

One of the more unusual stories is that of John Raven Fox, who, together with his identical twin brother 102, John Raven Fox, both were in the AN&MEF, both were in Egypt, served in France, returned to Australia, went back to Papua New Guinea and both served with ANGAU (Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit) in World War 2.

Thomas was born at Rayleigh, Essex on 12th November 1892, the son of William Fox and his wife Alice Rose, nee Dodd. On the 1901 census he is shown as living with his family in Rayleigh and in the 1911 census, now 18, he is shown as still with his family employed as a merchant's clerk.

In June 1914 he left the UK with his brother John and 2,000 other migrants aboard the BERRIMA, arriving in Sydney on 4th August. A week later, on 11th August 1914 he, together with his brother, enlisted in A Company, ANMEF stating that he was a clerk and single, giving his father at "Rose Villa", Victoria Road, Rayleigh, Essex, as his next of kin.

He returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 4th March 1915 having completed 206 days service.

Shortly after discharge, on 13th March, he enlisted in the AIF as part of the 9th Reinforcements, 13th Battalion, regimental number 2937. He left Sydney on 6th September 1915 aboard the ARGYLLSHIRE and after a period in hospital with gastritis, he joined his battalion at Ismailia on 8th Jan 1916, after the battalion had been withdrawn from Gallipoli. On 3rd March 1916 he was promoted corporal and moved with the battalion in June to France. He was promoted sergeant on 5th Feb 1917 and was reduced to corporal on 24th October 1917 following conviction at a Court Martial for disobeying a lawful command.

He spent time with Mansions Motor Garage, 78 York St, Westminster, studying motor engineering between 24th May and 25th July 1919, returning to Australia aboard the FREDRICKSHRUH on 22nd Jan 1920, arriving home on 12th March. He was discharged from the AIF on 22nd August 1920.

After the war Thomas and his brother went banana farming in Queensland before moving to New Guinea where they became plantation owners on New Ireland and then prospectors at Edie Creek. After working with the Leahy brothers in Mount Hagen, in 1935 the brothers went on foot and canoe from Mt Hagen to Wewak where they prospected around Wewak, Aitape and Vanimo. They learnt of the outbreak of war whilst in Vanimo. Thomas served in ANGAU as a Warrant Officer Class 2, service number P503. Both brothers spent much of the war at Bena Bena and in the Markham Valley watching and reporting on aircraft movements.



After the war John joined the Department of Agriculture at Eiyura where he was diagnosed with a fractured neck and sent to hospital in Port Moresby where he died of pneumonia on 15th August 1952.