

# MACLACHLAN Roy Campbell Service No: 3583



## BASIC INFORMATION

Name: Roy Campbell

Service number: 3583

Date of enlistment: 3/7/1917

Age at Enlistment: 18 years 10 months

Civil Occupation: Farmer

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 5ft 5 ½ inches

Weight: 133 lbs.

Chest measurement: 33 ½ inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Fair

Father: John MacLachlan

Mother: Susan Bryson Vandeppeer

Married: Julia Maud Duperouzel

Children: Grace, Max, Donald, and 4 others



Courtesy of Kathy Emin

## Life Story

Roy Campbell MacLachlan was born in Leederville. His parents arrived from South Australia in the late 1800s and, after a period in Albany, took up residence at 6 Knotts Road, York. His Father, John, an orchardist and later a trader of skins, hides and tallow, served on the York Roads Board between 1924-1938 and was Chairman from 1936-37. He was also a member of the York Agricultural Society between 1917 and 1929, the York Branch of Primary Producers in 1924 and 1925, and the War Patriotic Fund. Last, but not least, he was an agent for the Woodbridge Nursery in Guildford.

Roy's mother, Julia, was an accomplished pianist and participated in many recitals and church services. Her piano still remains with her Great Granddaughter, Susan Castle. She was President of the York Red Cross Society from 1919 to 1920 and made it her responsibility to meet the trainloads of returning soldiers as they passed through York, handing out parcels of fruit, milk, refreshments and cigarettes.

Roy had one brother and three sisters, Doreen, Jess and Susan. Colin, his brother, was commonly known as "Ävon." He married Margaret MacLachlan, known to many as "Matron".



Patients of No 3 Ward, Brimstone Bottom Hospital 29.9.2017. Roy is bottom right.

Photo Courtesy: Kathy Emin

Roy enrolled as a service cadet three and a half years before enlisting at Blackboy Hill with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneer Unit of the A.I.F. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1917. He embarked aboard HMAT A16 *Port Melbourne* at Albany on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1917 as part of the 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion, and disembarked in Liverpool, England, on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 1917.

Roy was then marched to the 11<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion at Durrington.

He spent about two weeks in Tidworth Military Hospital, then Brimstone Bottom Hospital, before being discharged to the Training Battalion on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1917.

By December, Roy had been transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pioneer Division and Taken on Strength at Sutton-Mandeville, from where he proceeded overseas to France. The Pioneer Divisions were described as “light military combat engineers organised like the infantry and located at the very forward edge of the battle area.”

Roy struggled with the rigors of war after he witnessed a hand grenade kill his best mate. He spent several months in the trenches and was admitted to hospital from the Field unit suffering trench fever.

Roy’s son Max writes,

*“Roy was used largely in the field defences and the provision of mobility support to get people, weapons, ammunition, rations and stores up to the front lines and casualties out. In France, Roy saw action at Mesdines, Hellfire corner, Armentieres and survived some of the bitterest Somme battles. His last engagement was with the unit when it captured San Quentin.*

*As the War wound down Roy was transferred to be a driver for an officer. One day Roy was tending a horse that was lame for a soldier and the officer was impressed with Roy’s animal husbandry and veterinary knowledge and arranged for Roy to be sent to Edinburgh University with full pay and subsidy to attend summer school to study animal husbandry, veterinary science until he returned to Australia”.*

Roy embarked aboard the *Plassy* from England on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 1919 and disembarked in Australia on the 17<sup>th</sup> October.



## LIFE AFTER THE WAR IN YORK

Roy found it hard to settle back into civilian life after returning to York. He took on labouring jobs and moved around before buying a 434-acre block of land at Talbot. He purchased the land from Matthew Ryan at a mortgagee auction but, as Matthew refused to vacate the land, Roy had to take his case to the Supreme Court. He won and was able to take up the land, where he proceeded to build his own home from mud bricks.

Roy was also granted a War Service Block consisting of 898 acres of uncleared ground which adjoined his property. He then proceeded to buy up a few adjoining blocks, bringing the property up to 2000 acres in total.



Photo Courtesy: Kathy Emin

In 1923 he married Julia Duperouzel and together they raised seven children.

Roy became active within the Talbot community. He helped build the Talbot School, played tennis and cricket, attended dances and, when the Second World War loomed, spent a lot of time in the Voluntary Defence Corp doing guard duty and helping the army to reinforce the town bridge to take the weight of tanks, should the need arise.

In 1948 tragedy struck when his wife, Julia, suddenly died of haemorrhage and a septicaemia-related blood infection. Their youngest daughter was only three years' old at the time. An older daughter, Grace, took over the care of her father and the younger siblings.

Upon his retirement, Roy became a caretaker at the Beverley Fire Station whilst his two sons, Max and Donald, took over the farm. He died at eighty years of age.

## Acknowledgements

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The MacLachlan Family

## References

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