

The King Island World War 2 War Service Fund

During World War 2, Wilfred (Fred) Lott received a Comfort Package or a Money Order from the King Island (Tasmania) War Service Fund, and then corresponded with the Fund.

In August 1940, the Island Fund was formally approved to operate independently from the State of Tasmania. It was run by a group of volunteers, led by Mr John (Jack) Marshall. John was an ex WW1 soldier, also the President of the local Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA), founded on King Island in 1919. This is now known as the Returned and Services League (RSL) and the King Island RSL Sub branch is still in operation.

The fund distributed packages to locals who had enlisted and other people who had no connection with King Island. As a mark of respect 139 service personnel wrote letters of thanks, totaling approximately 530 letters – they form the basis of the collection. Further information on the Fund and its operation can be found on the Community Page.

The challenges for a service person during World War 2 to write a letter was to firstly find the inclination (often directly related to their mental condition due to combat), time, paper, a writing implement and a place under cover. Occasionally a letter was typed and the paper ranged from high quality to loose scraps, and as the war progressed supplies dwindled. With letterhead paper, naming a unit or organisation, do not assume that was where the person was when writing. Paper was borrowed and passed on to mates. Occasionally, a Telegram was sent where the emphasis was on brevity as each word added more to the cost.

The standard of writing is directly related to the standard of education and sometimes a friend or a Chaplain would write a letter on a person's behalf. Many of the letters were addressed to Mr Marshall (or just Jack), his wife, a member of the voluntary committee, or the RSSAILA. Some letters are very brief while others are detailed and mention other people, or events they have witnessed. The Marshall's also lost their son John while on Active Service, and some writers asked about John or acknowledged his death to the family.

For most of the war, letters were subject to censorship and this is often observed in a cutout section on a page – if the other side was written on it was also deleted. Many letters have the initials or the signature of the person who checked them prior to posting.

What follows is a scan of the original letter and a typed transcript, based on the original. Grammar or spelling has not been changed or corrected, and if more than one letter was written they follow in date order. Some of the original letters, although stored correctly, are very faint and fragile, but all have been included along with undated letters. They are perhaps the only surviving documents written by this person.

Fred wrote three letters to the Fund; two in 1941 and the last in 1942. His letters record the challenges of the early years of the war where soldiers were reallocated from one Corps to another. Fred also mentions the possibility of being charged with Absent Without Leave along with people he has met. He was almost 34 when he enlisted and his service was detrimental to the health resulting in his discharge on 19 April 1942.



Australian Young Men's Christian Association

PATRON: HIS MAJESTY THE KING

"It is not sufficient to live,
But to live well."

Write Home First

Aug 13 1941

Pte H. S. Lott

TX 5264

12th Batt. Brighton
A.I.F. Camp.

Dear Jack

Received your letter today & thanks
very much.

By the way you got my m. h. wrong. it is
TX 5264. not as you addressed it.

I don't know whether the Captain & order. will
be right with that. Do on it but will
send out from S. M. he will be sure
know. & thanks very much.

One is John getting on & nervous hope he
is O.K. I hope to get there someday.

Suppose I will
I met V. in Turner in Hobart - we should be
remembered to you all in N. I.

I like the life alright it is O.K. not much to do
here at Brighton after work. but get used to it.

Hope this finds you all well & in the
best of health.

Yours truly
Pte H. S. Lott.

May 13. 1941
Pte W.G. Lott
TX 5264
12th Ball. Brighton
A.I.F. Camp.

Dear Jack

Recieved your letter today & thanks very much.

By the way you got my No. wrong. it is TX5264. not as you addressed it.

I don't know whether the Canteen Order will be right with that No on it but will find out from S.M. he will let me know. & thanks very much How is John getting on Overseas hope he is OK. I hope to get there someday. I suppose I will

I met Vin Turner in Hobart wishes to be remembered to you all on K.I.

I like the life alright it is OK. not much to do here at Brighton after wirk. but get used to it.

Hope this finds you all well & in the best of health.

~~Fred Lott~~

Pte W.G. Lott.

From W. G. Lott
No. 15264
2 T.B. B. Coy
Warley.



Aug 28. 1941

Dear Jack.

Just a line hoping you have got over your attack of the flu.

I'll I arrived back in camp alright on the Thursday night. I haven't heard anything more about being A.W.H. I think they will let it go, the other two boys who came back with me said they were told not to go A.W.H. again & were let off so I am O.K.

As far as we have been put into our new Battalion it is the 2/43 Bn. 9th Division & that seems to be definite one. I've said that was what we would be in.

If there is any change I will let you know the instant.

I don't we are going to the Middle East not sure can't say.

I thank the War Service Fund for the parcels given me when on leave & also for which I appreciate very much.

I can't tell you when we will be going but I leave it to yourself.

Hoping this finds you in the best of health &
Yours Marshall.

4 red.

W.G. Lott
TX5264
2 TB. B. Coy
Darley

2nd/ 4 30 Btn
9th Div
A.I.F.

Aug 28 1941

Dear Jack.

Just a line hoping you have got over your attack of the flue.
Well I arrived back in Camp alright on the thursday night & I haven't heard anything more about being A.W.L. I think they will let it go, the other two boys who came back with me said they were told not to go A.W.L. again and were let off so I am OK.

We Jack we have been put into our new Battalion it is the 2nd/43 Bn. 9th Division & that seems to be definite our Luet said that was what we would be in If there is any change I will let you know thr Mother. I think we are going to the Middle East not sure can't say. I thank the Ware Service Fund for the parcel, given me when on leave & also pen which I appreciate very much. I can't tell you when we will be going but I leave it to yourself.
Hoping this finds you in the best of health & Mrs Marshall.

from
Fred

I have been thinking of writing you for some time
 but have been so busy that I could not find time
 to do so. I had a real R.I. going. I had met
 the Williams & Jim Graham before
 just after they had come over quite
 a short I got to when I saw them
 I believe Royce Perry is our vice man
 & Dr. Lincoln but I haven't seen
 them may come in later later
 let me know if you have sent
 more than the one parcel
 that is a lot of my mail & parcel
 which I have caught up with
 you get I am a few short from
 home yet.
 How is that business do you and
 your family I hope he is much
 better.
 Has been pretty cold over here for
 the last month but will clear
 up now the snow has gone.
 Well Jack I thank you for the
 letter & always be pleased to
 hear from you.
 Yours sincerely
 Fred Lott

23/1/42.

TX 5264
 Gnr W. G. Lott
 2/8. Aust Field Regt
 A.I.F. Abroad.

Dear Jack.

I received your letter alright
 was pleased to get one from you
 I am glad you are all keeping
 well at home.

Your letter has been a long time
 getting here as I have been transferred
 into the Artillery since then my correct
 address is the above & have been
 in the Artillery now for about 3 months.
 About parcel I received a parcel from
 War Service Fund sent on Sept. 21. but
 none since only my Xmas hamper what
 received at Xmas. I forget whether I
 thanked you for parcel but do so now
 Have been getting Comfort issues which
 has been coming in handy. as tobacco
 is fairly scarce here.
 Had quite a family gathering the other day

TX5264

23./1./42.

Gnr W.G. Lott

2/8 Aust Field Regt

A.I.F. Abroad.

Dear Jack.

I recieved your letter alright was pleased to get one from you I am glad you are all keeping well at home.

Your letter has been a long time getting here as I have been transfered into the Artillery since then my correct address is the above I have been in the Arty now for about 3 months. About parcel I recieved a parcel from War Service Fund sent on Sept 26 but none since only my Xmas hamper which recieved at Xmas. I forget whether I thanked you for parcel but do so now Have been getting Comforts issues which has been coming in handy. as tobacco is fairly scarce here. Had quite a family gathering the other day there was Bill Fisher & Arch Terry McHugh & 3 Williams Bros so you can guess we had a real KI gossip. I had met the Williams and Jim Graham before just after they had come over quite a shock I got too when I saw them. I believe Royce Percy is over here now & Dr Lincoln but I haven't seen them may run into them later Let me know if you have sent more than the one parcel There is a lot of my mail & parcel which haven't caught up with me yet. I am a few short from home yet.

How is Bert keeping do you see much of him I hope he is much better.

Has been pretty cold over here for the last month but will clear up now the snow has gone Well Jack I thank you for the letter & always be pleased to hear from you

Yours sincerely

Fred Lott