

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: SX9483
Name: Lloyd George GALE
Nickname:



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star

Pacific Star

Defence Medal

Australian War Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Rank: Private

Service: Army

Enlisted: 22 Jul 1940

Discharged: 9 Jan 1946

Lloyd was born on 4 May 1919 at Kadina (SA) to Alfred Gale and Lillian Gale (nee Burgess). There were 6 children in the family, 4 boys and 2 girls, of which he was the second youngest. His family lived at Kadina until 1927 when they moved to Yallunda Flat.

He went to school at Yallunda Flat. On completion of schooling he worked in the Flour Mill at Cummins until his enlistment in the Army at Yallunda Flat at the age of 21. At that time he recorded his occupation as labourer.

On enlistment he was sent to Wayville for training before being allocated to Signal Corps. On completion of basic training in Oct 1940 he was transferred to Signals Training Depot in 3rd Military District (Healsville, Vic) for further training, before being posted to 8th Divisional Signals on 14 Nov 1940. He then undertook additional training, becoming a qualified linesman in Mar 1941 and was then detached to 2/15th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery.

On 6 Aug 1941 he embarked aboard HMT "K" bound for Singapore via Fremantle (WA), disembarking on 16 Aug 1941 and reverting to his original posting with 8th Divisional Signals.

On 26 Jan 1942 he was wounded in action (WIA) receiving shrapnel wounds from hostile air action.

On 21 Apr 1942 he was reported as missing in action (MIA) after the fall of Singapore to the Japanese. However, what transpired was that he was captured by the Japanese on the fall of Singapore and incarcerated in the infamous Changi Prison. In early May 1942 he was then transported to Victoria Point by steam barge to a POW

camp, where the POWs were forced to build an airfield. Five months later he was moved by road, rail and sea to Thanlybyuzat (Burma), which was the northern most point of the Burma Railway. More than 60,000 POW, 13,000 of whom were Australian, were forced to build the 421 km of rail. The conditions were horrendous and over 2700 Australian POW died as result of this forced labour.

On the 11 May 1943, one year after being reported as MIA, the report was amended to "now a prisoner of war (POW) in Thailand". Approximately two years later (12 Sep 1945), a further report states that "member now reported alive in Thailand." This uncertainty and lack of information must have been very stressful for the family.

Another missive to the family on 4 Oct 1945 states "member recovered from the Japanese in Thailand". Two weeks later Lloyd embarked aboard the *"Highland Brigade"* from Singapore bound for Freemantle, arriving on 19 Oct 1945. He was immediately evacuated to 121st Army General Hospital (AGH), where he remained until 3 Jan 1946. A week after release from hospital he was discharged from the Army at Keswick (SA) on 9 Jan 1946.

Lloyd returned to Tumby Bay where he met and married Mary Cabot from Lock on 29 Aug 1946 at Lock. The couple had 2 children, a boy and a girl. Their daughter, Christine Trezise, still resides in Tumby.

Lloyd took up a "soldier settlers" block at Warratta Vale and worked this for a few years until his health would no longer allow such activity. He suffered poor health as a result of his incarceration by the Japanese.

He retired into Tumby and passed away at Tumby Bay Hospital on 3 Apr 1979. He is buried in the Tumby Bay Cemetery.

His wife, Mary, remarried to Geoff Baillie of Lipson after the death of her husband. Mary died on 19 Nov 2015 and is also buried in the Tumby Bay Cemetery.

