoli. The regiment was again split up, to reinforce three light horse regiments already ashore - A Squadron went to the 2nd Light Horse Regiment, B Squadron to the 5th, and C Squadron to the 9th. It was not reunited until 12 February 1916, by which time all of the AIF troops from Gallipoli had returned to Egypt.

Returning to its mounted role, the 11th Light Horse joined the forces defending the Suez Canal on 20 July 1916. In ensuing months it conducted patrols and participated in several forays out into the Sinai Desert. In April 1917 the regiment moved into Palestine to join the main British and dominion advance. It joined its first major battle on 19 April when it attacked, dismounted, as part of the ill-fated second battle of Gaza.

With two frontal attacks on Gaza having failed, the next attempt to capture the Turkish bastion was a wide outflanking move via the town of Beersheba, launched on 31 October 1917. A deteriorating tactical situation late on the first day of the operation caused the 11th's sister regiments - the 4th and the 12th - to be unleashed on Beersheba at the gallop, an action which has gone down in history as the charge of Beersheba. The 11th, engaged on flank protection duties was too widely scattered to take part. Another charge was mounted by the 11th and 12th regiments against Turkish positions at Sheria on 7 November, but, confronted with heavy fire, the troopers were forced to dismount and eventually withdraw.

After Gaza fell on 7 November 1917, Turkish resistance in southern Palestine collapsed. The 11th Light Horse participated in the pursuit that followed, and then spent the first months of 1918 resting and training. It moved into the Jordan Valley in time to participate in the Es Salt raid between 29 April and 4 May. The regiment subsequently defended the crossing points over the Jordan, and helped to repulse heavy Turkish and German attacks on 14 and 15 July.

In August, the regiment was issued with swords and trained in traditional cavalry tactics in preparation for the next offensive against the Turks. This was launched along the Palestine coast on 19 September 1918. The 11th Light Horse displayed its versatility at Semakh on 25 September by first charging the Turkish defences around the town on horseback, with swords drawn, and then clearing the actual town on foot, with rifle and bayonet.

Semakh was the regiment's last major operation of the war; the Turks surrendered on 30 October 1918. While awaiting to embark for home, the 11th Light Horse were called back to operational duty to quell the Egyptian revolt that erupted in March 1919; order was restored in little over a month. The Regiment sailed for home on 20 July 1919.

After the war Russell returned to the farm in July 1919, his father passed away in 1920.

In March 1927 he married Gladys Phynella Hooper aged 31, daughter of a citrus grower of Salisbury. They had a daughter Jennifer.

In April 1935 he was charged at Adelaide Police Court with having failed to furnish income tax returns when required to.

Russell died at Salisbury Private Hospital on 7th September 1938 after an accident in which a team of horses bolted with a huge wagon loaded with hay near the Little Para Hotel on Main North Road. He was 43.

Gladys later moved to Adelaide and became a music teacher of the Shefte method. She died aged 66 at Woodville on 29th April 1962.

Russell's mother Alice was the last occupant of "Whyte Bank" and was 92 when she died, outliving all her children. After her death the house deteriorated, and by 1960 it was a ruin, which has since been cleared away.

Pam & David Gallery
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