

**SCUDAMORES IN AUSTRALIA & WW1 – The Descendants of Sarah Scudamore (1771-1842) & Her husband, William Mayo (1746-1818).**

Sarah was the daughter of John Scudamore of Mitcheldean and Abenhall (1729-1796) and his wife, Elizabeth Voyce (1723-1808). Sarah and William's son, John Mayo had been transported to New South Wales in 1819 – he had married and had a large family and it was inevitable that when the Great War broke out in 1914, some of his descendants would enlist in Australia's first Australian Imperial Force.

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When the "Great War" of 1914–1918 broke out, it was only one hundred and forty-four years since 1770 when Captain James Cook charted the east coast of New Holland – the Continent that was to become Australia and claimed it for the British Crown. He declared it "terra nullius" – or uninhabited, completely ignoring the local indigenous population of thousands of tribes that had inhabited it for thousands of years.

It was a further eighteen years, in 1788, before Captain Arthur Phillip landed in Botany Bay, with a fleet of eleven ships, carrying a mixed complement of convicts, soldiers and free settlers. This site was considered unsuitable and the fleet moved north to Port Jackson (present day Sydney), where the British flag was raised on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1788 and the European settlement of the east coast began. Eventually, as settlement increased, and exploration opened up more of the continent, six States came into being, and the separate colonies voted to form a Federation and the Commonwealth of Australia was formally proclaimed on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1901.

When Australians volunteered to fight in the First Australian Imperial Force, it was the first time that the Australians fought under an Australian flag. These troops who fought in the 1914–1918 War were all volunteers.

**William Herbert Mayo** – (1893–1969) – enlisted on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1915, as a Trooper in the 7th Light Horse Regiment, 2nd Light Horse Brigade, 4th Reinforcements. Sailed on the "Argyllshire" on 9th April, 1915. His occupation was given as "stockman". He was on the Gallipoli Peninsula from 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1915, was evacuated to hospital in Malta with appendicitis and from there to England at the beginning of August, 1915. He saw service in France, where he was badly "gassed", and was repatriated to England on 3rd November, 1917. William's service records show a history of treatment in hospitals. He returned to Australia on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 1918, discharged as medically unfit.

*(He is one of the WW1 veterans whose family history in later life show friction and difficulties within their families.)*

**Bruce Selwyn Mayo**, – (1895–1916). Private, 54th Bn. Australian Infantry. Enlisted on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1915. Sailed to Egypt, arriving 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1916. After a training period there sailed to Marseille, arriving on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1916. As a member of the Australian 5<sup>th</sup> Division, he took part in the disastrous and badly planned attack at Fromelles on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, was reported as “wounded in action” and died on the 21<sup>st</sup> July.. He had been in France for twenty days. He was 22 years old. The 5<sup>th</sup> Division suffered over 5,500 casualties at Fromelles. He is buried in the 255 Anzac Cemetery, Sailly-Sur-La-Lys, France.

#### #### Brothers

**Richard Stanley Mayo**, (1895–1918) Was a Signaller and dispatch rider in the 3rd Bn. 1st Division, 1st A.I.F. He enlisted on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1914, gave his occupation as “fitter’s assistant”, and sailed to Egypt from where he took part in the original landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula on the 25th April, 1915 and remained there until the final evacuation from Gallipoli, staying at Mudros Harbour, thence to Egypt and from there to France. He was involved in battles in France and Belgium, as a dispatch rider and signaller and promoted to corporal. He was killed on 23/8/1918 near Chuignes, France, after delivering a dispatch from H.Q. to a forward Company and on his return across some ground swept by machine gun fire, he was shot. His original burial was noted by his army chaplain as told in a letter from him to Richard's mother. However, by the time the bodies of the dead soldiers were collected for burial in war cemeteries, his body could not be found. His name is No. 37 on the Memorial Panel, 26 Villers Bretonneux, France. He was 23 years old.

*(The family holds several letters from Richard Stanley Mayo and his brother, William Burns Mayo – written to their cousins and also letters written by the Chaplain who buried Dick, as he was known. As mentioned above, all trace of his final burial place was lost in the last months of the war. The family also hold copies of correspondence between Richard’s mother and the A.I.F. Records Office as she desperately sought identification of his burial place – this never happened).*

**William Burns Mayo** – (1897–1971). Enlisted 25th August, 1915, aged 18 years. Embarked for overseas 13th September, 1915 as member of 1st Battalion – which became 53rd Battalion – 5th Division of the first A.I.F. As a member of the Australian 5<sup>th</sup> Division, he took part in the disastrous and badly planned attack at Fromelles on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 1916, at the same time as his cousin, Bruce Mayo. He was reported as missing and then “wounded and captured at Fromelles and was interned in a German P.O.W. camp, Schneidermuhle, near Posen after 19th July, 1916. Returned to Australia 10th April, 1919, after spending some time in England and Scotland to recover from his internment.

*(In a letter home, written from Egypt on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1916, Will mentions meeting up with his cousin, Bruce and is disappointed that he hadn’t been able to meet up with his brother, Richard “Dick”, who had left for France three weeks prior to his arrival in Egypt. Richard had landed at Gallipoli on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1915, took*

*part in the evacuation from there in December, 1915 and spent several months in Egypt until moving to France.)*

#### #### Brothers

**Frank Alexander Trevillion Mayo.** (1890–1970). Enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, AIF in 1914. Among the first contingent of volunteers to leave Maitland (his home town) for training prior to service overseas. Landed at Gallipoli on 25th April, 1915 – wounded – and evacuated to Alexandria and records show him on the dangerously ill list and he was sent to England with typhoid and enteric fever. Records also show him back in Egypt in February, 1916 and returning to England 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1916. Was in the Battle for Pozieres from the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1916 where he was severely wounded on the 28<sup>th</sup> July ,sustaining massive head wounds and losing his right eye. He was evacuated to London, and spent many months in the Military section of London hospital. He was discharged from hospital on the 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1916 and repatriated to Australia on the 13<sup>th</sup> February, 1917.

*(For the rest of his life he had particles of shrapnel in his body and his brain. Not surprising that his daughter described him as having massive mood swings.)*