

SEDUNARY, Alfred Joseph Lyall (AIF 62600)



Image 1 © Geoff Sedunary Collection (n.d)
Taken prior to embarkation.

Name	SEDUNARY, Alfred Joseph Lyall AIF
Service Number	62600 Private
Date of Birth	8th January 1898
Died	15th October 1950
Place of Birth	Saddleworth SA
Resident	Victor Harbor SA
Cemetery	Victor Harbor Cemetery

Alfred Lyall Sedunary (Lyall) was born at Saddleworth on 8 January 1898, the third of five children of Joseph Edward Sedunary and Edith Jane Sedunary (nee Swain). The family later moved to Victor Harbor, and Lyall attended school at Victor Harbor public school. After leaving school and became a baker and joined the militia forces serving in the 74th Infantry Regiment and the 27th Infantry Regiment for over two years.

On 9 May 1918, although he was only 20, Lyall enlisted in the AIF and stated that his age was 21. Being 21 he did not need parental consent to serve overseas in the AIF. Lyall was posted to A Company at the 2nd Training Depot at Mitcham. He wanted to serve overseas in France and assist in combat like the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux, which had just been fought in April.

With the Germans gradually being pushed back, many young Australians were anxious to serve their country. Lyall and the new recruits were trained in drill, musketry and route marching over the following months until the next designated group of reinforcements were due to embark overseas. By late September 1918 the Allied forces had succeeded in breaching the German fortified Hindenburg Line.

On 22 October 1918, Lyall, together with the soldiers of the 6th General Service Reinforcement unit, embarked from Port Adelaide on the troopship HMAT A36 Boonah. On the 11 November 1918, the Reinforcement General Service unit was still out at sea. The ship had sailed into Durban in South Africa. For the 1,200 soldiers still aboard the Boonah and on route to South Africa, they had missed the signing of the armistice by three days.

With the war officially over the HMT Boonah was ordered to return the soldiers back to Australia. Unbeknown to those on board, local stevedores had come on board infected with the Spanish flu which had been at a global pandemic state in 1918.

The troopship, Wyreema had departed ahead of the Boonah, but remained in radio contact with the crew of the Boonah throughout the eastward return journey across the Indian Ocean.

The Wyreema's commanding officer, Lt Col P.M. McFarlane had received updates on the infected passengers on board the Boonah, and entered into the Wyreema's ships log, he wrote:

"The troopship Boonah was two days behind us and we picked up her wireless messages nightly, detailing the daily increasing number of men suffering from pneumonia influenza. Nursing volunteers were called for and so many offered that it was necessary to place the names in a hat and draw the twenty required. They knew the enormous risk they were taking yet they were eager to undertake the work and those whose names were not drawn were disappointed."

The Boonah had created the perfect breeding ground for the spread of the deadly flu and Lyall and the other members on board had no protection or any way to get off the ship. The cramped living conditions, the extreme weather, the rough sea's which a large number confined below decks, and the sea conditions, allowed the disease to spread.

The first casualty of the outbreak was Sergeant Arthur Charles Thwaites. Upon investigation, it was determined that Thwaites had committed suicide by jumping overboard on the night of the 9 December because of delirium; a direct result of the fever symptom brought on by the Spanish flu.

When the HMT Boonah finally made land on the 12 December in Freemantle, the ship had reported more than 300 victims of the flu. When reported to the Commonwealth Immigration Authority, the Authority refused to allow the soldiers to disembark.

The strain of the Spanish flu had created global panic by 1918. Australian authorities were concerned about the flu entering its region. Australia had been a country that had avoided any cases of the flu; therefore, any boat filled with cases of the deadly virus was a real threat. Public backlash ensured and as the ship docked at Gage Roads, the numbers of deceased soldiers grew. The flu continued to spread, and the Captain of the Boonah could only wait. Those left to tend to the sick were also infected with the deadly virus.

Finally approval was granted for the sickest of the soldiers to disembark and relocate to a quarantine station at Woodman Point south of Freemantle. Of the 300 of the sickest personnel, 27 soldiers and 4 nurses died at Woodman Point Quarantine Station due to the delay in getting of the ship.

600 soldiers had reached Woodman Point by the 20 December. Those that were left on board the ship had to face deplorable conditions each day. The cramped living conditions on board continued to create new infections and sadly, more deaths.

The voices of the public continued to grow and the ship set sail to Albany and then onto Adelaide. On the journey, a further 17 cases were discovered, however no further deaths occurred. The remaining soldiers were given the all clear, and the disembarked at Torrens Island Quarantine Station, north of Adelaide. Finally, their journey was over and after a quarantine period on land, they were able to return to their homes and their loved ones. The Spanish flu pandemic lasted from 1918 to 1920 and it took the lives of over 50 million people worldwide. It infected over 500 million people. For Lyall, he was one of the lucky ones, and made it home alive. He disembarked in Adelaide on the 17 January 1919.

Once home Lyall was discharged from the AIF on the 31 January 1919. He would return to his vocation as a baker and opened a bakery in Victor Harbor. He married Caroline Cakebread on the 17 October 1921, and they had two children.

On the 28 June 1940, Lyall reported to the recruitment centre to re-join the army. Lyall attained the rank of Sergeant in the local recruiting office. He served until the 11 May 1942, thereafter he served as the district National Service Officer. On the 21 July 1941, his eldest son Alan Joseph

Lyall Sedunary enlisted into the RAAF, but on the 24 August 1943 he was tragically killed in a flying battle over Germany. Lyall's youngest son, Geoff, (Edgar Geoffrey Sedunary S/N PA3482,) served in the Royal Australian Navy during WW2 from the 5 January 1943 and was demobilised on the 11 July 1946.

Alfred Lyall Sedunary died on 15 October 1950. He is buried in the Victor Harbor Cemetery.

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Compiled by the Victor Harbor RSL History Research Team 2017. Updated by T.Young
24/07/2026

Appendix



Image 2: ©Geoff Sedunary Collection (n.d.)
A second studio portrait of Lyall Sedunary, also taken prior to embarkation.



Image 3©Geoff Sedunary Collection (n.d.)
Studio portrait of Lyall taken after his enlistment in the army in June 1940.

PARTICULARS OF ARTICLE Form R.15 (C.5)

Registered Article (1) C/Discharge
Envoi recommandé

Posted Wayville
Déposé au bureau de poste à

On 3/8/44 No. 1357
Le 44 le No.

Sent by Discharge Sect
Expédié par

Addressed to Mr. A. L. Sedunary,
Addressé à VICTOR HARBOUR

ON POSTAL SERVICE
SERVICE DES POSTES

Postmark of office
Timbre du bureau
recommending advice.
Recommandant l'avis

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:—
S.A. ECHELON & RECORDS,
GENTENNIAL HALL, WAYVILL
(Street and number or P.O. Box No.)

(City or town)

(State)

AUSTRALIA

1) Insert "Letter," "Printed Matter," "Parcel," etc., as the case may be. If an unregistered parcel, strike out "Registered," and insert "Ordinary."

Particulars of the article, and the name and address on right, are to be inserted by the sender.

National Archives of Australia NAA: B884, S152

Image 4©naa.gov.au 2026
Studio portrait of Lyall taken after his enlistment in the army in June 1940.

4TH MILITARY DISTRICT
No. 42 370 1/881

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.
4th Military District.

Kewick Barracks,
ADELAIDE.

1 FEB 1910

Officer in Charge,
Base Records,
Victoria Barracks,
MELBOURNE.

CONFIDENTIAL

The undermentioned soldier has been handed his Discharge,
Medical Board Proceedings and other documents as follows, forwarded
herewith:-
D1, Attestation Form, Dental Form X, Conduct Sheet,
Casualty Form.

No. 62600. Rank. Pte. Name. SEDUNARY, Alfred Lyall.
Unit. 6th G.S.R.
Date of Attestation. 9/5/18.
Date of Embarkation 22/10/18.
Date of Disembarkation. 17/1/19.
Reason for Discharge. Cessation of Hostilities.
Date of Discharge. 31/1/19.
Total Service. 268 days.
Service Abroad. 68 days.
Account Adjusted in Part. £1000.

1 FEB 1910

RECEIVED

A. A. Thompson

Captain,
S.O.I. & R.S., 4th Military District.

National Archives of Australia NAA: B2455, SEDUNARY ALFRED LYALL

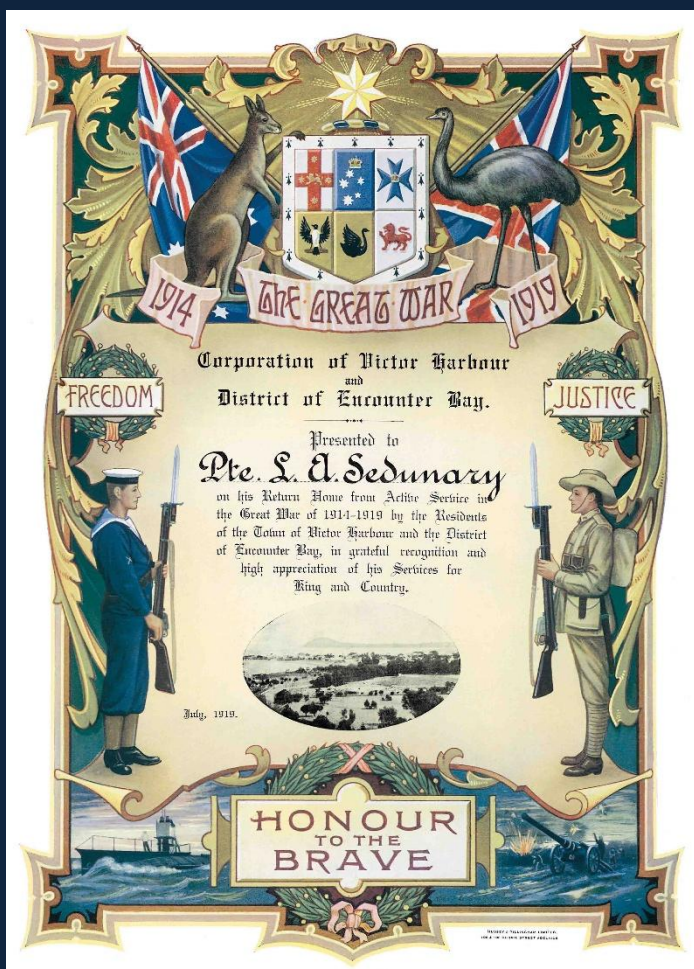


Image 7 ©Geoff Sedunary (n.d)
The Certificate presented to Lyall after his return to Victor Harbor. The Corporation of Victor Harbour and the District Council of Encounter Bay jointly presented certificates like this to all local returned servicemen.

A.M. Form Mob. I.

AUSTRALIAN  MILITARY FORCES.

MOBILIZATION ENROLMENT FORM.

To be filled in for all Persons at the Place of Assembly when called out under Parts III. or IV. of the Defence Act, or when voluntarily enlisted.

Army No. S. 152

Name in full SEDUNARY Alfred Lyall

Unit Co. Fred Receiving Depot.

Reported or enlisted for war service Victor Harbour, 1 July 1919. (Date)

at Victor Harbour. (Place) South Australia (State).

A

Questions to be put to persons called out or presenting themselves for voluntary enlistment.

1. What is your name!	1. Surname <u>SEDUNARY</u> (GIVEN NAMES) Other names <u>Alfred Lyall</u>
2. Where were you born!	2. In or near the town of <u>Sakaleworth</u> in the state or country of <u>South Australia</u>
3. Are you a British Subject!	3. <u>Yes</u>
4. What is your age and date of birth!	4. Age <u>42</u> Date of birth <u>8th Jan 1898.</u>
5. What is your trade or occupation!	5. <u>Baker & Caterer</u>
6. Are you married, single or widower!	6. <u>Married</u>
7. Have you previously served on active service? If so, where and in what arm!	7. <u>A.I.F. 6th General Reinforcements</u>
8. What is your actual next of kin! (Order of relationship—wife, eldest son, eldest daughter, father, mother, eldest brother, eldest sister, eldest half-brother, eldest half-sister).	8. Name <u>Baroline Agnes Sedunary</u> Address <u>Victor Harbour.</u> Relationship <u>Wife.</u>
9. Have you ever suffered from— (i) Fits of any kind! (ii) Rheumatism!	9. <u>No.</u> <u>No.</u>
10. Have you ever been treated in an asylum for insane!	10. <u>No.</u>
11. What is your permanent address!	11. <u>Box 53 P.O. Victor Harbour</u>
12. What is your religious denomination! (This question need not be answered if the man has a conscientious objection to doing so.)	12. <u>Congregational</u>

3. Alfred Lyall Sedunary do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true.

Witnessed by L. A. Sedunary (Signature of Soldier or Witnessing Officer.)

Alfred Sedunary Signature.

11. 1284/1285—4. 1284/1286—5. 1284/1287

National Archives of Australia

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Image 8 ©naa.gov.au 2026
Mobilization Form 1940.

BRANCH. ANNUAL MEETING

will be held in the Institute Committee Room on
FRIDAY NEXT, 23rd JULY,
at 8 p.m.

Business:
Balance Sheet, Election of Officers, etc.
All members are urged to attend this important meeting.

S. K. PORTER,
Hon. Secretary.

SCHEME TO SUPPLEMENT RURAL LABOUR.

**Notice to Dairy Farmers, Agricultur-
ists, Horticulturists, Etc.**

An important meeting of employers of rural labour will be held in the Odd-fellows' Hall, Meadows, on Friday, 23rd July, at 2 p.m.

Mr. Vickers, Chief Rural Officer, of the Department of Labour and National Service, will address the meeting on the proposed scheme.

Further information can be obtained from the clerk of your District Council, or at the National Service Office, Victor Harbour (phone Victor 161).

A. L. SEDUNARY,
National Service Officer,
Victor Harbour.

DEATH OF MR. A. L. SEDUNARY

The death occurred last week after a short illness of Mr. Alfred Lyall Sedunary, of Victoria Street, Victor Harbour. He was 72.

Mr. Sedunary was born at Saddleworth in 1898 and came to Victor Harbour with his father Mr. E. J. Sedunary, when he was twelve. Mr. Sedunary, sen., established what is now the Wheatsheaf Bakery in Albert Place. For many years it remained in the family until it was sold in 1939. When Mr. A. L. Sedunary conducted the bakery he often made the tearooms available for meetings of town organisations free of charge.

Mr. Sedunary had many interests over the years. He was a former secretary of the R.S.L. sub-branch and High School Council, a member of the Town Council and hospital committee and a past master of the Lodge of Peace. He was also a former member of Southern Mark Lodge and Peace Royal Arch Chapter. He was a foundation member of the R.S.L. at Victor Harbour.

Prior to World War II the Sedunary family had a unique connection with the Victor Harbour Town Band. Messrs E. J. and A. L. Sedunary and Mr. A. L. Sedunary's elder son Alan were members at the same time of that organisation.

Alan Sedunary was born in the National Library of Australia

time of that organisation. Alan Sedunary was later to lose his life while serving with the R.A.A.F.

During the war Mr. Sedunary was Area Manpower Officer for Southern Districts.

He was instrumental in forming the Encounter Bay Bowling Club while a member of the then S.A. Bowling Association. He was also a member of the Victor Harbour Bowling Club for many years and served it well.

Mr. Sedunary was privately buried at Centennial Park last Friday. He is survived by his widow (formerly Miss Caroline Agnes Cakebread) and a son, Mr. E. G. Sedunary, of Victor Harbour.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article187524513>

Image 9 ©trove.nla.gov.au 2026

This advertisement, 'SCHEME TO SUPPLEMENT RURAL LABOUR') was published in the Victor Harbour Times on 16 July 1943 and records that Lyall was the National Service Officer for the district during the Second World War.

Image 10 ©trove.nla.gov.au 2026
Mobilization Form 1940.



Image 11 © Ian Milnes (n.d)

Photograph of the plaques in the Victor Harbor Cemetery for Lyall, his wife Agnes and their son Alan.