



## **George Ernest Doddridge**



**18<sup>th</sup> of October 1894 – 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1961**

**Service Number: 938**

**10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion**



**Lest We Forget**



When looking out over the beautiful Barossa Valley, the glowing fields in bright yellows and greens and lines of organised vines, do you spare a thought for the men who gave up so much so that we could enjoy this? After my research on George Ernest Doddridge, I now understand the ANZAC spirit and the sacrifices made for our sake.

George was born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1894 to Charles and Sarah Doddridge in Angaston, South Australia. George and his family relocated to Lindsay Park from Angaston where he lived for most of his childhood years (Appendix 1). He was an energetic young man who enjoyed playing cricket and eventually umpired for his local team, community and belonging had already started to play a significant role in his life. At the young age of 19 he took up the call and enlisted for what was to become known as the Great War.

George enlisted for the First World War on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1914 in Morphettville, South Australia. He was 19 years and 11 months. He departed Adelaide on the HMAT Ascanius on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1914 with his unit, the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. When he left, George's family would have been very concerned if they would ever see their beloved son again.

The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs) landed at what we now know as Anzac Cove in Gallipoli on April 25<sup>th</sup> 1915. On only the first day 900 ANZAC troops were killed and a further 2,000 injured (*The Battle of Gallipoli*, 2018). Gallipoli had become a major battlefield in a matter of hours. The vast expanses of dust and dirt were moistened by the blood and tears of casualties from both sides. The solitude was broken only by the constant unmistakable sound of gunfire, it was as if the battle would never end. In July 1915, George contracted Enteritis, after treatment, he rejoined his unit on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August. George fought on in Gallipoli until September, when a severe bout of diarrhea saw him hospitalised in Malta for treatment. The Battle of Gallipoli lasted from the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1915 to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 1915 with almost 900,000 casualties lost on both sides of the campaign.

It was in late 1916 that George along with his unit, were sent to France to fight in the battle of the Somme, a battle that had been raging since 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1916. George was wounded in action on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July and was sent to hospital in Manchester, England to receive treatment. In November 1916 after seven months of fighting, the Battle of the Somme came to an end. In total the Allied and Axis forces lost around 1.5 million men, who were fathers, sons or husbands who paid the ultimate sacrifice. 23,000 casualties were suffered by the ANZACs after one of the bloodiest military battles in history (*Battle of the Somme*, 2018). Returning to the battle front time after time through sickness and injury is a great example of the ANZAC Spirit being shown through George's behavior, this is the courage that makes us proud to be Australian.

For his recuperation George went to Perham Downs until October 1916. Through this time. George went absent without leave from the 18<sup>th</sup> of September to the 4<sup>th</sup> of November resulting in him receiving 60 days' detention at Wadsworth Detention Barracks in England. On speaking to Robert and Rosemary Doddridge, George's son and daughter said "they had no idea what he [George] was doing or where he went during this time". They also discussed "it wasn't something that was easy for him to talk about" which is understandable for a young man who had experienced so much. However despite his time AWOL, George was appointed Lance Corporal on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1917.

George rejoined his unit on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1917. However, the gunshot wound in his thigh never healed and resulted in his evacuation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Auxiliary Hospital in Southhall, England. Here, George's right leg was amputated above the knee. I can only imagine the long hours contemplating what he was going to do for the rest of his life. He lost a leg, but in reality, he lost so much more than that. However, during his recuperation, George, along with 137 other Allied servicemen created the spectacular tapestry that is still displayed on the altar front in St. Paul's Cathedral, London (Appendix 2).

George was discharged from hospital in March 1920 and returned home to Australia. On his return, George married Adel and together they had six children, raising them in their new home town of Keyneton. For employment, George drove a school bus around the Barossa Valley in order to provide for his family. He drove to Nuriootpa High School which is the school I currently attend (Appendix 3). Meeting his family, living in the Barossa Valley and attending

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By Abby Walker

Nuriootpa High School makes me appreciate what George and every ANZAC gave so we can enjoy this freedom and it gives me a closer connection to George. Driving the bus was a comfortable sit- down job for him which accommodated his disability. As to why George took up this career, Rosemary suggests, “ I think it was a new adventure for him, It was easy money because he couldn't do much else”.

In times of pain he would bang on the dinner table muttering “bloody Germans” under his breath, reliving all the horrible circumstances he had experienced (Appendix 4). Adel often administered morphine injections when the pain became unbearable. Even to the day of his death, George never lost his sense of humour as his favorite party trick was to raise his wooden leg and play it like a banjo (Appendix 5).

George passed away in 1961, it was believed by his family to have been a result of the stomach ulcers he developed through the constant pain of his amputation. He died surrounded by family at the Angaston Hospital and was laid to rest at the Angaston Cemetery. He is honoured on the Angaston District WWI Honour Board, the Angaston Congregational Church Honour Roll and the Angaston WWI and WW2 Memorial (Appendix 7).

Learning more about what life in the war was like for this brave soldier, I have come to my own definition of the ANZAC spirit, based on George's experiences. The true meaning of the ANZAC spirit is an individual who is prepared to sacrifice their life to serve and fight for their country so a better and safer world is created. This has been achieved through the suffering and sacrifice of the ones we are proud to call our ANZACS. I believe this is exactly what George did in serving and bringing honour to both his country and family. George was awarded the British War Medal, the Victory Medal and the Great War of Civilization 1915 to 1919 Medal for his service (Appendix 8). The characteristic of the ANZAC spirit that was predominantly shown by George in his war service is courage. This quality was demonstrated through the extreme bravery he demonstrated in going back to the front after illness and injury and coming back to South Australia from the “Great War” to make a life for himself as an amputee. As a result of this, George clearly found it difficult coming back home with such a serious injury. His daughter Rosemary also expressed her perspective on his difficulties when she said, “ you can understand that a nineteen year old boy going off to war fit, well and able, coming home minus a leg. Thinking the thoughts of “Who the hell's going to marry me?” and “Who's going to love me?” and “What am I going to do for the rest of my life?” (Appendix 4). This was clearly a hard time for George and his family but being such a resilient individual, George came through it.

George showed his courage through his recovery in activities such as the Cathedral Tapestry. This was a symbol of his suffering through the situations he had faced. George's life was threatened many times and he survived. He continued to serve others long after the war by driving the school bus for a further 14 years. Even though his disability prevented him from doing many of the things he enjoyed before the war, he was still able to achieve greatness by building a life, a family and enjoying the freedom he fought so hard to win. In my eyes he came back from the war and embodied the greatest example of courage which reflects the true meaning of the ANZAC spirit, in war and in his life after the war. His sacrifices make me proud to be Australian. He will always be remembered as one of the brave soldiers that fought for our country and bore the horrors of war for our sake.

Lest we forget Lance Corporal George Ernest Doddridge.

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Interview of Mrs. Rosemary and Mr. Robert Doddridge. (2018).

Image of George 'playing' the Banjo. (2018). [image].

Image of George Ernest Doddridge's Grave. (2018). [image].

Image of memorials on which George is honored. (2018). [image].

Image of George's War Medals. (2018). [image].

**Appendix:**

Appendix 1 – AIF Project Information

Appendix 2- Alter Frontal Newspaper Article

Appendix 3 – St. Paul's Cathedral Website

Appendix 4- Interview Transcript

Appendix 5 – Photo of George playing 'Banjo'

Appendix 6 - Photo of George's Grave

Appendix 7 – Photos of memorials where George is honored

Appendix 8 – Photo of George's medals

## Appendix 1 – Australian Imperial Forces Website



### George Ernest DODDRIDGE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Regimental number                               | 938   |
| Place of birth                                  | Angaston, South Australia   |
| Religion  | Congregational  |
| Address   | Lindsay Park, Angaston, South Australia   |
| Marital status                                  | Single  |
| Age at embarkation                              | 20  |
| Next of kin                                     | Father, C Doddridge, Lindsay Park, Angaston, South Australia  |
| Previous military service                       | Served for 2 years with the 79th Infantry, Citizen Military Forces; discharged to enlist in the AIF.  |
| Enlistment date                                 | 1 September 1914  |
| Rank on enlistment                              | Private   |
| Unit name                                       | 10th Battalion, D Company   |
| AWM Embarkation Roll number                     | 23/27/1   |
| Embarkation details                             | Unit embarked from Adelaide, South Australia, on board Transport A11 <i>Ascanius</i> on 20 October 1914   |
| Rank from Nominal Roll                          | Lance Corporal  |
| Unit from Nominal Roll                          | 10th Battalion  |
| Fate  | Returned to Australia 16 March 1919   |
| Miscellaneous information from cemetery records | Plaque in South Australian Garden of Remembrance  |
| Discharge date                                  | 27 March 1920   |
| Other details                                   | War service: Egypt, Gallipoli, Western Front<br><br>Evacuated from Gallipoli (dysentery), to Malta, 1 September 1915; to England, 14 September 1915; rejoined unit in Egypt, 10 March 1916.<br><br>Proceeded from Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force, 27 March 1916; disembarked Marseilles, France, 3 April 1916.<br><br>Wounded in action, 23 July 1916; evacuated to England, 2 August 1916; rejoined unit, 25 December 1916.<br><br>Wounded in action (second occasion), 30 May 1918; evacuated to England, 25 June 1918; right leg amputated above knee.<br><br>Commenced return to Australia on board 'Czaritza', 16 March 1919; transhipped to 'Dunluce Castle', 7 April 1919; disembarked in Australia, 13 May 1919; discharged, 27 March 1920.<br><br>Medals: 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal |
| Date of death                                   | 26 August 1961  |
| Age at death                                    | 66  |
| Place of burial                                 | Angaston Cemetery, South Australia  |



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## **Appendix 2 – 'A Stitch in Time' Newspaper Article**



## Appendix 3 – St. Paul's Cathedral Website



### George Ernest DODDRIDGE



**Private George Ernest Doddridge**  
**10th Battalion, The Australian Imperial Force**

George Ernest was known locally as Mick or sometimes as 'Pegleg Doddridge' because of his wooden right leg, the result of his War injury.

After his War service, he married Adel (nee Lane) and they had six children: William, David, Ian (Jocky), Rosemary, Josephine and Robert. The latter four are still living and have grown up families.

In the late 1940s, Mick had bought a fruit block at Keyneton, Southern Australia, and tried to work it but, as he grew older, it became difficult and he sold it and was successful in tendering for a school bus run from his home town of Keyneton to Eden Valley, Angaston, and to Nuriootpa High School. He also spent time doing odd jobs at Nuriootpa.

At that time, motor vehicles were hard to come by and the best he could find was a Model T Ford one ton truck fitted with a two speed rear axle that made it much faster than his old Model T which was good for about 10-15 mph. The new vehicle was fitted with a canvas canopy and two rows of seats long ways on the tray of the truck. Mick was afraid to drive the new vehicle which was faster than his old one and enlisted the help of his cousin Harold Doddridge who had the pleasure of claiming that he started a bus run with a Model T Ford truck.

After the first week, he was made familiar with the new vehicle and drove it himself for a while. Then he purchased another truck, an International D30, which was more suitable and much quicker. After several years, he was able to purchase a Diamond T40 passenger bus from the Nuriootpa Community which he drove until he could no longer manage it because of his health. Despite his disability, his driving record was really excellent: over the years, he never had a vehicle accident.

After he purchased the D30 and the Diamond T, he often got weekend trips and charter work and his cousin did the driving for him while he occupied the passenger seat.

Friends often asked how he managed to operate the foot brake since it was his right leg that was missing. The answer was simple: he had a long lever fitted to the brake pedal and operated it by hand.



## Appendix 4 – Rosemary and Robert Doddridge Interview Transcript

Abby Walker: Ok.

Rosemary Evans: Ask what you want and we'll do our best to help you.

Abby: Thank you. Well I have a few questions in here that I wrote down and obviously these are all mine. I have stuff from online as well, I've got a few records and I've got a list and on it I've said whether I printed or saved them. So I do have a little bit more than what I brought with me. So yes, that's what I have been doing for the last few weeks. I've obviously been reading about him and I noticed he was nicknamed 'Mick'.

Rosemary: Yes

Abby: And I was just wondering why that was?

Rosemary: "[laughs]"

Robert Doddridge: I was actually thinking the same thing myself and I have no idea.

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Rosemary: I really don't know.

Robert: I have no idea where it came from.

Rosemary: I think it must have been a war nickname although... he may have been called 'Mick' before he went to the war I don't know.

Robert: I certainly have no recollection of why he was called 'Mick'.

Rosemary: No I can't help you there I'm sorry.

Robert: "[Laughs]"

Abby: That's all right. I haven't been able to find any specific battles that he fought in. Do you happen to know where?

Robert: The sheet that you've got there (<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=80358>) that's the only information that we've got as well on where he fought.

Abby: Ok.

Robert: This is from the Australian Imperial forces in Canberra (<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=3510913&S=1>). It's difficult to read but it's got all of the information of where he was at the time and where he was wounded and so forth.

Abby: Ok.

Robert: You can probably pick out things from that.

Abby: I think I saw a copy of this online.

Robert: All right yeah well that will probably be the same thing. So that will be his war records on where he would have been at the time.

Abby: Ok.

Robert: So if you've got access to that. It would probably be the best information we can give you.

Abby: Sure, ok. Yes, I might have a look through that when I get the chance. I'll see how I go with that. Do you know any stories about what he was like before the war?

Robert: "[Laughs]"

Rosemary: No not really "[Laughs]" we know he had a vegetable garden but that was sort of after he came home. But what he was actually like we were only talking about it just now, there was so many things that we don't know about him because they never spoke about it. Even how he met our mother we don't even know that. So we were just talking about it a while ago. I'm not sure how it happened. What he did before he went to war or how he got the call up to go to war, I really don't know.

Robert: Did he work at Collin Grove after the war or before?

Rosemary: Well... they lived at Collin Grove so we would have worked there as a Station hand I think at Collin Grove. Which is now not Lindsay Park but it was Lindsay park before.

Chris Walker: Ok.

Rosemary: Yes, so he did work there but only as a Stable boy or something like that because he was only nineteen. So he would have only just left school and I would say he just worked there as Stable hand and then he got called up, went to war and then came home and took up the vegetable garden. And that's about all I can tell you because I just don't know.



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Abby: Ok. Yeah and about his bus driving as well, do you know what attracted him to it and why he wanted to start bus driving?

Rosemary: Well I just think it was a new adventure and probably something he could do because it was a sit down job. It was easy for him to be able to get in the bus and drive to school. Then just sit and wait for the kids to come out of school and then bring them home again. So it was sort of just an easy job and easy money for him because he couldn't do anything else because of his disability.

Robert: I think the hardest thing was probably to modify the bus for him to be able to use because he only had one leg. The wooden leg he couldn't use obviously so he had to redo the gears.

Rosemary: Yes, he put a plate on the left hand side and he used to use that with his hand. He also had a hand signal thing out the window an iron or steel one because he couldn't use his feet. He could use the brake pedal but he couldn't use the accelerator pedal. So they had to do that by hand.

Chris: So he lost his leg above the knee did he?

Rosemary: Yes, It was just above the knee yes.

Chris: My grandfather lost his leg in the mines in England but he lost it below the knee.

Rosemary: Ah ok.

Chris: And that gave him a lot more flexibility to drive and everything.

Rosemary: Well they wanted Dad to have an artificial leg with the knee in it to make it a bit easier for him. He tried them but for some reason he couldn't get on with them. That was why he had the peg leg because he couldn't have a leg with a knee in it.

Robert: And while he wasn't bus driving, when he was waiting for the kids he was working for a boot shop making boots and doing shoe repairs. He didn't really think much about it but when we saw these records in Middlesex when he was recovering from his war wounds, they taught him embroidery and leather making. So he was obviously a bit bored to be making shoes and leather craft and all of that sort of stuff. So that's what they taught him so when he wasn't driving the bus he went to the shoe makers and he was helping them. So that's where he got his skills.

Rosemary: And we didn't know about that until we read it in the records.

Chris: How long was he in hospital in the UK recovering before he came back to Australia, do you know?

Robert: Oh...

Rosemary: I don't know whether it actually says in there it probably does.

Chris: And you were all born after the war?

Robert: Yes.

Rosemary: Yes.

Chris: Yeah, a lot of my grandparents and great uncles they fought in World War Two and they never really talked about it.

Rosemary: Yeah they never really talked about it so you just didn't know. It probably says there somewhere where he was discharged.

Robert: Where does it say on that sheet where he was discharged from? It may be in there somewhere. But it doesn't say where he was.

Abby: No, it just has a discharge date.

Robert: Yeah, I don't know.

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Chris: I suppose they didn't get a war pension in those days.

Rosemary: No.

Chris: There was nothing really.

Rosemary: it wasn't till after they got home that it went through and they got a small pension.

Robert: Yeah, so if you just have a look through these records it might tell you...

Rosemary: How long he was in hospital for.

Robert: I think he was wounded twice.

Rosemary: Yes.

Robert: That's another little bit about Saint Paul's (<https://www.stpauls.co.uk/ww1/the-men-of-the-altar-frontal/george-ernest-doddridge>). Again that was something we didn't know anything about until...

Rosemary: Until it all came about.

Robert: Uncle Joe told us all about it.

Rosemary: We had no idea that sort of thing even existed and him taking part in it was just so mind boggling "[Laughs]" it's just something that I could not imagine my father doing was embroidery.

Robert: I was told that when he had the lady who was doing the actual piece of fabric, they used to go to the soldiers and say they needed forty five green leaves or something. So the boys would sit down and embroidery green leaves and hand them to the ladies who would sew them on to the piece of fabric in Saint Paul's. And I think they used to give it to the young ladies to take them in so that the boys would think, this is a pretty girl I'll have to impress her.

Rosemary: Yes "[Laughs]".

Robert: Well that's the book they've got out with people's names in it. Because there were people from England, Australia and New Zealand all helping to do this. And there's Dad's name up there. But a lot of the people in New Zealand didn't get their information because a lot of the boys were so young that they didn't have any family or when they were killed they didn't have anyone to give the information about where they came from. At least most of the Australians they were able to get information and do all that.

Abby: Is it alright if I take a picture of this?

Robert: Yeah, sure no that's fine.

Abby: Thank you.

Robert: So this is the lost hospital documents. And we've got the piece that Carol White wrote in the advertiser about the piece of fabric.

Chris: It will be nice for you to go over and see it.

Robert: Yeah about two years ago in 2015 being when we first heard about it and I went over in 2016 but our niece went over in 2014 to see it.

Rosemary: So she's been over there and seen the tapestry as well.

Robert: That's the postcard they've got of the tapestry so that's the actual piece.

Chris: He died far too young.

Robert: Yeah. And that's the piece she wrote in the paper and she gave me this (transcript) to read through before she wrote it. She's actually my neighbor so I was hoping to go over and have a chat because I saw her one day and I

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knew she wrote for the boomer section in the advertiser and I went round there one day and I was talking to her about it. I said, "would she be interested in this story" and she says, "Oh Hell yeah" "[Laughs]".

Rosemary: "[Laughs]"

Robert: So she said, "come round for a drink one night and give me all the stories". So I went round and told her all the stories and I gave her the photographs and she wrote the story in the advertiser. I might have another copy you can have. Yes there you go, it's a bit crappy but there you go. It's the one I photocopied.

Abby: Thank you.

Chris: Did he ever tell you where he went when he went AWL?

Robert: No.

Rosemary: We didn't even know that until we read through the war records and things and that he spent more time out on the streets than where he was supposed to be.

Robert: I didn't know anything about that. Although I found out before I went because when I got to London and when I was talking to the Lady she said, "I'm not sure if you want to see this". I said "oh you mean when he went AWL" "[Laughs]". She said, "oh you knew about it" and I said, "yes". We didn't know where he went or what he did or anything else. But I said, "I don't suppose I have any other relatives anywhere else do I?" but not that we know of "[Laughs]". The boys were a bit promiscuous in those times. Yeah, I don't know anything about it at all.

Rosemary: I mean what would a nineteen year old boy do in a completely new country? Just out on the street and there was no pokies or anything like that in those days so just go to a bar and drink, I suppose. What else would they do?

Robert: We had no idea what he was doing or where he went... none at all.

Rosemary: It was just something they never talked about and you'd ask a question and he'd say, "You don't want to know about that" and shove us off. We just never found out what was happening. He just never talked about it.

Chris: That was just the way back then, wasn't it.

Rosemary: Yeah, that's right.

Robert: When they came home it was something they locked away and never spoke about.

Rosemary: Well you can understand that being nineteen year old boys going off to war fit and well and able and all the rest and come home minus a leg. You know "Who the hell's going to marry me?" and "Who's going to love me?" and "What am I going to do for the rest of my life?". It must have been pretty dramatic for them.

Chris: Absolutely Yes.

Rosemary: But no wonder they didn't want to talk about it.

Robert: I think when they went they thought it was going to be a big adventure but they didn't think about the consequences. It's just like with any war, they think 'well lets go off and have a good time, we've got to travel half way across the world to new countries, it's going to be fun'. It would have been pretty horrific, it's no wonder they never spoke about it after they came home.

Rosemary: No, that's right.

Abby: Obviously after he came back from the war and you were born, did you kind of notice anything different, did you see how he was different due to his experiences in the war?

Rosemary: Well I know he never ever spoke about it and I didn't want to speak about it. He used to have I suppose like an anxiety attack and mother used to have to give him morphine. I suppose the nerves in his legs never ever died and she used to have to give him morphine injections to kill those pains. Those sort of days he used to clench his fists

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and slam and “Bloody Germans” and “Bloody” that, and he used to relive all that. But you daren't speak to him or he would fly off his handle and carry on like that. So you just ignored him and let him sit in the chair quietly and when the pain had subsided, he was fine, back to his normal self again. But when he used to have these attacks and the pain would get that bad in his leg you just went out of the house, you didn't even bother... it was just horrific. The pain that they went through must have been dreadful.

Chris: Yeah.

Rosemary: And I know that he would often say “Bloody toes are aching again today” and even though there were no toes there they still were sort of thing... which made it pretty hard for him. But when he was good, he was very good and on those days where he couldn't drive the bus, we would have to get somebody to drive the bus for him on those days. He would just sit at home in the chair and wait until the pain subsided and then he would be back to his normal self again. But otherwise he was just a normal Dad .

Abby: Do you have a favorite memory of your Dad before he died?

Robert: “[Laughs]” Oh God

Rosemary: “[Laughs]” Well I do remember one day that he really growled at me because he could never give us a hiding because he could never catch us. But when you come to the tea table, you would get a back hander. Across the paddock from where we lived, there was a butcher man and this butcher man had a family and big paddock of green peas. We were told not to go over there because they had a big bull in this paddock and we were not to go over there and pick the peas. Nobody around, no bull around so off we went. He found out somehow or rather that we had been over to the paddock and got the peas probably because we had green stuff all around our face when we came home. We all got a clip around the ears at the tea table because he knew we had been where we weren't supposed to be.

Rosemary: And I remember getting a bike for Christmas and was told not to go out on the road until he'd showed me how to ride it. “Oh I can ride a bike, I can ride a bike” down the road I went, ran into a man's milk stand and the front wheel skidded. So I left the bike there and walked home. “Where's your bike?”, “Down the road”, “Go and get it”, “No It's broken”, “Doesn't matter, go and get it”, so I had to walk down the road, get the bike and try to drag it, I was only about nine or ten I suppose. And drag my new pushbike all the way back with a crumpled wheel. “I told you”, “Yes dad I know” it was confiscated for a few days and I wasn't allowed to ride it. And even when it was repaired, I had to ask permission before I could ride my bike again. There were a few things like that “[Laughs]”. We weren't the best kids either. We thought we could get away with it because ‘oh well he can't catch us if we run away’ you know, but he always made his point across at the dinner table. Especially after he'd had a couple of sherries or something like that, it made it ten times worse.

Robert: Well I was a bad child because I was the youngest and when he was driving the bus, he would always make sure the rear vision mirror was always where I was sitting. So no matter where I was sitting in the bus, he could see me. So one day I was coming home from school and there was one boy at school and he was really picking at me all day and I'd had enough of it by the time he got on the bus. I got on the bus and this guy was still picking at me so I got up and really whacked him and because Dad can see it, me punching this guy in the bus. And of course I got home and he really got stuck into me for abusing this boy in the bus. My job was to put petrol in the bus every couple of days and make sure it was filled up. So one day I went to put petrol in the bus and I put sand in the tank as well as the petrol. So we were heading off to school early one morning and halfway between Keyneton and Eden Valley we were rolling along and the bus stopped. He couldn't work out why it had stopped and I said, “Oh no what have I done” and I still haven't confessed to this day that it was me that put sand in the tank. So I was a bad child “[Laughs]”

Rosemary: “[Laughs]”

Robert: But we got through.. we did some naughty things.

Rosemary: We did.

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Chris: We've all done it.

Robert: Apart from that he was a pretty good Dad.

Rosemary: He was.

Abby: Do you know of the Anzac Spirit, the attributes of Courage, Mate ship, Perseverance and resourcefulness? I was just wondering how you think that your Dad showed those characteristics in his life?

Robert: Well I think he probably showed courage, certainly, especially after losing a leg. It would have been pretty difficult to get back into the workforce and saying things like "Is anyone going to fall in love with me?" "Is anyone going to love me because I've only got one leg?" I don't think courage really came into it when they went to war, I think most of the times the young lads thought it was going to be an adventure. I don't think they realized what they were getting themselves into until they got over there and realized how awful it would have been. I think the courage would have come after the war when they got back and realized they were in a pretty bad state and that's when I think they would really have to resource themselves and do whatever they could to forget about it and move on. I don't think the help was there at that stage. I don't think there's even a lot now for the boys who came back from Afghanistan I mean they never got the help. I think they would have had a lot of courage to move on and make a life for themselves. And then they never spoke about it so they would have to wipe those memories away from their lives and try and move on.

Rosemary: Well I think they were the sort of people that didn't want handouts. "I'll manage on my own because I've been a brave soldier, I've been overseas, I don't want your handouts I can manage on my own". And trying to raise six kids, he realized it wasn't easy and he realized then that he probably had to have help of some sort. I think it was Uncle Jim Burton that got him to do this sort of thing through probably not so much the RSL but to go through and get things for him and to get mother to get a pension. She probably got her child endowment and he only had his small wage that he got for driving the school bus, which wouldn't have been very much anyway. To try and bring up a family and run a property and bring up six kids on that and that was probably why this Uncle Jim Burton did help mother get a lot of stuff even when Dad passed away. He helped her get a lot of extra stuff.

Abby: And he was the Uncle?

Rosemary: He was the Uncle yes. His wife was my Dad's sister.

Abby: I've written a little piece on the ANZAC Spirit because that is one of the questions in our essay that we have to cover and write about how our soldier showed the attributes of the ANZAC Spirit. I was wondering if you could read it and what you think.

Rosemary: I have got something I can show you. These are my Dad's medals. These are not the originals, they are just a photocopy of them but you can take a photo of those if you wish to.

Rosemary: We've got a photo of Dad playing the banjo or making out he was. That was his party trick.

Abby: What were those medals representing?

Rosemary: That one is the Great war of civilization 1914 and 1919. That one just says George the VII Britain and I don't understand what all of that means on there. Bit of Latin or something, I think that one was just what they called their service medal. Everybody got one of those I think.

Robert: Just a general medal.

Robert: I think they're called the British war medal and the Victory medal.

Abby: Yep well I've got a photo to use of them. Do you have any other photos of him that I could use as evidence?

Rosemary: I can't think of any others that I've got.

Robert: Do we have a wedding photo?

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Rosemary: I don't even think we have a wedding photo.

Abby: Well do you have any other information that would help me in any of the questions I have to answer or anything like that?

Rosemary: Well he liked his sport, he was a cricket umpire for many years when they had a cricket team in Keyneton. He did that for a couple of years because he couldn't participate in anything so he got the good job. Because of his disability I suppose there wasn't a lot that he could do. He grew vegetables and that sort of thing. His name is on the honor roll in the Angaston park. But he was never on the Keyneton honor roll and people couldn't understand why. Probably because he never enlisted in Keyneton, he enlisted in Angaston.

Robert: Here's his wedding certificate not that it had that much to do with Dad.

Rosemary: Well he was there "[Laughs]".

Robert: They were married in 1929. It's funny how you go back in time, because I've never really been interested in all this information that my brother found until recently.

Chris: The enlistment was voluntary wasn't it?

Rosemary: Yes I'm pretty sure it was.

Chris: Is that all you need?

Rosemary: Very good.

Abby: Yes I think so, thank you very much.

Rosemary: Well I wish you all the best and I hope all goes well with you. Pass it and off you go.

Abby: Thanks again for your time.

## **Appendix 5 – Photo of George playing the 'Banjo'**







Appendix 6 – Photo of George's Final Resting Place





**Appendix 7 – Photos of Memorials Where George is Honoured**



**Appendix 8 – Photo of George's War Medals**

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