

Charles Walter Cornford

Charles Walter Cornford was born at Kiama on 29 October 1893. He was the youngest son and seventh child of Walter and Ester Cornford. Charles was raised and educated along with his siblings at Kiama.

Charles's father Walter Cornford was Mayor of Kiama throughout World War One.



OBITUARY.

MR. WALTER CORNFORD—aged 80.

The sudden death of Mr. Walter Cornford on Friday evening at the home of Mr. Charles Cornford, Wollongong, was heard with deep regret by the many old and life long friends he had left behind in Kiama. He leaves to mourn him two daughters in Mrs. W. E. Hurlstone (Five Dock) and Mrs. A. East (Coraki), and three sons in Messrs. Herbert, Arthur and Charles Cornford, with whom deep sympathy is expressed in their bereavement. The late Mr. Cornford lost his dearly loved wife two months ago, and with her, his interest in life, for it might be said he never recovered from the shock, which affected his heart, none too strong since a big operation three years ago, for a man in advanced years, which he had to go through, in having a leg amputated below the knee. He passed away in his sleep, and in the reunion with the loved one gone before, it is felt his dearest wish was gratified. In his son's home at Wollongong, to which he went after his wife's death, he had every attention and the kindest care. As he did not seem well in the morning, Mr. C. Cornford at once got medical advice, and after medicine had been given, he was left to rest, and visiting him a short time after it was found he had passed away. What one remembers first about the late Mr. Cornford was his simple and direct christian creed, to which he had so closely lived all his life. Though a busy man during the week, the Sabbath for some 50 years was given by him to his Master's service, as a lay preacher in the Methodist church, and in Sunday

school work also. In civic life he also took a worthy part, for 28 years an alderman and from 1914-1925 excellently carried out the duties of Mayor. In the war time stress he took a splendid part publicly sending the boys off—his own son amongst them—and welcoming them home. He was always at the station to extend a greeting as they came back, and not one of the many meetings brought into being by war time calls, did he shirk. On Saturday and Sunday the town flag hung at half-mast, a fitting tribute to the citizen he was and the service he gave.

The funeral took place on Sunday afternoon, and at it there was a good district representation, the Mayor and Aldermen present, the coffin conveyed by motor hearse from Wollongong.

At the Methodist Church a short service was held prior to the funeral. The Rev. J. G. Martin conducted it, the Rev. F. Todd giving a short address on the life and character of the deceased. At the grave side the Rev. J. G. Marin officiated.

The late Mr. Cornford was born in the district in which he died—at Wollongong in 1848—but came in his early manhood to this district where he lived for some 60 years. Fifty one years ago he married Miss Hester Cousins, of Gerringong, and the young couple then made their home in Kiama and reared a worthy family who may be proud of the respect and esteem in which their parents were held. The late Mr. Cornford was a painter and paperhanger by trade, and in earlier days bee-keeping was a hobby with his garden.

Beside his sons (2 predeceased in Harold and Thomas) and daughters mentioned 21 grandchildren are descendants.



CHARLES'S FATHER WALTER WAS MAYOR OF KIAMA DURING WW1

After leaving school Charles started work with New South Wales Government railways, initially as a porter. His job took him away from home where he boarded with families close to his place of work. Charles was stationed at Waterfall, working as a railway signalman when he enlisted in the army in 1915, aged 21.

Charles enlisted in the Australian Army on 26 July 1915 at Liverpool, departing from Sydney on 6 September, 1915 on board HMAT Ballarat. Serving in France, he was a driver in the 5th Machine Gun Company, 20 Infantry Battalion.



HMAT BALLARAT

Charles returned to Australia on 4 January 1918 onboard HMAT Anchises, after being discharged from the army as medically unfit. He returned to work for the New South Wales Government railways.

Gunner Charles Cornford just missed being sent home on furlough. Three English doctors passed him for the home trip after his long and severe illness from sciatica which has left heart trouble, but an Australian doctor thought a three months' spell at the south of England would recuperate him sufficiently for active service again and he is now convalescing there.

KIAMA INDEPENDENT. 23 JUNE 1917



HMAT ANCHISES

COMING HOME.

The friends of the Mayor will rejoice with Mrs. Cornford and himself in the news their son Gunner Charlie Cornford is returning home. For some time he has been at the Base in office work, not strong enough to return (after being in hospital) to the firing line where he had been badly gassed as well as wounded. Charlie is a district boy who was in the district from childhood, until he went out as a man, to work for himself and become an esteemed member of the railway service. We trust a return to his native air, will restore him to bodily strength again and express our sincere pleasure that his worthy parents are soon to have the joy of welcoming him home.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Base Records Office,
Victoria Barracks,

MELBOURNE 5th Jan. 1917

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Dear Sir,

I beg to advise you that information has been received to the effect that No. 2343, Driver G.W. Cornford, was admitted to the Edmonton Military Hospital 17/12/16, suffering from lumbago (severe) but is now convalescent.

His postal address will therefore be:-

CONVALESCENT
STRICK No. 2343, Driver G.W. Cornford,
5th Machine Gun Company (late 20th Australian Infantry)
in Edmonton Military Hospital,

C/o A. I. F. Headquarters,
130 Horseferry Road,
Westminster, LONDON. S.W.

To ensure speedy delivery the endorsement "CONVALESCENT" should be written prominently in RED INK.

Any further reports received will be promptly transmitted.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. W. Cornford,
Teralong St., KIAMA N.S.W.

J. M. LEAH,
Major,
Officer i/c Base Records.

Charles married Ruby Hall on 15 June 1918 at Petersham, New South Wales. They went on to have four children, Dorothy Jean, Roydon Charles, Melva Joy and Yvonne Olive between 1919 and 1934. In the early years of their marriage the family lived in New South Wales country areas where Charles was stationed with the railway.



CHARLES CORNFORD AND RUBY HALL

The family returned to the Illawarra area in the early 1920's where Charles continued his employment with the railway. He purchased land and built the family home in 1924 and lived there with the family throughout his working life and into his retirement. He spent many years working at Wollongong railway station where he went on to become supervisor of the goods shed, a position he held until his retirement.

Charles joined the Masonic Lodge in Portland, New South Wales in 1919. He was presented with his 50 years Freemasonry Medal in 1969. In 1979 he travelled to Norway to receive a medal marking 60 years as a member of the Illawarra Lodge. He was also honoured with Life Membership. Charles also served as both secretary and treasurer of the Druids Lodge for many years, retiring at the age of 90.

Community service was a big part of his life. Charles served on Wollongong Municipal Council as an alderman from 1930 to 1947, including one term as Deputy Mayor. Throughout his life he was involved in community groups. He was a Life Member of both the Wollongong Agricultural and Horticultural Societies. He exhibited both flowers and poultry at shows throughout the local area and was known for the magnificent dahlias that he grew. His garden was his pride and joy into his early nineties.

Charles passed away on 6 May 1988 at Helensburgh after a short illness, at age 94. His life was celebrated at a service at Wesley Uniting Church, Wollongong where he was a long standing member of the congregation. Following his funeral service Charles was cremated and laid to rest at the Wollongong Memorial Gardens.

MASONIC BALL

LODGE ILLAWARRA

The annual ball of Lodge Illawarra was held in the Town Hall Theatre, Wollongong, on Wednesday night. A colour scheme in red, white and blue was carried out in the hall. Those who attended spent a very enjoyable evening, and great interest was taken in the ceremony of presenting the debutantes.

The official opening was performed by Most Wor. Bro. Aubrey Halloran, who also received the debutantes. The official party included Very. Wor. Bro. H. Pugh and Mrs. Pugh, V. Wor. Bro. Breeze and Mrs. Breeze, V. Wor. Bro. S. H. Neal and Mrs. Neal, V. Wor. Bro. P. J. G. Webb and Mrs. Webb, and Miss Gale, of Sydney. The visitors were received by Wor. Bro. Charles Cornford, the Wor. Master of Lodge Illawarra, the former advancing through an arch of steel and guard of honour, formed by the brethren. The ladies were presented with bouquets.

Mrs. Charles Cornford was hostess, and Mrs. H. E. Gale the matron of honour. The debutantes presented were Misses Mavis Burling, Nancy Abbott, Phyllis Taylor, Joyce Taylor, Judith Smith and Jean Cornford.

Bro. E. Taylor was M.C., and Wor. Bro. H. E. Gale the marshal. Beaumont's Orchestra supplied the music, and the catering arrangements were in charge of Mrs. Roberts (W. L. Howarth).



WOLLONGONG WESLEY UNITING CHURCH

