

Robert (Bob) Harold Glanville

b: 9 October 1922, Wondai, Qld.

d: 15 March 2012

Extract from Bob's life history compiled by his daughter, Gaye Cook, Buderim, Queensland.



THE WAR YEARS

Bob grew up on a dairy/mixed farm at Winderera in the South Burnett, Queensland. He signed up in the 5th Light Horse in March 1941. His father only gave his permission as this was a militia group and Bob would only have to attend a 90 day camp in Gympie and then return home - which he did. He couldn't join the Australian Imperial Forces, which served over seas, without his father's permission, as he was under 21. However, in August 1941, he was called up for active duty anyway as a transport driver. He reported to the Regimental Sergeant Major Reimers at the Gympie Showgrounds. Bob served a total of 750 days in Australia, until 1943.



Bob returning to camp 1941



On leave 1941

Anecdotes from this time:

1. When Pearl Harbour was bombed, all troops were called up on parade and issued with 2 rounds of ammunition with strict instructions not to fire except under extreme circumstances. In a couple of days, when the hue and cry had settled, they were called back out onto parade to hand it back. Anyone who didn't still have their two rounds were in serious trouble. It is doubtful the old rifles would have fired anyway and the old bayonets issued were next to useless.

2. The Stampede

6.00 A.M. one Saturday morning, in camp at Gympie, Bob was leading 3 horses to water. He heard shouting "Hold those horses. Hold those horses." Looking up, he saw two to three hundred horses galloping towards him. His three horses pulled back and he let go of them and ran to one side. The mob of horses raced past him just missing him. As they entered the showground ring, the mob split in two and went round the ring in opposite directions. The two mobs collided in front of the grandstand. Horses flew 20 feet into the air. When that had settled, there were 8-9 horses dead on the ground. The rest collected themselves into one bunch and galloped out of the showgrounds. When they hit the bitumen, about half skidded over. The rest galloped straight into town, down Shannon Street, then up Mary Street, the main street of Gympie. Within an hour they were 20-30 miles from Gympie in all directions. Being a transport driver, Pvt. Glanville spent the

next fortnight driving vets around shooting injured horses and collecting dead horses for burial or burning. Altogether, 70 horses were destroyed. Luckily no person was injured. If it had happened at the midday feed, when Gympie would have been full of people doing their Saturday morning shopping, it could well have had a different outcome. As to the cause, the horses had been in camp 3 weeks, well fed and very fit. They were all down at the watering troughs for the 6.00 A.M. feed. Each horse had a chain attached to its halter. It is believed that one of the horses threw its head back, dragging its chain against the trough and this sound was enough to frighten the rest and start them off. Funny sights included the farrier sergeant who shinned up a sapling only a few inches thick. His weight caused it to bend so that the horses bumped his behind as they passed under. He spent an awful few minutes swinging up and down. Similarly, a parson tried to climb a tree but couldn't get high enough with a similar result. Afterwards, men put in claims to the army for compensation for horses lost (claims which were frequently over inflated).

After camp in Gympie, Bob was moved to Gomeri for 3 months early in 1943. From here he went to Ravenshoe where the 5th Motor Regiment was disbanded. The 5th Light Horse had become the 5th Motor Regiment in 1942. All militia members went to Sellheim near Charters Towers to the N.G.F.A.R.D. (=New Guinea Forces Advance Reinforcement Depot). The men were pretty disgruntled because their unit had broken up and were very uncooperative. They were sent to Warwick to do an infantry training course in August 1943, still in jungle warfare issue so nearly froze. They continued to be uncooperative until promised leave for Christmas.

Bob went into hospital on 01 Oct. 1943 with osteomyelitis in his thumb. He remained there for 2 months until the bone decayed and came out so the thumb healed. The cause is unknown; but possibly a jar to the thumb or a prickly pear thorn. Bob went home for Christmas and stayed until February 1944. After this leave his unit went to Canungra for 28 days jungle warfare training. From here, it was Kauri on the Atherton Tableland to reinforce the 7th Battalion (infantry) which had been through the bombing of Darwin. They were in Kauri for 2-3 months before embarking on the 'Duntroon' from Cairns at 2.00 A.M. for New Guinea. This was a 10 day trip. They called into Milne Bay but did not leave the ship.

They disembarked at Lae and were there 2-3- months unloading ships. The procedure was ship to duck to shore to coldroom. The cargo was mostly beef from Bowen, but some general merchandise, including thousands of cards of bobby pins!! From here, they went to Wau for 3-4 months of more training, and spent a lot of time marching up the Black Cat trail and across to the Markum River, The trail was steep and muddy but not a bad as the Kokoda. There were a lot of skeletons on the trail, as the 7th Division had defended Wau here before Bob arrived. Bob found a Japanese rifle but didn't keep it for long as it just became a nuisance. While in New Guinea, Bob was a No. 2 Bren Gunner – the No. 2 helps loading and takes over when No. 1 gets tired.



Bob with his parents, Bill & Janet, on leave 1941

On returning to Lae, they embarked on a Yankee Victory ship for the Solomon Is. They took over from the Yanks on Stirling Is, part of the Treasury Group south of Bougainville. Pay was an extra sixpence per day as they were defending British Territory not Australian Mandate. The Yanks method was to bomb a perimeter, send in Australian/NZ troops to take it, then the Yanks used it as their base for the next stage. When they moved on, Australian troops were sent in to clean up. On Stirling Is., the group Bob was with spent most of their time loading bombs and 44 gallon drums of fuel back onto ships. While here, Bob became No.1 Bren Gunner. They captured a lone Japanese soldier on an adjacent Island used as a petrol dump, Mona Is. A section went over to investigate a light seen near the uninhabited end. About 10 men surrounded the lone Japanese. He had a machete and a sugar bag containing yams and some tinned food. He'd been there a couple of years and had hair down to his shoulders. He was sent to jail on Stirling Is. and went to Australia from there.

In February 1945, while still on Stirling Is., Bob got word of his discharge to the rural industry. He went to Bougainville to await a return ship to Australia. He returned to Sydney on the 'Duntroon' and then to Brisbane by rail. In all, Bob spent 303 days on overseas service and was discharged on 1 March 1945. Home was now 35 Baynes Street Margate as his father had sold the farm at Windera as he had been unable (and unwilling) to run it on his own while the boys were away.



Bob and his bike



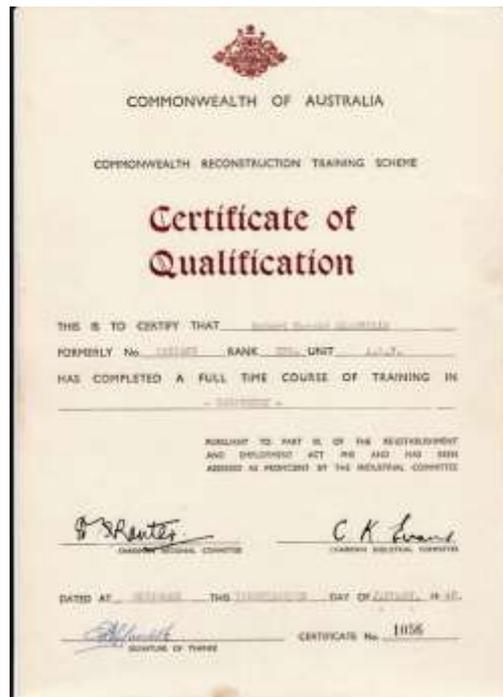
With Bill and his new car



Bob with mates in Redcliffe after the war

AFTER THE WAR.

To get out of Manpower, Bob and his brother Bill bought a 30-acre farm at Redcliffe. They worked for their uncle, Maurice Glanville, as carpenters for a couple of days a week. Manpower was disbanded when Labour lost power. Bill and Bob sold their farm. Maurice used "Post War Reconstruction" to enroll Bill and Bob at the Brisbane Technical College to do a trade test. They were found to be 40% proficient at carpentry and became trainee carpenters with Maurice. They were paid full wages but the government refunded 60% to Maurice. As their proficiency increased, the government refunded less. The brothers were tested annually and became qualified carpenters on 22 January 1948.



Also of note is that Bob's father, William (Bill) Edward Glanville served during WW1 at Gallipoli and the western front in Europe. The following is a brief summary of his military service.

- 21 Aug 1914 - Bill joined the 5th. Light Horse, part of the 1st. Light Horse Brigade Train, with his brother Bob. They were among the earliest of volunteers.
- 23 Sep. 1914 - Embarked for Egypt
- 9 May 1915 - Embarked on "HMAS Melville" for the Dardenelles, second wave at Gallipoli.
- 31 May 1915 - Returned to Alexandria, Egypt on the same ship.
- 31 Dec. 1915 - Left aerodrome camp for Khataba.
- 2 Jan. 1916 - Wounded at Wardam. Contusion left thigh. Collected by 3rd. Welsh Field Ambulance.
- 8 Jan. 1916 - Discharged for duty in Cairo.
- 28 Apr. 1916 - Transferred to 14th. Co. of Army Service Corps.(ASC) and proceeded to Abbassea.
- 5 Jun. 1916 - 14th. Co. proceeded to join the British Expeditionary Force(BFC) and disembarked at Marseilles on 12th. Jun. 1916 to fight in France.
- 13 Aug.1917 - Transferred to the 20th. Australian Depot Unit of Supply(ADUS). He reverted to private.
- 20 Aug. 1918 - Re-instated to the rank of driver.
- 14 Sep. 1918 - Leave in the U.K.
- 4 Oct. 1918 - Transferred to Folkenstone, U.K. for return to Australia for leave. (the armistice was signed before he actually got leave.)
- 25 Nov. 1918 - St. Budeaux, Devon - rest camp. (a couple of AWL charges.)
- 3 Dec. 1918 - Return to Australia.
- 12 Apr. 1919 - Discharged in Brisbane.