



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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SIR ROSS McPHERSON SMITH, K.B.E., M.C., D.F.C., A.F.C.

(1892 - 1922)

SIR KEITH McPHERSON SMITH, K.B.E., F.R.G.S., F.R.Ae.S.,
M. Inst. T.

(1890 - 1955)

Anyone who wanted to find two world famous airmen probably wouldn't think to go to a South Australian property of some 780,000 ha (3,000 square miles) called Mutooroo Station, situated on the New South Wales border, 225 km north-west of Adelaide and just 50 km south-west of Broken Hill.

The station was managed by Andrew Smith and his wife Jessie (nee McPherson), who had both been born in Scotland and who were the proud parents of two sons. ¹

Keith, born in Adelaide on 20 December 1890 and Ross born on 4 December 1892 in the Adelaide suburb of Semaphore on the shore of Gulf St. Vincent, were both given, as a second Christian name, the maiden name of their mother.

Both boys were boarders at the Queen's School, Adelaide and they spent two years at Warriston School at their father's birthplace in the Scottish town of Moffat.

On his return to Australia, Ross worked as a warehouseman and joined the Australian Mounted Cadets. He was selected to tour Britain and the United States of America and, on his return, he joined the 10th Australian Regiment, the Adelaide Rifles.

In August 1914, at the outbreak of the first world war, Ross enlisted as a private in the 3rd Light Horse Regiment of the first Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). He was quickly promoted to sergeant, sailed for Egypt and, after training, landed at Gallipoli on 13 May 1915.

Three months later he was the regimental sergeant major and, on 5 September 1915, he was commissioned a second lieutenant.

