



**DRIVER Stanley George Thomas BROWN +  
1195 – 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion & 4<sup>th</sup> Light Trench Mortar Battery**

**Born:** 1892 Molong

**Parents:** Mary & George Brown

**Occupation:** Labourer

**District Connection:** Cumnock, Molong

**Enlistment Date:** 15 May 1916, Sydney

**Enlistment Age:** 24yrs 4mths

**Embarkation:** 7 Oct 1916, Sydney, *HMAT Ceramic A40*

**Fate:** DOD 21 Feb 1919, Belgium, 28yrs.

**Buried:** Charteroi Communal Cemetery, Wallonie, Belgium.

**Honour Boards:** National War Museum, Canberra;  
Molong & District WW1 Memorial, Cabonne Shire Council,  
Cumnock Public School WW1 Honour Board.

**Biography:**

Stanley George Thomas Brown was born in 1892 at Garra, birth registered in Molong, to George and Mary Elizabeth Brown. George and Mary Elizabeth Bennett married in Molong in 1875. They had 12 children: James b1875, Sarah (1877-1881), Amelia b1879, Mary (1881-1881), George b1882, Emily b1885, Grace b1887, Alice b 1889, Stanley b1892, Pearly b1893, Bertha b1896 & Percy (1899-1901),

George and Mary moved around the Molong, Garra and Cumnock districts after they were married. Stanley may have been schooled at both Norah Creek School (on particulars of the Roll of Honour in the Australian War Museum as completed by George Brown) and Cumnock Public School. *The Molong Argus* – 9 Mar 1906, p12, reported the marriage at Toogong on 7 Feb 1906 of James Brown, eldest son of Mr George Brown, of Norah Creek, to Miss Elizabeth Griffith, eldest daughter of Mr George Griffith, of Toogong.

Stanley and James are both listed as working as labourers at Larras Lake, on the 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for Orange/Molong.

Stanley enlisted on 15 May 1916 at Sydney and stated his occupation was a labourer. His next of kin was noted as his sister, Mrs Pearl Griffiths, Glebe, Sydney. His medical examination stated that he was 24yrs and 4mths old, 5 feet 8¾ inches tall, had blue eyes, dark brown hair, a fresh complexion and was of the Church of England religious denomination.

The Molong Express & Western District Advertiser – 9 Sep 1916, p7 reported that “*Pte Stan. Brown, who was on final leave, returned to camp last Saturday.*”

Pte Stanley Brown embarked at Sydney on Saturday 7 Oct 1915, on *HMAT Ceramic A40*. On board the *Ceramic* were 6533 Pte Martin O’NEILL – 3<sup>rd</sup> Btn KIA 4 Oct 1917 and 4033 Leslie GOW – 30<sup>th</sup> Btn, also associated with the Cumnock district.

*The Forbes Times* – 13 Oct 1916, p4 reported on one of their soldiers who left on the *Ceramic* the same day: “*There were 2500 soldiers and 1000 passengers by this boat. At an inspection of the troops on Friday afternoon at Moore Park over 40,000 relatives and friends of the departing men lined the four sides of the ground. Flags and battalion colors were flying everywhere. At the railway stations there were thousands of people to see the men as their trains came in from Bathurst, Kiama, Liverpool and Goulburn.*”

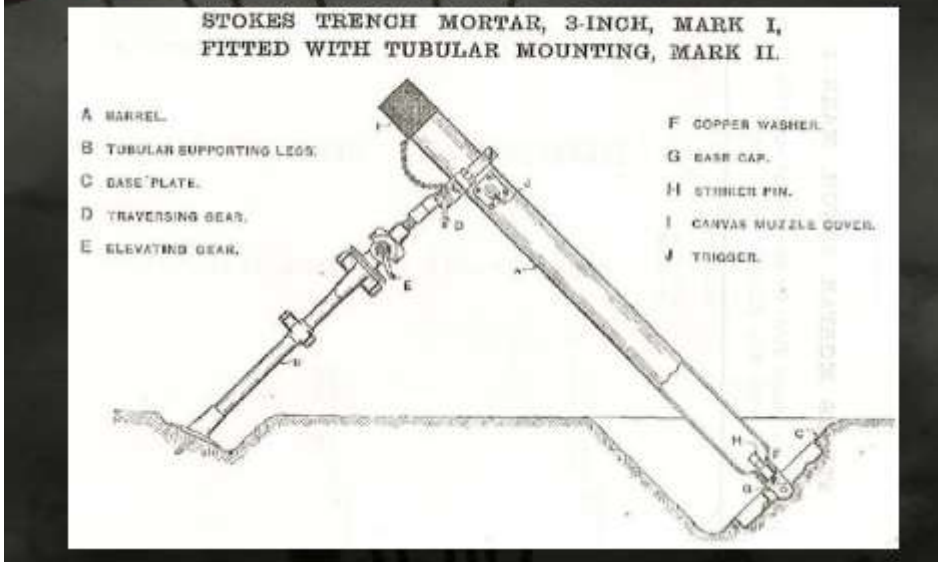
The *Ceramic* voyage was the victim of wild rumours according to the *Sydney Telegraph* – 24 Oct 1916, p4: “*People with friends on board the transport Ceramic will naturally be reassured by the statement from the Minister for the Navy that there is no foundation for the rumors about the vessel that have been flying about Sydney during the past week or so. The rumors were of the wildest description and ranged from assertion that the ship had foundered with all hands, to a fantastic story that the troops had broken into mutiny, thrown the captain and other officers overboard, and started off on a voyage to South America. The absurdity of all this was sufficient to prove the baselessness of it...*”

The *Ceramic* arrived at Durban, South Africa, on 27 Oct 1916 and then sailed onto Capetown before arriving in Plymouth on 21 Nov 1916. Pte Stanley Brown trained with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Trench Mortar Battery and left England for France on 28 Feb 1917 and was first stationed at Étapes. He was taken on strength with the 13<sup>th</sup> Btn on 6 Mar 1917.

Pte Stanley Brown was hospitalised with Tonsillitis from 25 Apr – 5 May 1917. On 19 May he was taken on strength with the 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Trench Mortar (ALTM) Battery then stationed at Le Doullier, Northern France.



### 4th Light Trench Mortar Battery 4th Brigade, 4th Division, AIF



Light Trench Mortar Batteries were under the direct command of the Brigade Headquarters but were generally deployed close to the front line so that the enemy was within range.

A mortar is a lightweight, man portable, muzzle-loaded weapon, consisting of a smooth-bore metal tube fixed to a base plate with a lightweight bipod mount and a sight. They launch explosive shells in high-arching ballistic trajectories.

The Unit Diary for the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery for 1917 is very brief. The Battery spent from June to Dec 1917 either resting, training or relieving on the front line. In December the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery moved to the Péronne area on the Somme. They spent a very cold Christmas and New Year with heavy snow and frosts.

Pte Stanley Brown had leave in England from 18 Jan – 5 Feb 1918. His leave is noted in the Unit diary as well as his transfer to the 13<sup>th</sup> Btn for training on his return from leave. He returned to the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery at 'Kent Camp' on 9 Mar 1918.

**On 12 Mar 1918 the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Trench Mortar Battery had a group photo taken in the Messines Area, Belgium. 1195 Pte Stanley Brown is on the front row sitting on the ground 2<sup>nd</sup> from the right.**

[www.awm.gov.au/collection/C392682](http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C392682)

On 26 March the Battery moved to the front line near Saulty and on 13 May the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery were stationed at Villers-Brettonneux with the Unit Diary stating: "Light rain. 3 Officers & 30 Other Ranks (ORs) moved into line & relieved 13<sup>th</sup> ALTMB..."



Pte Stanley Brown was sick with Tonsillitis from 25 Apr – 5 May 1918 and on 26 May was promoted to Driver, while the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery were stationed at Allonville, Northern France.

During the afternoon of 2 July 1918, the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade was inspected at Vaire Wood, near Hamel, by the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr William Hughes, who was on a tour of the Western Front. Two days later, on 4 July 1918, the 4<sup>th</sup> ALTM Battery took part in the Battle of Hamel, a successful attack by Australian Army and US Army infantry, supported by British tanks, against German positions in and around the town of Le Hamel. The attack was planned and commanded by Lieut. General John Monash, commander of the Australian Corps and AIF.

**Photo: Australian and American troops dug in together during the Battle of Hamel.**



*“The 4th Brigade remained in the front line until late September 1918, taking part in the Hundred Days Offensive, including the fighting on 8 August, which was later described as the “Black Day” by the German commander, Erich Ludendorff. In early October the rest of the Australian Corps was withdrawn from the line for rest and re-organisation in order to prepare for further operations. As a result, the brigade did not take part in any further fighting before the Armistice in November 1918, after which the brigade's component infantry battalions began the demobilisation process and were eventually disbanded in 1919.”*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th\\_Brigade\\_\(Australia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/4th_Brigade_(Australia))

Driver Stanley Brown had leave in England from 12 Nov – 29 Nov 1918 and was transferred back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Btn. On 16 Feb 1919, Stanley became ill with influenza and was admitted to the 55<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearance Station where he died of pneumonia on 21 Feb 1919. He was buried at Charleroi Communal Cemetery, Wallonie, Belgium. His father George later received Stanley's British War and Victory medals.

*The Molong Argus* – 16 May 1919, p4, reported:

*“Mr James Brown [Stanley's eldest brother] received the following letter this morning from the hospital Chaplain, in reference to the death of his brother, Pte Stanley Brown; - ‘The sad news will have reached you that Pte Stanley Brown passed away in this hospital (Charleroi). He was admitted, suffering from pneumonia, and I am sure it will comfort you to know that everything that was possible was done for him, but unfortunately he did not respond favourably to treatment, and he passed away on the 21<sup>st</sup>, being unconscious and peaceful. He is being laid to rest in the military cemetery at Charleroi.’”*

*The Molong Argus* – 21 Mar 1919, p4, reported: “At St. John's Church, Cumnock, on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, at 3pm, the Rev. JA Poole will hold a memorial service for the late Pte Stanley Brown, who fell a victim to pneumonic influenza in France [Should be Belgium].

*The Molong Argus* – 23 Apr 1920, p3, AO DRUIDS – A SOLDIERS' TABLET UNVEILED, reported:

*“...The tablet, which is composed of cedar, was made by Mr T Gadd, and polished and lettered in gold by Mr Albon (Orange). It is in size about 3ft 18in, and a handsomely finished piece of work. The following 14 names of the members of the Lodge who went to the war, the first four of whom lost their lives there, appear on the tablet:- Bros. G Hayman, W Neville, J Goldspink, S Brown, H Dalling, Chas. Goldspink, W Gadd, EA Taylor, W Toohey, J & W Peasley, SA Morris and B Williams...”*

Stanley's parents, George Brown died on 18 July 1925 at Molong, aged 81 years and Elizabeth Brown died on 10 December 1926 at Cumnock aged 69 years.

The Brown family history is featured in the book “Families of Molong and District” by Aileen Roberson, 1993. Stanley Brown's entry reads:

*“9. Stanley (1891-1919), served in World War 1. While waiting for a ship to bring him home, Stan contracted some plague in England [Influenza in Belgium] and died without seeing family again. He had a son to Kit Griffiths out of wedlock but the boy died of a brain tumour at the age of six years.”*

[Norman G Griffiths was born in 1913 and registered at Molong, to Catherine T Griffiths (father unnamed). Norman Griffiths died in 1918 and the death registered at Annandale, Sydney]



**Photo left: Charteroi Communal Cemetery, Wallonie, Belgium.**

**Below left: Molong & District WW1 Memorial, Cabonne Shire Council, Bank Street, Molong.**

**Below right: Cumnock Public School WW1 Honour Board, the Crossroads Building, Obley Street, Cumnock.**

