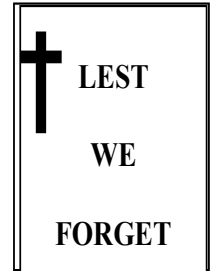


A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 550
Name: Roy DUNN



Medals and Decorations

1914 - 15 Star
British War Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Lance Corporal
Service: Army
Enlisted: 4 Mar 1915
KIA: 4 Aug 1916

Roy was born on 14 Nov 1890 at Laura (SA) to James Albert Dunn and Harriet Emilene Dunn (nee Basley). He was the eldest of 6 children in the family, 2 boys and 4 girls. His father was a farmer near Laura. The family moved from Laura to Yeelanna in 1903, where they purchased a scrub block.

Roy went to school at Laura. After the family relocated to Yeelanna he worked on the family farm and other farms in the area until his enlistment in the Army at Keswick (SA) on 4 Mar 1915 at the age of 24.

At the time he recorded his occupation as farmer and his home town as Yeelanna. After enlistment Roy was sent to 2nd Depot Battalion (Bn) at Mitcham for training before being allocated to 27th Bn on 16 Apr 1915. On completion of training he embarked, with his unit, at Adelaide on 31 May 1915 aboard HMAT "Geelong" bound for the Middle East, disembarking at Alexandria.

After a further short period of training he embarked from Alexandria on 4 Sep 1915 bound for Gallipoli, landing on 12 Sep 1915.

On the withdrawal from Gallipoli he was one of the last of his unit to leave, returning to Alexandria via Mudros (Greece), disembarking on 10 Jan 1916. After another short period of training and unit reorganisation he was again on the move, embarking at Alexandria on 10 Mar 1916 bound for Marseilles (France), disembarking on 21 Mar 1916.

The Bn entered the front-line for the first time on 7 April 1916 near Armentieres; he must have acquitted himself well as he was promoted/appointed Lance Corporal at this time. The Bn took part in its first major battle near Pozieres between 28 Jul and 5 Aug 1916. It was deployed on the left flank of the 2nd Division attack aimed at capturing the

heights above Pozieres. The Bn's axis of advance took it through the Windmill, or rather the ruins of the 17th Century windmill, which had the dominant view of the surrounding area. They captured it, and held it in the face of unrelenting artillery fire and counter attacks.

When the 48th Bn took over from the 27th Bn they reported that there was no one left alive in the forward positions; the area around the windmill is said to contain more South Australian DNA than any other piece of ground anywhere in the world save for metropolitan cemeteries in South Australia itself. The Bn suffered over 400 casualties during the action (approx 40% of its strength).

It was during this action that Roy was reported Missing in Action on 4 Aug 1916. A further 75 members of his Bn were also reported as Missing in Action at this time, many, like Roy have no known grave.

A Court of Enquiry convened on 30 Jul 1917 found that Roy had been Killed in Action on the date that he had been declared missing in action.

Then commenced the usual difficulty in ascertaining Next of Kin (NOK). Many soldiers had listed their mother as NOK, but the military only recognised male relatives. It was finally ascertained that Roy's father was the closest living male relative and his medals and scroll were forwarded to the family in Dec 1922, five years after the finding of the Court of Enquiry! The stress on the family must have been unbelievable.

Roy's name is recorded on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial with over 10,000 other Australian names of soldiers who have no known grave. His name is also recorded on the Tumby Bay Memorial.



1914-15 Star British War Medal Victory Medal



Memorial at
Villers-Bretonneux
Military Cemetery,
France