

J S Battye Library of West Australian History Private Archives – Collection Listing

MN 1622
Acc. 5030A

WHITFELD, Miles, 1903-1997

WHITFELD, Ivan, 1904-1983

Miles Whitfeld, a mechanical engineer, arrived in Western Australia aboard the *TSS Moreton Bay* on 12 March 1926. He was met in Perth by his brother, Ivan. The brothers contracted work in Grass Valley, then moved to Southern Cross, where Miles worked and lived in the railway construction camp at Norseman.

Miles wrote many letters to his mother in England, telling her in great detail about his way of living, his work, the fauna and flora and many other items of interest. He describes how they set up a tent to live in while they were working in the bush and how he made camp beds and a larder. Later in the year when he worked on the railway at Norseman, his letters are illustrated with delightful sketches of railway trains and equipment.

The collection contains a few short letters from Miles to his mother which were written from 1926-1927 and one in 1935 when Miles was working on the Canning Dam construction. Photographs taken by Miles Whitfeld can be located in the Battye Pictorial Collection.

The Papers

The papers were donated to the State Archives by Mrs F. Raethel on 12 December 1998.

Holdings = 0.01m

Access

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Summary of Classes

ARTICLES
CORRESPONDENCE
REFERENCES

5030A/1	ARTICLES 26 August 1926-7 April 1927 'A farm in Australia' by Miles Whitfeld B.Sc, A.G.G.I., S.I. Mech. Eng.	Handwritten, 4 folios
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CORRESPONDENCE

All addressed to "Dear Mother", mainly from Miles, number 4 from Ivan

- 5030A/2 19 February-28 February 1926
Written initially from *TSS Morton Bay*, Bitter Lakes, Suez Canal, later "Indian Ocean". Relating life on board ship, activities, food, places visited
Handwritten, 7 folios
- 5030A/3 3 March-12 March 1926
Written initially from "In the Indian Ocean, about 400 miles from S. of Ceylon"
Handwritten, 6 folios
- 5030A/4 Sunday 14th (1926)
Written by Ivan, telling of Miles arrival in Perth, contract work, paper-bark trees, searching for suitable land to purchase, considering bee-hunting as a commercial prospect and anticipated travel to Grass Valley
Handwritten, (pencil), 2 folios
- 5030A/5 19 March 1926
Contract work, job hire from a registry, travel to Grass Valley by train, drawings of 'blackboy' trees, with diameters
Handwritten, 2 folios
- 5030A/6 25 March 1926
Ants, with full-size drawing, clearing in the bush, gum-trees, dirt, 'black with charcoal', payment for labour. Includes hand-drawn map of the land contracted to be cleared
Handwritten, 3 folios
- 5030A/7 7 April 1926
Describing a photograph that he enclosed in the letter, small drawing of a larder, made from a kerosene case
- 5030A/8 16 April 1926
- 5030A/82 REFERENCES
18 January 1937
Character reference, from the Resident Engineer of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department, for Miles Whitfeld, supervisor, batching of concrete for the Canning Dam construction

4 April 2001