



In Memory of
Private
RUDOLPH CLARENCE RITTER
QX12468, 2nd/31st Infantry Battalion, A.I.F.
who died age 33
on 08 June 1941

Son of Johann Wilhelm Ritter and Emilie Augusta Ritter,
of Mount Tyson, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
DAMASCUS COMMONWEALTH WAR CEMETERY, SYRIA



PRIVATE
RUDOLPH CLARENCE RITTER
2ND/31ST INFANTRY BATTALION
REGIMENTAL NUMBER: QX12468



Private Rudolph Clarence Ritter, the son of Johann Wilhelm Ritter and Emilie Auguste Ritter (nee Drews), was born at Oakey in Queensland on 29th February 1908. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School. At the age of 32 years and 3 months he voluntarily enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at Rockhampton on 28th July 1940 after swearing the statutory oath that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. He had no previous military experience. At the time of enlistment he was unmarried and employed as a Bank Officer with the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney at Wowan in Queensland. His physical description was that he had fair hair and brown eyes. He stated that he was of the Lutheran religion. He gave his next of kin as his father, Mr Johann Wilhelm Ritter, residing at Mt Tyson via Oakey in Queensland.

Private Rudolph Ritter was allotted the regimental number of QX12468 and he joined the Yeppoon Training Depot on 29th July 1940. He joined the Caloundra Infantry Training Depot on 24th August 1940. He was transferred to the 2nd Infantry Training Battalion at Grovely Camp in Brisbane on 17th December 1940. He joined the 11th Training Battalion at Redbank Camp and was allocated to the 3rd Reinforcements of the 2nd/31st Infantry Battalion. He was granted pre-embarkation leave during the period 15th March until 22nd March 1941 to farewell his family and finalize his personal affairs. He left Brisbane by rail transport on 7th April 1941 and proceeded to Eastern Command in Sydney where he embarked for overseas service in the Australian Imperial Force on the following day. He disembarked from the ship in the Middle East on 4th May 1941.

Private Rudolph Ritter, upon arrival in the Middle East, joined the 25th Infantry Training Battalion. He left the Training Battalion on 29th May 1941 and joined the 2nd/31st Infantry Battalion in the field in Palestine on 30th May 1941. Rudolph Ritter was killed in action whilst serving with his battalion at Khirbe in Syria on 8th June 1941. At the time of his death Rudolph Ritter was 33 years of age. He was buried in the field near Olaar on 11th June 1941. He was reburied in the Damascus War Cemetery on 11th September 1941. His headstone in the Damascus Commonwealth War Cemetery contains the family inscription "The Lord Gave And The Lord Hath Taken Away". His name is commemorated on Panel No. 59 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Grammar School World War 2 Honour Board. For his service during World War 2,

Rudolph Ritter was awarded the 1939/1945 Star, the Africa Star with 8th Clasp, the War Medal and the Australian Service Medal 1939/1945.

Pittsworth Sentinel. Saturday 19th July 1941. OBITUARY - LATE PRIVATE R.C. RITTER. The late Private Rudolph Clarence Ritter, who was killed in action in Syria on 11th June, was the third son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Ritter, Mt. Tyson. He was born at Oakey on 29th February, 1908. He attended the Mt. Tyson State School, at which he gained his scholarship. After passing his Junior University examination at the Toowoomba Grammar School, he joined the staff of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney. During his fifteen years' service he was employed at the following branches of the bank:—Ingham, Innisfail, Longreach, Maryborough, Stanthorpe, Quilpie, Charleville, Ungarie (N.S.W.), Cunnamulla, and lastly, Wowan, from which place he enlisted. He was given a public farewell and presentation at Mt. Tyson, and left for overseas duties on 7th April, 1941.

Note:

His mother applied for and received a Mothers & Widows Badge with one star and the Female Relative Badge with one star on 28th October 1942.

A comprehensive history of the 2nd/31st Battalion during World War 2 can be found in Bob Burla's book, "Crossed Boomerangs – a history of all the 31 Battalions". Australian Military History Publications, Loftus, Australia. 2005. ISBN 1 876439 67 X. The book contains a Roll of Honour.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a day student on 20th July 1921 and left the School on 4th December 1924. His parent was shown as Mr Johann Wilhelm Ritter of My Tyson. He passed the Junior examination in seven subjects in 1924 after attending Mt Tyson State School where he passed Scholarship. The November 1941 School Magazine reported that he joined the staff of the Commercial Banking Co. of Sydney and worked at the following branches: Ingham, Innisfail, Longreach, Maryborough, Stanthorpe, Quilpie, Charleville, Ungarie (NSW), Cunnamulla and Wowan.

External Links:

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[Australian War Memorial Honour Roll](#)

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