

SPICE

Herbert Kenneth

Service No: 7342



Basic Information

Name: Herbert Kenneth Spice

Service Number: 7342

Date of Enlistment: 25/10/1916

Age at Enlistment: 23 years 6 months

Civil Occupation: Telegraph Linesman

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 6 ft ½ inches

Weight: 161 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 33 inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Fair

Father: Joseph Henry Spice

Mother: Mary Anderson

Siblings: Flora Jane (born 1890), Grace Muriel (born 1896), Jessie Madeline (born 1899)

Married: Mabel Ley

Children: Irene

Life Story

Saul and Sarah Spice arrived in the Swan River Colony with their family in 1830. After taking up land in Perth, they purchased W.L. Brockman's property "Brockhill" in the Chittering Valley and settled there in 1848. Their son, John, married Frances Crane in the Upper Swan in 1846 and, in 1854, took up land at Chittering and established "Goyamin" farm. He also became Bindoon's first postmaster in 1852/3. John later inherited the "Brockhill" property.

Joseph Henry, Herbert's father, was born in the Upper Swan in 1861 and, in 1889, married Mary Anderson, whose family had arrived on the same ship as Saul and Sarah. He worked as a linesman and moved to York in 1892, leasing, and eventually purchasing in 1907, a cottage owned by H. Wheeler. The family remained based in York, even though Joseph was often away from home patrolling the telegraph line between York and Hines Hill. Mary enlarged the cottage and advertised for paying guests.

Herbert was born in 1893. Like his sisters, he left school at fourteen to find employment. After working for a while on the family property, he became a telegraph linesman, like his father, but continued to reside at the family home, helping out on the property and guesthouse when possible. Herbert also joined the York Brass Band.

Neither of his sisters (Jessie and Flora) married. They continued to reside at the cottage, running the guest house until about 1945, then looking after the small farm and orchard until the end of 1963 when they sold the property and moved to 9 Alfred Street in York. Flora died in 1977, and Jessie moved to Albany in 1979. Both sisters were regular exhibitors and prize-winners at the York Agricultural Show and the Perth Royal Show.

When War broke out, Herbert attempted to enlist but was rejected because he had hammer toes on both feet. However, He went to Bunbury, in October 1916, and was able to enlist there, despite the Medical Officer noting the hammer toes on his examination record.

Herbert embarked at Fremantle on the 29th January 1917 and disembarked at Plymouth on the 27th March, only to be admitted to the 4th Southern General Hospital the same day (recorded as “sick”) having first been admitted to the ship’s hospital while at sea.

After being discharged, Herbert was attached to the 4th Training Battalion on the 4th June and eventually sent to France on the 5th September. He was Taken on Strength with the 16th Battalion on the 16th September 1917.

On the 25th September, Herbert received a serious gunshot wound to his right thigh and was transferred to the Suffolk Military Hospital. In early December he was moved to Hengrave Hall in Bury St Edmunds before being transferred to the 3rd Australian Auxiliary Hospital in Dartford on the 3rd March 1918. Herbert was transferred three more times, before he was finally returned to Australia, as an invalid, on the *Leicestershire* on the 3rd May 1919.

In 1920, Herbert married Mabel Ley, whom he had met in Plymouth while recuperating from his severe leg wound, and returned to his previous occupation of telegraph linesman, working in the Mundijong area. From 1928 to 1934, the family was based in York. They had one child, a daughter.

From 1938 to 1945, Herbert was listed as a caretaker for various Perth buildings. By the time of their Pearl Wedding anniversary in 1950, Herbert and Mabel were living at Devon Park, Cordering, via Collie. He later became the postmaster at Nippering, east of Wagin.

Herbert died in 1955. Mabel followed in 1967. They were both buried in Wagin.

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