

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 3412
Name: Robert Stanley CAMPBELL
Nickname: Stan



Medals and Decorations

British War Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Trooper
Service: Army
Enlisted: 3 Mar 1917
Discharged: 6 Jun 1919

Stan was born on 25 Dec 1894 at Templeton (near Balaclava, SA) to Robert Campbell and Annie Campbell (nee Lavis). There were 7 children in the family, 4 boys and 3 girls. His father was a farmer in the Templeton region.

In 1902 his father was allocated a block of land at Yallunda Flat, Hundred of Koppio. The father went over to the block in Jul 1903 after the death of Stan's mother and younger sister: The family arriving 6 months later on the "*Ferret*", which was to land at Tumby Bay, but because the conditions were too rough, landed at Port Lincoln. It was then a 2 day journey back to the farm by horse and wagon. On arrival the family of seven lived in a tent until they built a two room "gal iron" hut: the girls slept in one room, the cooking was done in the other and the boys slept in the stripper.

There was no school at Yallunda so his dad built one. It was completed on Christmas Eve 1904; the next year 33 pupils attended – the teacher was a Miss Owens from Port Lincoln who later married Clem Fairbrother of Yallunda. Stan worked with his father clearing the family land as well as attending school. He left school at age 13.

The family bought a second farm at Brooker. Stan worked this farm and in 1909 put in a crop that returned 5 bags per acre. The wheat was then carted 30 miles (48km) to Tumby Bay; 40 bags to a wagon load, a 2½ day trip, 2 trips per week. In 1912 the railway reached Yeelanna – now only a 12 mile trip to cart the wheat.

In 1915, Stan was allocated a block of 823 acres, Section 13 Hundred of Moody, adjoining his father's farm at Brooker.

In 1916, Stan, his brother, Jack Boundy and Bill Ahang left Tumby to enlist in the Army. Stan and his brother failed the medical and returned to Tumby, their two mates were enlisted. Twelve months later Stan and his brother tried again. This time they both passed and were enlisted; Stan was posted to 9th Light Horse on 3 Mar 17, but his brother failed training and returned to Tumby again.

After a short period of training the reinforcements were sent to Melbourne in June to embark for the Middle East, but during embarkation a fever broke out amongst the

troops so the group was sent to an isolation camp in Sale (Vic). Finally on 7 Sep 17 the group embarked on the “*Kyarra*” bound for the Middle East, landing in Egypt on 19 Oct 1917. The reinforcements arrived at the front line on Christmas Day 1917 – at this time Stan met up with Harry Paul and asked of Jack Boundy, only to learn that he had been killed in action.

Early 1918 saw the 9th fighting its way to Jordan through Bethlehem and Jerusalem before arriving at the Jordan River. On 30 Apr 18 the Regiment was involved in the battle of As Salt (Syria): it was here that they were surrounded by a very large Turkish force and were lucky to be able to withdraw back to the Jordan Valley again.

At this time Stan suffered a severe bout of Malaria and was evacuated to hospital. On rejoining his unit, peace was declared and the Regiment was sent to Tripoli, arriving in Dec 18. They undertook a police action here, guarding the railway line because of the civil unrest in Egypt.

On 19 Apr 1919 he embarked on the “*Warwick*” bound for Port Adelaide, arriving 25 May 1919. After a further period of hospitalization because of a recurrence of Malaria, he returned to the family farm at Brooker; living with his father, brother (George) and two sisters.

1920 was a good year. Not only were the crops good and the price of wheat was 1 pound (\$2) a bag, but Stan met the love of his life, Arno Lavender Rose Hickman, at a concert at the Lipson Hall. They courted for 2 ½ years, only seeing each other 7 or 8 times each year. Eventually romance won and they were married on 13 Dec 1922; initially living at Butler before moving onto the Brooker farm in 1926.

On the evening of 28 Sep 1928 Stan had to rush his pregnant wife to Tumby Hospital (30 miles – 48 km). He did not make it; the baby was born at Bert Baillie’s house, seven miles out of Lipson. Both mother and child survived!

It took 19 years to complete their family of 7, 4 girls and 3 boys.

The Great Depression had started. These were grim days and many farmers lost their farms. The price of wheat had dropped to 12 pence (12 cents) per bag. Many farmers put their tractors aside and went back to horses – the tractors did not return for 3 or 4 years. Stan stuck with his horse teams until 1941 when he bought his first tractor - a Bulldog.

Stan bought and sold a number of farms before retiring to Port Lincoln in Mar 1958. He and his wife then undertook extensive traveling of this country of ours, covering many thousands of miles. On 13 Dec 1972, Stan and Lavender celebrated their Golden wedding Anniversary. All of their children and grandchildren (27) gathered for this event.

His wife died on 10 Jan 1973 and Stan died on 26 Jun 1989. They are both buried at Port Lincoln.



Wheat carting at Tumby Bay, circa 1920