

George Rooke

Private George Rooke

13th Battalion, AIF

Service Number: 6101

Born: 1897, Nobbys Creek, NSW

Died: 28 March 1918, Villers-Bretonneux, France

George Rooke, was born in 1897 at Nobbys Creek near Murwillumbah NSW, the only child of Evans and Kate Ann (nee McMillan) Rooke. The family moved to Penrith in 1911 where they purchased a 35-acre farm from Cornelius Comyn in Batt Street Jamisontown (York Estate). There they established a poultry farm. Prior to his enlistment Rooke worked as a farm labourer, probably on his parent's farm. The family appeared to have been supporters of the war effort. In December 1915 Evans Rooke contributed 5 shillings to the Gilgandra recruiting Coo-ee March reception fund. Also, George had spent four years in the cadets and eight months in the local militia.

Rooke enlisted at Bathurst on 23 February 1916. He was allocated to the 19th Reinforcements, 13th Battalion on 23 March 1916. He embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Wilshire* on 22 August and arrived in Durban, South Africa on 15 September and was taken to hospital with mumps. After he recovered he then re-embarked on the *Euripides* and arrived in Plymouth on 26 October 1916.

Rooke joined his battalion in France on 21 January 1917. He received a gunshot wound to the right knee on 4 February in France and was taken to 5th General Hospital in Rouen and admitted to 2nd Auxiliary Hospital in Southall in March. Rooke rejoined his unit in Belgium on 5 August 1917. In March 1918 the 13th Battalion helped stop the German Spring Offensive near Amiens. George Rooke was killed in action near Villers-Bretonneux on 28 March 1918. He has no known grave.

The family farm was sold after the death of Evans Rooke in June 1928. William and Maud Sheather purchased the farm. Maud would soon afterwards become famous in Penrith as the first female candidate in a Penrith local government election. Kate Rooke moved to Victoria Road Drummoyne and lived with a relative Kate Briggs. She died at Nurse Reynolds private hospital in Sydney in 1936. Rooke's parents are buried in Penrith General Cemetery and a memorial to their son is also on their headstone.

Memorial Details:

- Honour Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honour Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honour Roll, Penrith Superior Public School, Penrith
- Honour Roll, United Church, Jamisontown

Sources:

- [National Archives of Australia](#): B2455, ROOKE GEORGE
- [Australian War Memorial First World War Nominal Roll](#)
- Penrith City Library Biography files