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FROM A PAPER FROM MEMBER,
P.W. BRAIN, BY G.H.CUMMING.

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GEORGE WILLIAM BRAIN, MLA., JP., FCA., FICA.
(1893 - 1969)

George William Brain was born at Picton, New South Wales on 18 January 1893, the eldest of 9 children.

He attended public schools at Picton and Parramatta, leaving school at age 13. Two years earlier, he had begun delivering newspapers for 3 shillings a week but was docked one penny for each paper said not to have been delivered even though they were frequently stolen by passers-by.

In 1907, George, aged 14, moved with his parents to Scone to work on a dairy farm where, during a drought, the cows were fed on prickly pear, chaff, molasses and oil cake.

Three years later, George went to Mudgee where he worked on Burrundulla Station with 100 milking cows.

At age 20, George decided to try his luck in Sydney but was unable to get employment.

He eventually got a job delivering milk from a dairy at Mascot but, after all his possessions were stolen, he returned home to Mudgee.

He realised that to make progress, he had to become a tradesman or professional man and so he began a correspondence course in double-entry bookkeeping. His studies were done by the light of a slush lamp after he had completed a 4 am to 8 pm working day on the farm.

[A slush lamp was made from a stick wrapped in cloth, to serve as a wick, in a tin of fat].

As a result of his studies, he obtained a job with the *Western Post* at Mudgee.

In 1916, George Brain again came to Sydney and took a position with Starkey and Starkey, a firm of Public Accountants.

On 26 January 1918, George married Paula Agnes Merkle at North Sydney. Paula's father was Bro. Adolph F.E. Merkle, a member of Lodge Edinburgh St. John No. 38 at Mudgee.

The newly-weds lived in Penkival Street, Willoughby and, in 1920, moved into their new home in High Street, Willoughby where they raised their five children.

Meanwhile, George had passed his accountancy examinations and, in 1925, formed the partnership of Brain and Noble, which, in 1942, became Noble and Campbell, Chartered Accountants.

During the 1930's, George Brain became a director of Beare and Ley Pty. Ltd., the Mens' and Boys' Outfitters; J.P. Stuart Pty. Ltd., Retailers; McEwans Pty. Ltd., Retail Grocers; Chatswood Community Hospital and four terminating Building Societies.

By 1937 he had been admitted a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia and a Fellow of the Commonwealth Institute of Accountants where, for some time, he was Honorary Treasurer.

From the end of the First World War, George Brain took an active interest in local Progress Associations, Parents and Citizens Associations and local politics.

He was one of the promoters during the depression years of the Free Milk Movement for school children.

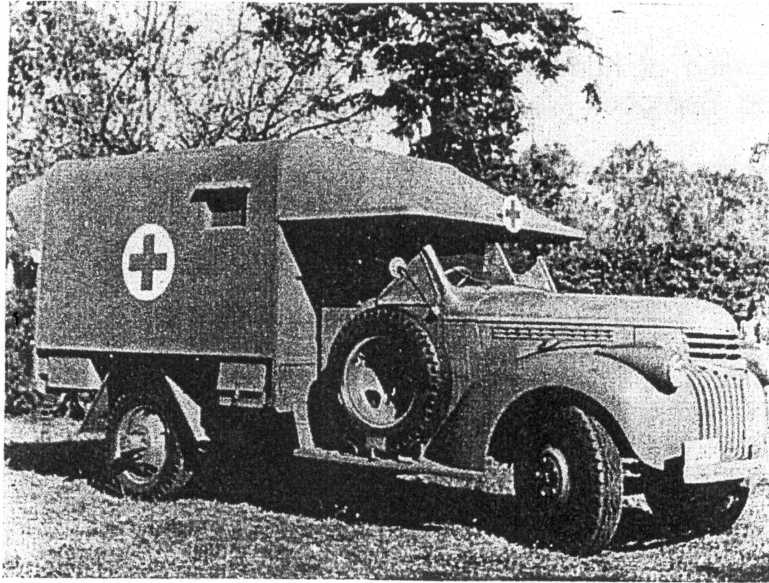
On Saturday, 22 February 1941, a Monster War Carnival was held in Willoughby Park. The President of the Carnival Committee was George Brain.

The Committee raised over £1000, enough to purchase two Field Ambulances - one each for the A.I.F. and the R.A.N.



The Willoughby Park Committee, 1941. From left: V. Chivers (organiser): Clive Reid (Secretary): George Brain (President): F. Butt (Treasurer): M. Whitaker (Publicity Officer).

Note: With the exception of Vince Chivers on the left, all the others in the above photograph were members of Lodges meeting at the then Chatswood Masonic Hall.



One of the Field Ambulances bought with funds raised by the Willoughby Park Committee.

On 6 December 1941, George Brain was elected an Alderman for the Middle Harbour Ward of Willoughby Municipal Council.



Bro. George William Brain in 1965.

On 1 September 1943, George Brain won the State Legislative Assembly seat of Willoughby in a by-election. He held the seat as a Liberal MP until he retired in January 1968. He was elected unopposed on 3 occasions.

His maiden speech in the House championed the cause of the Free Library Movement.

In his younger days, Brain had played cricket and tennis but, in later years, he turned his interest to bowls.

He was a member of Chatswood Bowling Club; a founder and Patron of Willoughby Park Bowling Club; a Patron of Valley View Bowling Club and the State Parliamentary Bowling Club where he was President in 1967 - 1968.

He was also the New South Wales delegate to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Congress held in Bombay, India in 1957 under the leadership of (Bro.) Sir William McMahon.

George Brain was also an active member of the Chatswood branch of Lions International.

He had a dry sense of humour. When asked why the three-way partnership of Brain, Noble and Campbell was so successful, his reply was: "Our wives have never met."

On another occasion he said: "Figures do not lie, but liars can figure."

George Brain died on 18 January 1969. It was the date of his birthday.

Obituaries were presented in the House by the Premier and Treasurer, Bro. Askin; the Leader of the Opposition, Phillip Hills and George Brain's friend and Parliamentary colleague, Bro. David Hunter.

Mr R.J. Kelly, the President of the Parliamentary Bowling Club also spoke in the House and the Willoughby Park Bowling Club published an obituary in their club magazine, *Surgite*.

Bro. George William Brain was made a mason at Chatswood, N.S.W., on 31 October 1928 in Lodge Hercules No. 452, United Grand Lodge of New South Wales. He was passed a Fellowcraft on 9 January 1929 and raised a Master Mason on 27 March 1929.

He became a foundation member of Lodge Prometheus No. 779 at the Lodge's Consecration at Chatswood on 22 April 1949.

He retained his membership in both lodges until his death.

So, if you remember receiving a free half-pint bottle of milk or if you freely borrow a book from your local library, spare a thought for the late Bro. George William Brain.

About the Author.

The original paper was submitted by Rt. Wor. Bro. Paul W. Brain, one of the four sons of George William Brain.

He was initiated in Lodge Hercules No. 452 on 2 May 1945 after service as an airgunner in the R.A.A.F.

He was the Foundation Treasurer of Lodge Prometheus No. 779.

He served as Wor. Master of Lodge Prometheus in 1954-55 and 1966-67.

He affiliated with Lodge Gladstone Temperance No. 618 in September 1974 and served as Wor. Master of that Lodge in 1976-77.

He served two further terms as Wor. Master of Lodge Prometheus in 1984-85 and 1985-86.

He was appointed District Grand Inspector of Workings for 10A District for the term 1972 - 1974.

The Rank of Past Junior Grand Warden was conferred on him on 9 June 1982.

He took up residence in England and joined Hartington Lodge No. 1085 E.C. on 2 November 1988 and was a foundation member of Grange Lodge No. 9639 E.C. on 10 May 1997.

Rt. Wor. Bro. Paul Brain was appointed a Past Provincial Junior Grand Warden, Provincial Grand Lodge of Derbyshire on 5 April 1997.

He was a foundation member of the Masonic Historical Society of New South Wales.