



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PAPER No. 61

PREPARED 7 DELIVERED BY: G.H. Cumming

DATE: 29 May 2000

BRO. ROY LONGMORE

(1894 - 2001)

Roy Longmore is the oldest of the three Gallipoli veterans portrayed on the Australian Legends stamps issued by Australia Post on 21 January 2000.

Roy was born on 29 April 1894 and when the First World War broke out in 1914, he immediately left his job as a farm hand in Victoria and enlisted in the first Australian Imperial Force (AIF). 1.



He celebrated, if that's an appropriate description, his 21st birthday in Egypt and, on 12 October 1915, he landed at Gallipoli with the 21st Battalion of the 2nd Division.

It was nearly six months after the first Anzac landing and the campaign was at a stalemate with both the Anzacs and Turkish troops engaged in heavy trench fighting.

Longmore had the dangerous job of tunnelling under the Turkish positions to lay mines. 2.

He was 6 feet (182 cm) tall and had to crouch to stay under cover.

Roy later said: "I was underground most of the time. I Didn't see much".

He told of a warning he gave to a young new arrival to keep his head down as the Turks were good shots. "Of course he wouldn't take much notice of me. He put his head up and ended up in a trench behind us, dead. Bullet straight through the head".

After the evacuation from Gallipoli, Longmore went to France with the 2nd Pioneer Battalion where he fought at Pozieres where he was wounded in 1916 but remained on duty, Armentieres and Villers-Bretonneux. 3.

He again continued fighting after being wounded in the leg in April 1918.

He was promoted to Corporal and just one month before the armistice in November 1918, his war came to an end when he was wounded in both legs.

"We were patrolling in a gully when suddenly half a dozen Germans just appeared over a hill with machine guns and opened fire. Jerry riddled me with machine-gun

bullets, knocking me flat on my back and the last I heard was 'Longy's had it, they got him'. My mates had won that skirmish, seen me move and that's how I survived. I am still crook at myself for letting them get me".

When he returned to Australia, he married Lillian Taylor and they had a son, Eric.

Roy was unable to work on his farm so he managed a hire-car business and worked as a driver for Mayne Nickless Ltd. He retired at the age of sixty-two to nurse his ailing wife.

He said of the war: "We just did what we were told. I'd sooner let bygones be bygones. I don't want to go through it all again".

He said he could'nt forget "all the people that were lost and all their families left behind hundreds of men were lost. All good men".

In 1998, Roy Longmore received France's Legion of Honneur (Legion of Honour) medal and, in 1999, the 80th Anniversary Armistice Remembrance Medal. He received nothing from the King and country for whom he fought.

Roy's son, Eric, received a gold replica of the stamp on behalf of his father.

He said: 'Dad couldn't see the stamp. It's just another day to him'. 4.

Bro Roy Longmore was initiated into Freemasonry on 3 December 1934 in Lodge Acanthus No. 400 on the Register of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria.



The Lodge met in the Melbourne suburb of Camberwell. 5.

He gave his age as forty and his occupation as garage proprietor.

He was passed to the Second Degree on 4 March 1935 and raised a Master Mason on 2 September 1936. He was issued with Master Mason's Certificate No. 84119.

Bro. Longmore called off on 3 March 1947.

NOTES

1. The Sun-Herald: article by Christine Sams, 16 April 2000.
 2. Australian Stamp Bulletin No. 254, March-May 2000.
 3. The Sydney Morning Herald, 25 April 2000.
 4. The Sydney Morning Herald, article by Tony Stephens, 22 January 2000.
 5. The United Grand Lodge of Victoria; membership records.
-