

Private Roland Winzel Carter



Roland Carter was the first Ngarrindjeri man from the Point McLeay Mission Station (now RAUKKAN), SA, to enlist for service in WW1. Roland worked as labourer prior to his enlistment in the AIF and sailed for Egypt in 1915 in the 10th Battalion expecting to take on "Johnny Turk", but was transferred to the 50th Battalion, which was sent to the Western Front. He was among 1500 Aborigines to serve in the AIF at the Western Front.

In the September of 1915, he fought in the Battle of the Somme. And was wounded in action. He returned with the 50th Battalion assault on the fortified village of Noreuil, as the Germans retreated to the Hindenburg Line. He was shot in the shoulder and captured along with 80 others, and sent to a hospital in Zerbst in Germany. From there he transferred to a POW camp south of Berlin. His mother was trying to keep in touch with him through the Red Cross, who for some time did not know if was still alive. Finally several months later, she received a card from him, before Roland was transferred to another camp in Halbmondlager, which contained many different nationalities of captured troops. It was here he met another Aborigine Douglas Grant, whom he taught indigenous healing techniques. They were well treated at this facility - the Germans trying to convince them to against their own.

German anthropologist Leonhard Adam, studying ethnology, became friendly with Roland at the camp, and after Armistice in November 1918, Roland was sent to England before returning to Australia to be discharged and returning to his Ngarrindjeri family. After this, Leonhard was sought by the Nazis in 1940, because he was Jewish, and escaped to England where he was thought to be an "enemy alien", whence he was sent to Australia, to an internment camp in Tatura, Victoria. In 1947 after his release, Leonhard sought out and visited Roland and his family at Point McLeay mission. They shared great admiration of each other.

Roland married and had 6 children, one of whom was Lorraine Wilson, who remembered her father as a wonderful singer at the church in Raukkan. He died in 1960 at the Tailem Bend Hospital. Leonhard also died in 1960, but not before buying farmland around Point McLeay and bequeathing it to the Ngarrindjeri people.