



Captain Morris Glen EVENSEN

[1907 – 1944]



Name: Morris Glen **EVENSEN**

Rank: Temporary Captain

Service Number: NGX 189

Unit: 2 Command Air Liaison Section

Service: Australian Army

Born: 15 August 1907; Geraldton, WA

Enlisted: 18 July 1941, Rabaul, PNG

Date of Death: 25 October 1944 (aged 39 years)

Place of Death: Keresau Island, New Guinea

Cause of Death: Killed in Action

Buried / Commemorated: Lae Memorial, PNG [panel 1]
Australian War Memorial [panel10]
Roll of Honour – Mosman, NSW

We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these Notes. The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the material.

Please do not reproduce them or distribute them outside of the Club membership.

Next of Kin:

Son of Olaf Anton Hagbart and Annie Matilda Evensen
Husband of Marjorie Ballham Evensen of Mosman, NSW

In Civilian Life:

On enlistment, lived in Rabaul, PNG; and was employed as a plantation manager.

Military Service:

1928	Compulsory Service
July 1941	Private, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles – to Australia for training (Liverpool, Cowra, Sydney, Tamworth)
August 1941	Acting Corporal
November 1941	Acting Sergeant
October 1942	Lieutenant; 39 Australian Infantry Battalion
December 1942	Wounded in Action (gunshot wound to eye and neck), New Guinea – evacuated to Australia
May 1943	Returned to Duty
June 1943	Posted to 1 Papuan Infantry Battalion; seconded to Advanced Land Headquarters, New Guinea
July 1944	Posted to 2 Command Air Liaison Section as Air Liaison Officer; allotted to HQ 71 Wing (RAAF) at Tadjil (near Aitape, New Guinea)
October 1944	Temporary Captain
October 1944	'Missing – believed Prisoner of War
December 1944	re-classified as "Missing – believed killed"
May 1945	re-classified as "Killed in Action"

Circumstances of Death:

On 25 October 1944, Captain Evensen's party landed at Keresau Island in a RAAF Walrus amphibian aircraft (No. 9559) to interrogate local natives as to enemy dispositions and likely targets in the Wewak area. An accompanying covering Beaufort aircraft reported the Walrus landing near some native canoes, and then towing the canoes to the island; two service personnel going ashore with the natives, and observing flashes resembling light arms fire. Despite a later aerial search, which located the destroyed Walrus aircraft, no personnel were seen and they were posted as "Missing – believed PoW". Unsuccessful searches were also conducted by RAAF aircraft and US LCMs which drew some anti-aircraft small arms fire from the island. It appeared the island was occupied by an unknown Japanese force. A Board of Inquiry was convened in December 1944.

From enemy documents captured in late 1944 and interrogations of Japanese PoWs in early 1945, it was confirmed that Captain Evensen and Warrant Officer J.M.T. Brown attempted to evade capture by engaging the enemy with small arms, but were killed by the return fire. The pilot (P/O W.B. Bernie) was apparently wounded and taken prisoner by the Japanese, and is reported to have died several days later from his wounds / malaria.

Sources included:

- Australian War Memorial
- National Archives of Australia
- Sundry web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports and sundry documents