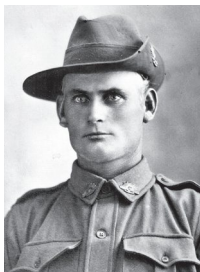


A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 2457
Name: George Hamilton YOUNG



Medals and Decorations

British Service Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Private
Service: Army
Enlisted: 1 Jun 1916
Discharged: 25 Sep 1919

George was born at Coonatta (near Hammond, SA) on 29 Jan 1879 to Robert Moller Young and Mary Ann Young (nee Edgecombe). There were 6 children in the family, 2 boys and 4 girls (2 of which died in infancy). His father worked in the Moonta mines.

George went to the Moonta Mines School, leaving at the age of 12. He went to work for his cousin, Tom Cosh, at Nantawarra (SA) and then onto the Eyre Peninsula, before returning to Moonta and taking employ in the mines. He married relatively young for the time, marrying Mabel May Trezise on 24 May 1902. They had a family of seven children, 4 boys and 3 girls (unfortunately one of the boys, a twin, died in infancy).

George and family moved to Butler Tanks in 1904. The family shipped their belongings to Cowell as cargo space to Tumby was at a premium, with a wait period of several months. As well as “normal” living items they brought with them a wagon, a plough and a team of horses. George remarked later that the plough was the silliest thing that they brought with them as it was too heavy to pull over the sand hills: the trip from Cowell to Butler took 3 days, the worst part being from Driver River Tanks to Lady Kinnaird Tanks. He initially worked as a share farmer on Section 9, but in 1907 he purchased the block and became a farmer in his own right. This was a big change from the busy mining area of Moonta – their property was situated six miles (10 Km) from their nearest neighbour, with no telephone and no reticulated water. Mabel had to carry water from a well some distance from the tin shed that was their home!

To overcome this isolation, George and Mabel began the tradition of the Butler Christmas Tree; a tradition that has been carried on each year since its inception in 1905. This social get together was a major event on the Butler calendar, unfortunately

terminating at its centenary in 2005. Also in 1905 George and Mabel became foundation members of the first Church of Christ on Eyre Peninsula.

In 1916 George enlisted in the Army whilst Mabel and the children moved to Tumby Bay. He was posted to 2nd Depot battalion and undertook his initial training at Wayville before embarking at Outer Harbour on “*Itrea*” on 14 Aug 1916 bound for Plymouth (UK), arriving on 30 Oct 1916. On arrival he was posted to the Pioneer Training Battalion before embarking for France on SS “*Golden Eagle*” on 28 Feb 1917. After another short period of training he was posted to 5th Pioneer Battalion on 3 Apr 1917, arriving at the front in time for the third battle of Ypres; one of the most bloody in the war.

On 30 Nov 1918 he was evacuated to the 8th Field Ambulance, then to 3rd General Hospital and finally to Graylingwell War Hospital (UK); all of this occurring only 3 weeks prior to the de-mobilisation of his unit. On 16 Mar 1919 he was repatriated to Australia aboard the HS “*Dundee Castle*”.

On return to Australia, he returned to his family at Tumby. He then bought another property (Section 17) at Butler and in memory of the toughest battle that he took part in during the war; he named this property “*Zonnebeke*”.

The 1920’s saw George and Mabel resume their community and church roles in the district. George also became a Justice of the Peace, a District Councillor and a member of the Tumby Bay Hospital Board. Their home, like many in the district, was always an “open house”.

In 1936 George became Treasurer of the Butler Soldiers Memorial Hall and oversaw the building of this structure.

In 1937 George passed the farm to George Jnr; he and Mabel retired and purchased a house in Tumby Terrace. Unfortunately Mabel passed away in 1945.

At the age of 85 George slipped from a ladder whilst repairing the roof of his house and broke one of his legs; but this did not stop him. After a time in hospital he was back home and busy in his workshop. At the age of 87 his vision had deteriorated markedly but he was still able to make coffee tables for each of his daughters and daughters in law and wooden bath mats for his 21 grandchildren.



British War Medal Victory Medal



George died on 23 Dec 1966, a month before his 88th birthday. Both he and Mabel are buried in the Tumby Bay Cemetery.