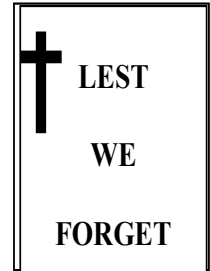


A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 2437A
Name: Roy Holly LARWOOD



Medals and Decorations

British War Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Corporal
Service: Army
Enlisted: 5 Apr 1916
KIA: 23 Feb 1917

Roy was born on 29 Oct 1890 at Yacka (near Clare, SA) to John Henry Larwood and Elizabeth Larwood (nee Elder). There were 6 children in the family, 4 boys and 2 girls, of which he was the youngest. His family lived in Yacka (SA) where his father was a farmer. His father died when he was 4 years of age.

Roy went to school at Yacka. On completion of schooling he remained in the area for a short time before undertaking training as a teacher; he then moved to Lipson as a teacher at the Lipson School and later as the Head Teacher. He remained in this employ until his enlistment in the Army at Petersberg (now known as Peterborough, SA) at the age of 25 years. At the time of enlistment he recorded his occupation as school teacher.

On enlistment Roy was sent to 2nd Depot Battalion (Bn) at Mitcham for training. He was initially allocated to 14th Reinforcements/27th Bn on 15 May 1916; this was changed to Base Miners on 1 Jun 1916 and then changed again to 11th NCO School on 16 Jun 1916; on completion of NCO training he was finally allocated to 5th Reinforcements/50th Bn. To add to the confusion of the constantly changing postings, he was also allocated a regimental number that had already been allocated to another soldier, thus the A following his regimental number. This was apparently not an uncommon occurrence at this time as there were no computers to keep a check on which numbers had already been allocated.

After this very confusing start he finally embarked from Adelaide on 19 Sep 1916 aboard HMAT "*Commonwealth*" bound for Plymouth (UK), disembarking on 14 Nov 1916. Two days later he was promoted to Corporal (provisional) and marched into 13th Training Bn at Codford (UK) – a few days later he was promoted to Sergeant (provisional and without pay). Just prior to Christmas 1916 he marched into his unit (50th Bn) in France, into one of the bleakest winters experienced throughout the war.

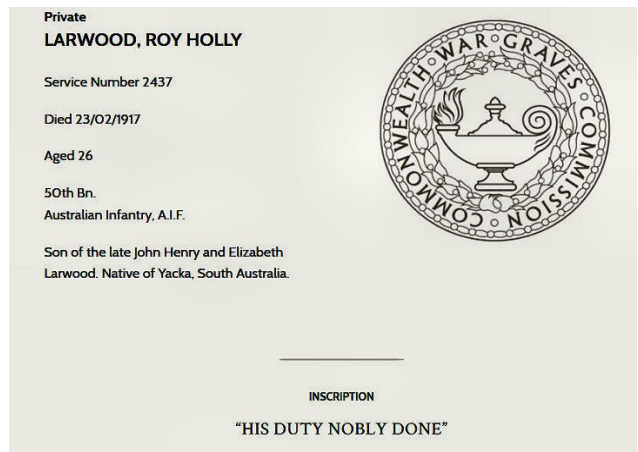
The 50th Bn was raised in Egypt in 1916 as part of the reorganisation and expansion of the AIF following the Gallipoli campaign. After arriving in France on 11 Jun 1916, the 50th fought its first major battle at Mouquet Farm (13 - 15 Aug) and suffered heavy casualties; it was also involved in another assault in the same location on 3 Sep 1916. The Bn spent the remainder of 1916 alternating in and out of the front-line.

Within two months of arrival in France. Roy was killed in action (KIA) on 23 Feb 1917 at the age of 26 years. This was during the lead up to the attack on Noreuil, a section of the Hindenburg Line, which was undertaken by the 50th and 51st Bns. Roy is buried at Bulls Road Cemetery, Flers.

Again the difficulty of communication is highlighted. Roy's mother passed away after his death and a number of missives to her from the Army are shown as "returned to sender", culminating in the Army advertising in the newspaper for next of kin for the late soldier. Eventually Roy's eldest brother was recorded as next of kin and Roy's medals and scroll were forwarded to him in 1923, almost 6 years after Roy's death.



British War Medal Victory Medal



Below: Bulls Road Cemetery, Flers, Somme, France

