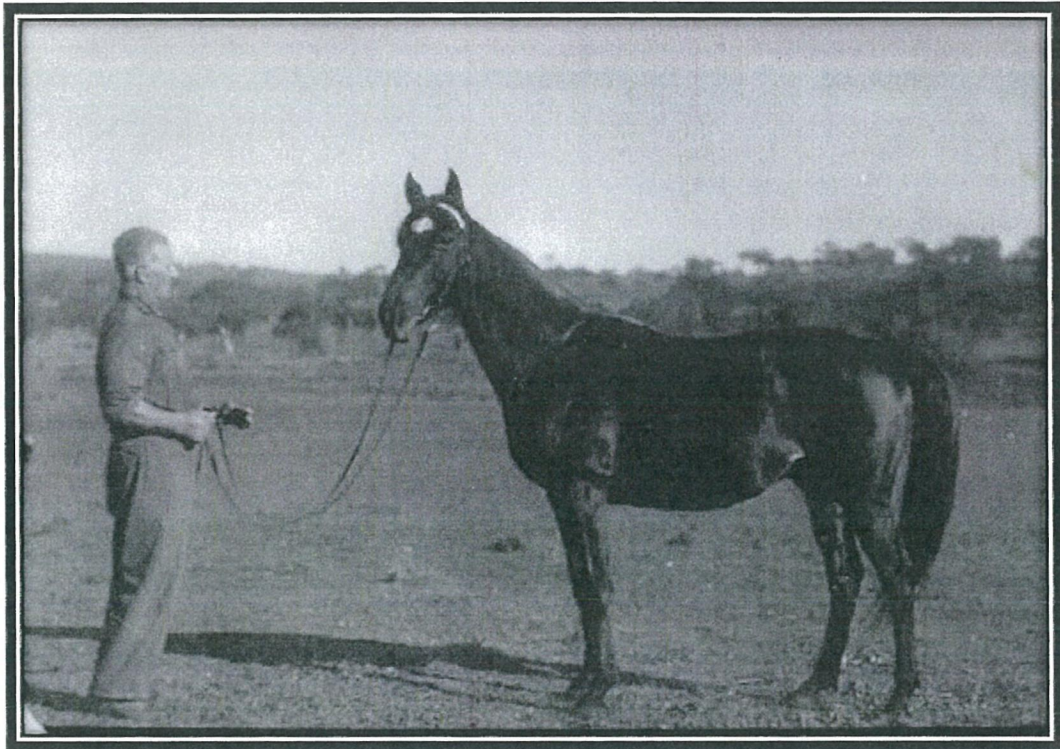


*Premier's ANZAC Spirit School Prize 2021*

Private

**Benjamin Frank Lovell**

**10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, A.I.F**



**13.05.1890 – 20.07.1980**

**Gemma Mann**

Year 9

Endeavour College, Mawson Lakes



## Part A

Benjamin Frank Lovell, (Frank), was born on 13 May 1890 to William Benjamin Lovell and Mary Elizabeth Wallace in Port Elliot, South Australia. He grew up and lived in Middleton, on a farm with multiple horses. He was the fourth child of six, with two brothers who took part in WWI, William Robert Lovell, and Ernest Charles Lovell, (Charles). Charles fought alongside Frank until the end. His youngest brother Alex Lovell took part in WWII. He left behind his fiancé, M. E. Wainwright. Frank was a blacksmith and a horseshoer<sup>1</sup>.



Fig.2 – A fraction of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Soldier circled is Frank Lovell.

Source: Trevor Lovell

Fig.1 – Enlistment Paper

Source: National Archives of Australia

On September 1, 1914, Frank at the age of 25, along with Charles, aged 21, enlisted (see fig.1). His enlistment number was 924 in the first 1000 to enlist. They were both a part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which was recruited in South Australia, and was one of the first infantry units raised for the Australian Imperial Force<sup>2</sup>.



Fig. 3 – S.S Ascenius leaving Outer Harbour in Adelaide

Source: Google image



Fig. 4 – Maadi, Egypt, 1915. Two Australian Light Horse farriers shoeing horses. The identities of the farriers are unknown.

Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/H02676>

<sup>1</sup> Fig.1, Enlistment Paper, under question 5, 'What is your trade or calling?'

<sup>2</sup> <https://veteranssa.sa.gov.au/history-and-stories/south-australian-regiments-and-battalions-1914-18/> - under the heading 'Infantry' and subheading '10<sup>th</sup> Battalion'



Frank and the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion embarked on September 10, 1914, from Outer Harbour in Adelaide (see fig.3) to Fremantle in Western Australia to meet with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion and then on 25 October they embarked to Egypt. On 5 December 1914, they arrived in Alexandria, Egypt. He and his battalion then entrained to Mena Camp west of Cairo (see fig.6). They spent

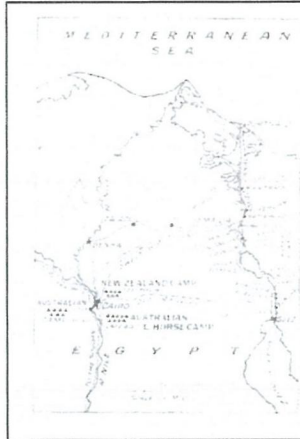


Fig.6 – Map of Egypt and camps Mena and Maadi, both where Benjamin Frank Lovell was at some point in 1915.

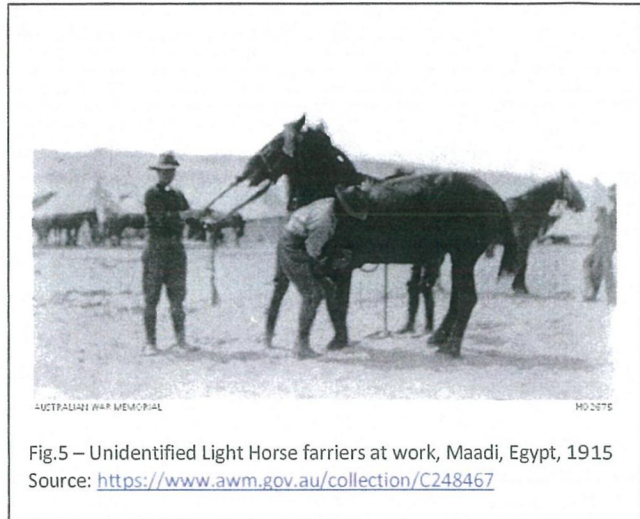


Fig.5 – Unidentified Light Horse farriers at work, Maadi, Egypt, 1915  
Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C248467>

three months training, then marched to Cairo before returning to Alexandria<sup>3</sup>. The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Battalions left Alexandria for Gallipoli. However, Frank remained stationed in Egypt because that was where his skills as a horseshoe smith (see figs.4 and 5) were needed, as horses were not suitable transport in Gallipoli<sup>4</sup>. He was

transferred to Maadi camp on 3 November 1915, where he remained until he was put into hospital during February 1916 in Serapeum due to mumps<sup>5</sup>. (see fig.6 for the map of Egypt). On 29 February he re-joined at the Front-Line Canal Depot and on 27 March he joined the British Expeditionary Forces at Alexandria.

On 3 April 1916 Frank disembarked in Marseilles. From then on, he fought alongside Charles and his Battalion on the Western Front in France, in battles including the Battle of Verdun, and the Battle of the Somme, in which he was wounded in action on 25 July. He suffered a gunshot wound in his shoulder, which sent him to England to be treated in Beaufort War Hospital in Bristol on 27 July<sup>6</sup>. He stayed in England until the 17<sup>th</sup> of December that year, when he travelled back to France via the boat *Golden Eagle*. On 18 December 1916, he arrived in Etaples and on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, he marched out to his unit where he re-joined on the 25<sup>th</sup>. From then he fought with the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion in the trench warfare until he was again wounded in action on 9 April 1917<sup>7</sup>. This was when he sustained the wound to his foot. At 3am on the morning of battle, Charles and Frank did not know that it would be the last time they ever saw each other.

Frank received the wound through an explosion, where he lost his foot. He laid in the trenches for twenty-four hours before someone found him. But it wasn't Charles or someone from his Battalion, it was the German Red Cross. They found him and took him as Prisoner of War on 11 April. He was one of the Bullecourt prisoners<sup>8</sup> (see fig.7).



Fig.7 Germans marching Australian P.O.Ws after the Battle of Bullecourt.  
Source: footnote 8

<sup>3</sup> Limb, Arthur, and Archive Digital Books Australasia. *History of the 10th Battalion A.I.F.* 1919. Modbury, S. Aust., Archive Digital Books Australasia, 2010. (Page 13)

<sup>4</sup> <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/nz-first-world-war-horses/egypt-gallipoli>

<sup>5</sup> Fig.11 – Active Service Casualty Form

<sup>6</sup> Fig.12 – Active Service Casualty Form

<sup>7</sup> Fig.12 – Active Service Casualty Form

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/what-happened-to-the-bullecourt-prisoners-of-world-war-i-20170411-gvifse.html>



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION FORM C  
 No. 924 LOVELL R. F. 1-12-18  
 Name: Private F. G., 10th Battalion, 1st Brigade, (A.I.F.) New Guinea Division, Australian Empire Force, New Guinea.  
 C/L 100, page 28. (Issued 27th August, 1918.)  
 Reported "Missing."  
 Date Information: The name has been referred to - Signalist William Johnson, 10th Battalion, 1st Brigade, (A.I.F.) New Guinea Division, Australian Empire Force, New Guinea.  
 Address: 120 Stanley Street, NORTH AUSTRALIA.  
 Cable: Cable: Comms: 10000.  
 Call Sign: YES NO

Fig.8 –Red Cross report response to the inquiry about Benjamin’s whereabouts.

They did not treat what was left of his foot, so it was exposed to infection. For months nobody knew where he was and could not answer the inquiries from his family (see fig.8).

As the A.I.F didn’t know where he was, his friend, Private William Johnson, opened the postcards in order to reply. Frank was in two P.O.W camps, Limburg an der Lahn, and Parchim, both in Germany. It is unknown for how long he was in each camp, only that he was in both. Almost a year after he was taken prisoner, Frank was repatriated to England where he arrived at First London General Hospital in Camberwell on 20 January 1918<sup>9</sup>. He was admitted, and the wound he had received to his left foot had worsened, leaving no choice but to amputate his left leg below the knee, which occurred on 7 April<sup>10</sup>. He was then transferred to Second Auxiliary at Southhall from where he was repatriated back to Australia. He disembarked on 26 May and was honourably discharged on 25 November 1918.

Frank Lovell spent a total time of four years and eighty-six days in service with three years, two-hundred, and nineteen days abroad. When he returned to Middleton his fiancé, Miss Wainwright, who had thought he was dead from the information on telegram she had received (see fig.5), had sadly moved on. However, he met another woman, Elsie Maud Collet, who was born on the 11 February 1894. They were married in 1922, and his first daughter, Joyce, was born later that year. In 1926, Elsie died. A few years after this, Frank fell in love with another woman, Kathleen Moran, and had two more children, Ronald George, and Margaret Joan. For his entire life, Frank lived in the Goolwa-Middleton area. He lived in his family’s house, which they gave to him after the war(see fig.10). He died on 20 July 1980. A cremation plaque in Enfield Cemetery (see fig.9).

Lest we forget Private Benjamin Frank Lovell.



Fig. 9 – Cremation Plaque in the Veteran’s Wall at Enfield Cemetery

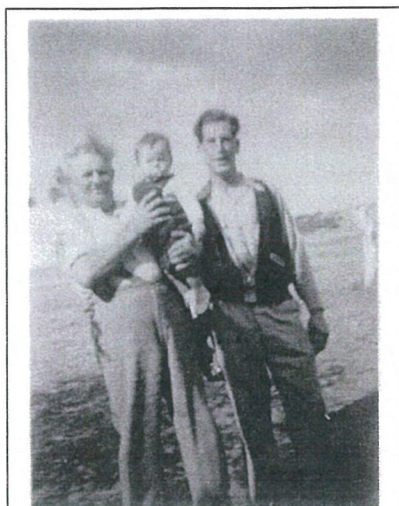


Fig. 10 – Glenford Cottage, one of the original Lovell farms, where Frank lived after the war.

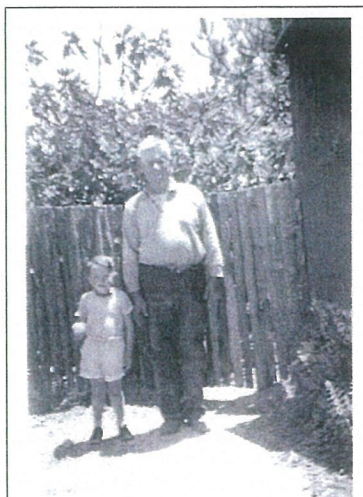
<sup>9</sup> Fig.12 – Active Service Casualty Form

<sup>10</sup> Fig.12 – Active Service Casualty Form





Frank, his son, and his grandson.



Frank and his grandson.



A photo of Frank, taken on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The last photo ever taken of Frank.

### HOW BENJAMIN FRANK LOVELL EPITOMISED THE ANZAC SPIRIT

Benjamin Frank Lovell reflected the ANZAC Spirit characteristics during his time of service. He showed perseverance through the many times he was injured and still returned to fight with his comrades. He was shot in his shoulder, and as soon as he could return, he was back at the Western Front fighting alongside his Battalion and his brother. He was again wounded, this time in his left leg, but he continued to fight, and was taken Prisoner of War soon after by the Germans. He had perseverance as he survived being in a POW camp for almost a year while having an open wound and injury to his leg. Being repatriated to England and having his leg amputated did not stop him from living a full life. When he returned to Middleton and lived on his farm, he rode his horses and cleared the bush like he did before the war.

Frank reflected mateship multiple times during his service. After he was injured, he returned to his comrades to fight again. This is a great representation of mateship because he returned to fight even though he was hurt and had experienced how dangerous being on the front line is. Another time was when he was in the German POW camp. He had been sent mail from someone back in Australia, but he didn't receive it and so was not able to reply. He had made friends with another soldier, Private William Johnson, who opened the postcards and asked about whether anyone knew Lovell's whereabouts in order to inform his family. While serving, Frank Lovell reflected the ANZAC Spirit, with great mateship with his comrades and a high amount of perseverance to continue his fight. In his post war life, he was determined to outlive his enemies. Even in his final failing health, from his nursing home bed he was heard to say "*gimme a rifle, I can still fight those bastards.*"<sup>11</sup>

He was a clear representation of the ANZAC Spirit, a true digger. He lived through the horrors of the war and lost his younger brother who had been by his side the whole way without ever being able to say goodbye to him. He was permanently scarred both mentally and physically, but this did not stop him from living out the remainder of his life to the fullest extent.

Benjamin Frank Lovell was a hero, one who never stopped possessing the ANZAC Spirit.

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<sup>11</sup> Trevor Lovell



Word count for Part A: 1493 words.  
 (Not including referencing, bibliography,  
 footnotes, or descriptions of any photos)



Frank's collection of war medals.

Source: Trevor Lovell

4th M.B.		Regimental Number 954	
Private	Benjamin Frank	Casualty Form Active Service 1004 Infantry Battalion AIF	
Religion	1/9/14	Christian	21/10/14
Date of promotion to present rank	1/9/14	Date of appointment to last position	21/10/14
Extended	Re-engaged	Qualification for	on Corps Trade and rate
Occupation	Re-engaged	Qualification for	on Corps Trade and rate
From when returned	From Aust	20/10/14	
OO. Max.	Date of coming on	Max Camp	26/3/15
22/11/15	OO Tpt D618	Transferred from Max to Meadi	3/11/15
22/1/16	OO Sn	WPH on 1/3 being in possession (illegal) of Govt property at Tel el Kibir. 27/15/15	20/8/15
26/2/16	OO Sn	To Hosp Bick	21/2/16
26/2/16	No 2 Pl	Mumps.	26/2/16
4/3/16	OO Sn	Rejoined	25/2/16

Date	Rank	Part of Campaign	Date of Casualty	Remarks
24/6/16	OO Tpt	Proceeding to join RFP	Alexandria	27/5/16
29/7/16	OO 10th Bn	Disembarked	Marseilles	28/7/16
29/7/16	OO 10th Bn	Wounded in action	France	10 42/6170 6/8/16
29/7/16	OO 10th Bn	Wounded in action	France	10 42/6170 6/8/16
27/7/16	OO 10th Bn	Wounded (sick)	England	27/7/16 DO St. 11/46/1548 17/9/16
17/12/16	OO 3rd Tng Bn	Proceeded to France per S.S. Golden Eagle ex Folkestone	England	17/12/16 DO 5/7577 18/1/17
18/12/16	1st A D B	Marched in from England	England	18/12/16
22/12/16	OO 10th Bn	Marched out to join Unit	France	22/12/16
29/12/16	OO 10th Bn	Rejoined from wounded	France	29/12/16 DO 1/13. 9/2/17
12/4/17	OO 10th Bn	Wounded in action	France	12/4/17 DO 30/1111 16/4/17 VL 320.
22/6/17	OO 10th Bn	Wounded in action	France	22/6/17 DO 30/1111 16/4/17 VL 320.
11/4/17	OO 10th Bn	Wounded in action	France	11/4/17 DO 59/5494 8/8/17
20/1/18	OO Hosp	Wounded in action	France	20/1/18 DO 5/455 16/1/18
25/1/18	OO Hosp	Wounded in action	France	25/1/18 DO 5/455 16/1/18
9/4/18	OO Hosp	Wounded in action	France	9/4/18 DO 5/455 16/1/18

Fig.11 – Front side of Active Service Casualty Form

Fig.12 – Second side of Active Service Casualty Form

No.	Name	Rank	Regiment	Service Number	Service Dates	Remarks
70	Benjamin Frank	Private	1004	954	1/9/14 - 25/2/16	
71	Charles [Name]	Private	1004	[Number]	[Dates]	

Fig.12 -10th Infantry Battalion Nominal Roll (Highlighted is Frank and Charles)

Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1897081>

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## Part B

When I first learnt about the Premier's ANZAC Spirit School Prize, I knew that I wanted to partake not only to challenge my research skills but to also learn the history of a South Australian soldier whose story has never been told. I wanted to change that, and honour those who served. I was aware that there were members of my family before me that were a part of the Australian Infantry Force who had fought in World War 1, but I did not know their story.

I first spoke to my Nanni, (my grandmother) and asked her if she knew someone that I could research. She stated that she had great uncles that had fought in WWI, Benjamin Frank, and Ernest Charles. She told me of the few memories she had of 'Uncle Frank', and what she knew about his life story and I was intrigued. She had spent time beforehand researching the family tree and had a membership on Ancestry.com which is what gave the information for the dates of birth and death, and the names of Frank's siblings. I started my research by visiting different sites with War records, such as the National Archives of Australia, Australian Red Cross, and the Australian War Memorial. From these sites I gathered records such as his enlistment papers, his Active Service Casualty Form, and records from the hospitals in London about Private Benjamin Frank Lovell. From the records, although they were not always clear and others had missed some events, I was able to piece together what happened to Frank and where he was at what time during his time in service. I had also purchased an online copy of a book on the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, which helped me to clarify dates and places.

My mother (Diane Mann, stated in the bibliography as the recipient of the phone call from Don Lovell) and I were able to track down a great nephew of Frank, Don Lovell, and interview him on what he knew about Frank's time in service to clarify what I had done. Don stated that Frank never spoke about his time in the war. I was surprised at the fact that he had been a P.O.W, as he was unaware of that. However, Don was able to speak about Frank's life post-war and was able to provide additional details to add to my profile of Frank. After continuing research and piecing together more information from different records I had found, my Nanni had remembered a relative that had contacted her months ago asking about photos or information on Frank. I contacted this relative, Trevor Lovell, who is actually a grandson of Frank. He was able to provide photos of Frank, such as the ones of Frank, his medals, and the artwork of his house.

Through this research I was able to learn the story of my great-great-great Uncle Frank and share it with his and my family, honouring his life and his service.

**Word count for Part B: 495 words.**

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