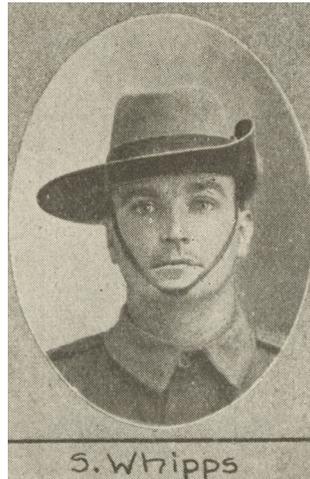


# **2697 STANLEY RICHMOND WHIPPS, M.M**

## **15<sup>th</sup> Battalion. A.I.F.**



Stanley was born in 1889 in the Lismore District, the son of James and Amy Whipps of Alstonville, New South Wales. Prior to enlisting as a Private on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 1915, at the age of twenty six, he worked as a labourer and farm hand in Alstonville, New South Wales. His parents were pioneers of the area and, in the 1880's, they cleared the land for dairy farming. After enlistment Stanley trained at the Enoggera Army Barracks Brisbane, before embarking for overseas on the "A55 KYARRA" 16<sup>th</sup> August 1915. He arrived in Alexandria and joined the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Lemnos and was sent to Gallipoli, where he remained until the evacuation. After Gallipoli, he was then placed on duty, at the Suez Canal.

In March 1916, he was sent to France and Belgium. During this time, Stanley was injured several times, on two occasions he was treated for his injuries and illness, at Norfolk War Hospital. Stanley also spent time at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Command Depot, Weymouth.

From 1916 to 1918 Stanley served in the Infantry, as well as being part of the Pioneer Section of the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion. In addition, he also volunteered his services as a stretcher bearer and ambulance driver. It was noted that Stanley also volunteered to rescue fellow soldiers from behind enemy lines on several occasions, helping bring them to safety. During this time he was promoted to Lance Corporal and Corporal.

He was awarded the *Military Medal* on 15<sup>TH</sup> July 1917 for 'gallantry and devotion to duty' at *Bullecourt*. During his time in France, he served in the *Battles of Pozieres, Fleurs, Bapaume, Armentieres, Messines, Bullecourt, Polygon Wood and Passchendaele*. Stanley also took part in the 1918 *German Offensive 'Operation Michael'* which was the last throw of the dice by the Germans before the end of the war.

At some time, possibly while on leave in London, Stan met Eleanor Mary Jane Mercer, and they married by coincidence on Armistice Day 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 at Emmanuel Church in Northwood, Middlesex- they must have thought that all the bells in London were ringing for them as well! In the marriage register Stanley gave his age as 29, a bachelor and soldier resident at Weymouth. His father was shown as James Whipps a

Farmer. Eleanor gave her age as 20, a spinster and Munion Worker resident at Hallowell Road, Northwood. Her father was George Mercer, also a soldier. The witnesses were her father and a George Austin Mercer who was probably the brides' brother.

In the 1911 census the Mercer family were living at 3 Marion Cottages, Hallowell Road where George the head of the household was 43, a General Labourer born Cranley, Surrey. His wife Annie, 34 born Mottisfont, Hampshire, and they had five children of which Eleanor was the second, aged 12 at School and born Oxshott, Surrey. In the 1901 census the family were resident in 2 rooms at 87 Beresford Street, Woolwich, Kent (RG13/545 f.24 p.40). George was 33 with the same occupation and birthplace and Annie aged 24. They had two sons, George A. 6 and Robert J 5, and daughter Eleanor aged 2 born Cobham, Surrey.

Stanley returned to Australia in December 1918 and the following July Eleanor joined him, sailing to Australia on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1919 on the Ship "*The Osterley*". In 1922 Stanley & Eleanor had a daughter Ruth, but their happiness was short-lived as in 1923 Eleanor passed away, and is buried at the Alstonville Cemetery. Stanley was left to bring up Ruth with the help of his brother and sister-in-law. In 1962 Stanley passed away in Brisbane, and is buried at Mt Gravatt Cemetery, Anzac Section.

(Researched & compiled by Jenny Andrews, Email: [gearyjen@hotmail.com](mailto:gearyjen@hotmail.com) in Australia, who is researching her great-uncle Stanley and would like to contact anyone with information on the Whipps or Mercer family. She has the marriage certificate for Stan & Eleanor and would dearly love to have a photo of the wedding.)