

Roy James Brown



Roy James Brown (1894-1981) was born on 6th February 1894 at the foot of Wheogo Mountain Piney Range, in the Grenfell District, to Enoch and Louisa (nee Holland). Roy was one of eleven children, and the family lived on a small farm section adjacent to the property once owned by Ben Hall, the notorious bushranger. The Brown family moved to Grenfell about the turn of the century.

Roy was educated at Grenfell Primary School and left at age 14. On leaving school he worked as a carpenters' assistant, and later secured a mail run by horseback in the Warraderry area. He also worked with his brother George on "Melyra" Gooloogong Road, and later he commenced share farming on Newman Brother's property 'Inglevale", now owned by the Bucknell family.

Roy attempted to enlist with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) at the outbreak of the Great War 1914, but his father Enoch, refused him permission to join up underage. Later after his father Enoch's death, Roy successfully enlisted and took part in a recruitment march into the Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook area, late 1917/early 1918.

Roy received his final training at the AIF camp at Sutton Veney England, and during the final months of the war served with the 2nd Battalion in France and Belgium, including the Bullecourt area, where the famous battles had taken place in 1917. Roy wouldn't talk much about the war years after his return to Australia. One cannot begin to imagine the horrors and difficulties soldiers like Roy were faced with.

Following the signing of the Armistice in 1918 and whilst awaiting transport home, Roy spent three months working on a farm at Sturminster Newton, Dorset, England.

In 1919, Roy applied for a soldiers settler block on "Gambarra" station - 384 acres, now known as West Gambarra (approximately six kilometres north of Greenethorpe).

Roy married Gladys Maidment Dorrington from Lidcombe, Sydney, in 1923, and had two children Jean Hughes (nee Brown) and Bruce Brown. To this date the farm is still owned by the Brown family, and many of his descendants live in the area.

Roy also enlisted for the Second World War but was refused due to his age and occupation as a farmer.

Roy then joined the Grenfell Voluntary Corp with training every weekend until the end of the war in 1945. He died 18th April 1981.

A courageous Christian man who did his best for God, King, Family and Country.

Presented to the Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Greenethorpe on ANZAC Day 2013