

Obituary – Sefton Bottomley (8/12/1914 ~ 18/11/50)



When Sefton Bottomley was born on 28 December 1914, in Hobart, Tasmania, his father, Len, was 29 and his mother, Kate, was 33. He had 2 older sisters: Agnes, born 1910 and Barbara, born 1911. They all lived at Lunawanna on South Bruny Island where the children did their early years of school.

When Sefton was 9½ years old (1924), his father, Len, moved to *Sacriston* - a North Bruny Island property on the eastern side of the island. Sefton continued his education at Barnes Bay school where his mother, Kate, later became the teacher (1927 ~ 1929).

After leaving school Sefton worked at first at *Sacriston* with his father. When he was 16 years old (1931) he went to work for Oliver and Gladys Gray at Killora for 10 shillings per week and he walked from *Sacriston* each day. He also worked for the Young family at Nebraska off and on.

During the depression years Sefton worked with his father at *Sacriston* and did contract work around the district.

On 14 June 1942 Sefton's father, Len, took over the lease of the *Lauriston* property from Elwin Hunter Pybus. *Lauriston* was a 421 acre farm a few miles north of *Sacriston*. However, Sefton and his mother did not move to *Lauriston* until 3 years later.

On 24 July 1943 Sefton married **Josephine Paton**, the daughter of William and Daisy Paton. The wedding was held at All Saints Church, South Hobart. Mary Gray was the Bridesmaid. Sefton and Jo went on to have 3 sons: **Ralph** - born 2/1/1944, **Alan** - born 9/5/1945 and **Geoffrey** - born 30/4/1947).

On 24 September 1945 the *Lauriston* lease was transferred from Len to his son Sefton and the extended family then moved to the *Lauriston* farm. (*Sacriston* was sold to Mac Johnstone).

After World War 2, Sefton employed Ross Denne, his good friend from school days, on a casual basis, to help work the *Lauriston* farm. (Ross had served 4½ years in the army during the war and was discharged on 28 February 1946).

In about 1948 Sefton's mother, Kate, moved from *Lauriston* to a rented cottage at Dennes Point owned by the Tate family. (Sefton's parents had not been getting on well together for some years).

Sefton worked hard on the *Lauriston* farm and made many improvements including building a saw mill, planting an apricot orchard, building sheds, fences, improving the pasture etc. He also purchased an Allis Chalmers tractor (1949) which was a boon for the farm work but also enabled him to get contract work on the Bruny Island roads.

On 9 May 1950 Sefton was operated on for suspected hydatids. It was not hydatids but rather cancer of the liver. His doctor estimated that Sefton would have only 6 months to live. Sefton expressed regret that he would not be able to fulfil his many farm projects and that he would not get to see electric power connected to North Bruny Island. (Power was connected in March 1951).

Sefton died on 18 November 1950 aged just 35. His very happy marriage to Josephine was cut short at just 7 years.

On 3 January 1952 Sefton's widow, Jo, married Ross Denne and together they brought up Sefton's 3 sons.

In Sefton's memory, the family has founded the Sefton Bottomley Liver Cancer Research Bequest through the Menzies Institute in Hobart.

This Obituary authored by Alan and Yvonne Bottomley, April 2022.



BACK ROW: Miss Streeter (Teacher), Gwen Davis, Rupert Denne, Myra Sward, Ken Sward, Roland Young, Colin Denne, Jack Denne.

MIDDLE ROW: Vincent Lowe, Ross Denne, Faye Young, Sefton Bottomley, Mavis Young, Bernie Lowe, Mervyn Denne.

FRONT ROW: Brian Denne, Stanley Denne, Ralph Young, Joan Lowe, Kathleen Sward, Rex Lowe, Cliff Sward.

Barnes Bay State School circa 1925. Sefton, aged about 10, is in the centre of the picture.



At the Sacriston farm about 1944 Sefton, aged about 30, with his sister Barbara.

The photo was probably taken by Sefton's wife, Josephine.