

## EVAN THOMAS OX5042 and VX68452

- 1915 September 20<sup>th</sup> Evan Henry Thomas was born at Drummond North via Malmesbury.
- 1919-28 Drummond North State School No 937
- 1932 Chopping firewood for Castlemaine Foundry (Tarilta, via Gailford (Tom Baker))
- 1933 Firewood for Mines (May Queen) Share farming McGregor's (neighbour).
- 1934 Jack O'Keefe, The Gap Rd, Lancefield-Pylong (3pound per week -48 hours) Ireland & Co Goonengerry Forest, via Mullumbimby NSW. Railway sleepers for NZ (1s/6d (15c)each) loading at Byron Bay.
- 1935 Firewood for Railways 2ft @ 2s (20c) per ton George Andrews Drummond North. Sleeper cutting round Drummond North Victoria Railways 6s (60c) each, also at Muckleford, also timber for mines.
- 1936 Menzies Sawmill, Buxton (Gippsland) also sleepers for South Australia Railways at Wartook Grampians and Gorake (Opperman)
- 1937 Tennis courts with brothers Chas and Jack around Melbourne, also at Linton, Snake Valley, Manumbar, Skipton, Newtown, Cape Clear, Scarsdale, Smysdale. Also with Jack O'Keefe, Colibrán bridge (Kyneton Trentham Road)
- 1938 Pulpwood cutting for Maryvale Paper Mills Jeeralang via Morwell – Tom Burrage contractor (paling splitting) Ireland & Co railway sleepers for NZ at 2s3d each – Nadye Beach. And west of Towamba NSW (J Walker) shipping from Eden NSW
- 1939 From Eden to Queensland, Bunya Mountains (Maidenwell) and Kilkivan Hoop pine logging (Bob Solway contractor) Beantree Cr.
- Enlisted in Aust Infantry Force (September) at Gympie QX5042 thence to Redbank (2/9 Bn) then Greta Camp
- 1940 AIF Ingleburn, Embark Sydney May 3<sup>rd</sup> "Mauretania" calling at Fremantle (where I picked up the Pears Encyclopaedia as it was the only thing I could find with a map in (as maps were banned). As we were not told where we were going, along with my mates we found out how fast we were travelling and by the sun and stars we knew which direction we were going). Onto Cape Town (South Africa) disembarking Greenock (Glasgow Scotland) thence to Salisbury Plain (Lapcombe Corner) and later to Colchester (Barracks).
- 1941 Leave England for Middle East, embarking Glasgow (Strath Eden) calling at Sierra Leone, Durban, Suez Canal, disembarking at Alexandria Egypt into camp at Ikingi Maru, Geeharabub across the river Waddy (Libya (first casualties)), Tobruk, in the "Battle of the Salient" (18<sup>th</sup> brigade) where I was wounded on May 5<sup>th</sup> and evacuated on the destroyer "Vampire" to hospital at Alexandria, thence to AIF Hospital at Kantara on the Suez Canal, evacuated by hospital ship "Aranji" for Australia calling at Fremantle, Melbourne disembarking at Sydney then train to Brisbane and while recuperating at Brisbane ??? Hospital I met Jean my future wife who along with her friend Heather, they belonged to the Union Jack Club and spent some of their spare time visiting wounded soldiers. I was discharged from AIF in November 1941.
- (Marshall Bros - both killed, Ern Triney South Australia SX #)
- 1942 I re-enlisted at Caulfield Melbourne. Echuca. ETO (Married Jean (Thomas) who was from Bowen). Bomb Disposal Course Bonegella, then Batman Av (Melbourne) Strathfield (Sydney) Newcastle where I exited Bomb Disposal and on to Kapooka, joined 2<sup>nd</sup> /11 Field Coy.
- 1943 - Nelsons Bay – Medical re-classification Sydney showgrounds  
- Court martialled after session of AWL when Ken was born in Brisbane on November 26<sup>th</sup> and had a 6 week session at Randwick detention centre, another medical reclassification and back to 2<sup>nd</sup>/11 Field Coy at Trinity Bay (Cairns N.Q.) eventually to be discharged again from AIF in Brisbane.  
- Ken Edward Thomas our first son was born in Brisbane 26<sup>th</sup> November 1943
- 1944 We moved to the Atherton Tablelands and worked for the Forestry Department at Gadgarra and Wongabel.

- 1945 Worked for Mareeba Construction Coy (Bert O'Brien) bridge work near Yungaburra (1 bridge on Old Gillies Hwy (near Lakeside)) and again at Jeelatten (Mt Molloy)
- 1946 - Moved to Bowen – Various sessions with Wangaratta Shire Council, Bowen Harbour Board, Borthwicks
- 1947 Our second son James Maxwell was born in Bowen on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1947.
- 1956 Meatworks (Merinda) Stedman & Sons (Harry Virtue) (mainly bridge building and carpentering).
- 1956 Sold up at Bowen for £2,300 and I was earning £20 per week which was good money considering most jobs were paying around £14.00 per week and relocated again to the family farm at Drummond North (Vic) buying the family farm for £3000. Evan farmed sheep and went fencing etc around that area until selling up the home farm on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1967 for \$20,146.55 and Burkes property for \$3,930.78 Total \$24,077.53 (including the School house) to McPhersons, and relocating again to Queensland.
- 1967 Bought a 170 acre Dairy farm with cream and pigs at Skyring Creek, Federal, via Pomona \$28,000 WIWO
- 1970 I have always been interest in nature and trees and decided to plant out trees on the steep slopes and gullies to stop erosion and keep the lantana at bay eventually.
- 1972 Converted from cream to whole milk and installed a milk vat
- 1977 Applied and received part pension Evan \$102.00 and Jean \$64 per fortnight – this was assessed for tax purposes because we were still milking.
- 1979 Stopped milking cows, went onto the full DVA pension and raising vealers on the milkers and topped the local markets with the bonny vealers that the cows produced.
- 1990 Evan was diagnosed with bladder cancer and after a biopsy in Nambour in May then onto 30 treatments in Brisbane for 30 radiation treatments he returned to the farm declaring he would never set foot in Brisbane again and thankfully it never proved to be a problem again.
- 1996 Sold last of my cattle – 8 steers which were bought in to fatten.
- 1997 Jean had a fall and broke her arm after a cataract operation; this caused her a lot of pain and died in her sleep 2 days before her 78<sup>th</sup> birthday on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1997.
- 2006 These past 9 years have seen me enjoy the fruits of my labour as I gaze across the farm, now mostly treed, and watching nature enjoy these areas, being in the trees, in the shade under or on the dams, while silently puffing away happily on my pipe filled plug tobacco and reflecting on a wonderful and fulfilling life that I have had.
- 2007 In August after spending a few weeks in hospital I realized I could no longer care for myself at “1309” so reluctantly went into the brand new area at “Kabara Hostel” in Cooroy where to this day I can smoke on the veranda which looks out onto bushland and a creek, feeding the birds and bush turkeys and also enjoy my nips of rum in the late afternoon so this is the next best thing to living at home.
- 2009 I am still here in Kabara and still enjoying the care and attention that is given to me and surprisingly still able to walk out onto the veranda to enjoy reading the paper in the fresh air and have a smoke. When my son Ken takes me on regular car trips around the area and on the farm I do so enjoy seeing the fruits of my labour in the majestic stands of trees that have matured on the property, also the corned beef sandwiches and mulberry pies that are provided.
- 2010 A fairly un-eventful year with Ken still taking me on various car trips around the local area on a Saturday which includes an update on the upgrade of the Bruce Highway showing me pegs where the Highway will be impacting on my property then morning tea and sometimes lunch (depending on how I felt) at 66 Gardners Rd but becoming less frequent towards the end of the year.  
Spent a pleasant few hours on Christmas Day on the veranda at Ken's place but unfortunately the next day “Boxing Day” I fell, while returning to my room after my smoke on the veranda, and broke my leg. This saw me getting it pinned in Nambour Hospital and then returned to Kabara but really was not able to walk again but the staff used to get me into a wheelchair at times. I deteriorated physically and life was not the same again.
- 2011 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2011 Evan died at Kabara Aged Care Home in Cooroy Queensland, his ashes were spread on his property at Skyring Creek Pomona and a memorial plaque placed at Pomona cemetery.

*Evan Thomas - History*