

One of the more unusual stories is that of John Raven Fox, who, together with his identical twin brother 101, Thomas Alston 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.

John 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 boarding with a family at Lower Halstow, Kent, with his occupation shown as a seaman, oyster fishing

In June 1914 he left the UK with his brother Thomas 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 mariner 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 9th March, he enlisted in the AIF as part of the 6th Reinforcements, 17th Battalion, regimental number 2644. He left Australia for the Middle East on 2nd November 1915 aboard the EURIPIDES and taken on strength by the battalion in Egypt on 5th February 1916. With the battalion, John went to Marseilles on 17th March before moving up to Amiens where he was transferred to the 5th Brigade, Light Trench Mortar Battery on 10th April and promoted corporal on 21st April.

He was hospitalised with a gunshot wound to the jaw on 21st November, rejoining his unit on 1st December 1916. On 28th April 1917 he was promoted sergeant and Mentioned in Despatches on 10th June 1917. He was hospitalised with malaria on 6th July 1917, not rejoining his unit until 16th November.

He attended Pittman's School in London between 3rd June and 3rd September 1919, returning to Australia aboard the FREDRICKSHRUH on 22nd Jan 1920, arriving home on 12th March. He was discharged from the AIF on 14th May 1920.

After the war John 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. John served in ANGAU from Jan 1943 until 19th April 1946 as a Warrant Officer Class 2, service number P504. 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 where he lived on Korn Farm near Mount Hagen.

He died in t Hagen in 1977