

Robert Sydney Davies



By Peter Burgess, 2020

It is uncertain whether Robert Sydney Davies sought adventure or adventure simply followed him. His life was full of varied and exciting challenges. He travelled widely, lived on four continents, spoke two languages and pursued diverse occupations that ranged from plantation manager to dairy farmer. In the Boer War he served gallantly as a British soldier and, during World War 1, he joined Queensland's 9th Battalion, and was one of the first Anzacs ashore at Gallipoli. War left him with disabilities but he possessed a strong belief in his ability to overcome. He never complained. To his many friends and family, his life was an inspiration.

The Boer War:

In 1900, with the assistance of some older mates, Syd smuggled himself on-board a troopship bound for South Africa. He was a rebellious teenager who saw the Boer War as an adventurous opportunity to escape a stern father and a regimented home-life.

Upon arriving in Cape Town, the British Army accepted the young stowaway as a soldier in A Company of the 1st Battalion, 4th Reserve, 44th Essex Regiment.¹ Untrained and ill-prepared, Syd suddenly found himself facing a formidable enemy in a difficult guerrilla war. Over the next two years, he served with the 1st Battalion in the Orange Free State, Transvaal and the Cape Colony, and, for his service in the war, he was awarded the Queens South Africa medal with the associated three colony clasps.

India:

At the end of the war, his regiment was posted to southern India where, for the next 4 years, Syd served with the garrison at Bangalore. Although sentry duty was often tedious, in India it was not

without danger. When Australian writer, S.G.C. Knibbs met Syd some ten years later, he recorded some of Syd's recollections of his life in India. *"He (Syd) had been an old Tommy on the frontier in India, and each night, I used to listen to the relation of his experiences of barrack life and service in India. Obviously the man was telling the truth, and not drawing the long bow; he told his stories with reserve, and not as a hero acting a part. I remember one of them wherein he related how the arms had been stolen almost from under the eyes of the sentry by natives, naked and greased so as to avoid capture, creeping on the building one night. The sentries did not relish their jobs, for sometimes they were stabbed by an arm which appeared to rise from nowhere, so silent were the natives in their approach. Some went mad owing to the strain, so Davies asserted."*²

Burma:

After Bangalore, the 44th Regiment transferred to Burma. Syd resided there for the next six years, and developed a fondness for the people and a deep respect for their Buddhist religion. His battalion undertook military missions to the upper reaches of the Irrawaddy River and, after leaving the army, Syd led expeditions into Upper Burma. In later life Syd would enjoy retelling stories of these adventurous expeditions. He often made the claim that he was the first white man to explore Upper Burma.³

Syd was about 25 years old when his 8 year contract of service with the British army ended. After spending leave in England during the previous year, he chose to be discharged in the colonies. It was an adventurous choice as a colonial discharge required the soldier to remain on call in that colony as a reservist for another 4 years. The Essex Regimental Gazetteer recorded Syd's discharge as follows, *"12th August 1909 R. Davies, 6534, was transferred to the Army Reserve in India."*⁴ From 1909 until 1913, he stayed in Burma (part of India at the time), working as a silk buyer and as a guide, leading expeditions into Upper Burma.

Papua:

In the year before the war, Syd moved to Papua, formerly British New Guinea, where a well-paid position was obtained with the Australian Government Survey Party. The Australian Government had recently taken over the colony and its development strategy was to survey the land into 99 year plantation leases. Syd's job as a Field Assistant earned him £1 per day⁵, more than three times the basic wage in 1913. However it was difficult work and often in very isolated and dangerous locations. Fortunately Syd's army experience equipped him well.

Australia:

By 1914, Syd had lived for more than 10 years on the remote frontiers of the British Empire. He was 30 years of age and began to question the direction his life was taking. When an offer of work was received from a distant relative in Australia, Syd thought it perhaps time to consider a more stable and comfortable lifestyle. He moved to 'Marathon,' a sheep station near Hughenden in Central Queensland to work as a wool presser.

World War 1:

Unfortunately, only a couple of months after commencing work, the world descended into war, and Syd's eagerly anticipated plans for a new life in Australia were put on hold. He travelled immediately to the nearest recruiting office at Townsville and then to the Enoggera Training Camp in Brisbane on October 22nd, where he was appointed to D Company of the 9th Battalion, 1st Reinforcements.⁶ (Later he was attached to C Company.)

Gallipoli:

At the Gallipoli landing, Syd was given the role of signaller and was also selected to join the Battalion's scouts. According to Syd, the scouts' objective was to land quickly, reconnoitre and find a way for other troops to follow.⁷ He was positioned with a dozen other scouts in Lieutenant Chapman's boat, the first boat to reach the shore of Gallipoli.

As they landed at Anzac Cove, the battalions and companies became hopelessly mixed. All formation was lost and the 9th became scattered into small bands. Despite the confusion, Syd and the other scouts attempted to follow their original orders by pushing forward rapidly. A Gladstone newspaper interviewed Syd in the early 1930s and recorded his recollection of that fateful day, "Mr Davies assumed the lead of one of these small bands. They penetrated inland far beyond the high ground, along which afterwards were formed the trenches known as Pope's, Courtney's and Steele's posts. They crossed the main watershed of the Peninsular, and could look down on the blue waters of the Dardanelles. Mr Davies and his companions maintained their position here all day, inflicting damage on the enemy, who were unaware that in this locality there were only a mere handful of men. Eventually the survivors, overborne by numbers, were compelled to retrace their steps."⁸

The daring operations of these small isolated bands of men, far ahead of the main body, were greatly important to the outcome of the day. Against great odds, groups like Syd's maintained a vigorous fire for many hours which made it difficult for the Turks to locate the main position of their enemy. This uncertainty caused the Turks to delay their counter attack on the afternoon of April 25 and gave the main body of Anzacs sufficient time to dig in.

Syd survived another 25 days on the Peninsula.

On the night of the 19th/20th May, he participated in one of the most difficult episodes of the whole Anzac campaign. At about midnight the Turks launched a determined attack along the whole Anzac front with the aim of pushing the Anzacs into the sea. Another demonstration followed at approximately, 1.45 a.m., and then the main attack came at about 2.45 - 3 a.m. The Turks advanced in close order and were easily mown down by our rifle and machine gun fire.⁹ Major Salisbury, Battalion commander, wrote 'In the 9th Battalion the fire was so rapid and continuous that the hot rifle bolts began to jam.' Huge casualties were suffered by the enemy but, with great determination and sacrifice, they continued to push forward. More than 600 Turks died that night. Within a distance of 150 yards in front of the 9th Battalion's position, 205 Turkish dead were counted.¹⁰

By the end of the battle, 16 men from the 9th Battalion had also been killed and another 25 were wounded. Unfortunately Syd was among these casualties. During the Turk's last desperate artillery

bombardment, a piece of shrapnel exploded in Syd's face, dislodging his right eye. Lucky to be alive and in enormous pain, he was evacuated to the beach and later transferred offshore to the hospital ship, 'Galeka'. While receiving treatment on the beach, an eerie silence fell over the battlefield. A truce was declared so that the huge number of dead could be buried. On the 'Galeka' there was mayhem as hundreds of casualties arrived. The scene was described in a soldier's diary, 20th May - 'Spent a very bad night, terrible pain. Battle raging all night. Now on troop ship Galeka. Every kindness shown to troops by Australian Medical Corps. Just took on board 14 Turks, wounded. Some terrible sights on this boat, about 500 on board.'¹¹

Brisbane 1915:

After spending six weeks in hospital in Egypt, Syd was declared unfit for further duty. On 5th July, he was embarked on the troopship, 'Ballarat', with 450 other wounded and sick soldiers for return to Australia.

Australia greeted these first veterans from Gallipoli with enormous fanfare. In every town and city, through which they passed, there were great celebrations. Family and friends rushed to greet them. Although Syd did not have the benefit of family in Australia to console or support him, he took comfort in the mateship of other soldiers and a growing awareness of a his own newly acquired Australian identity spawned through the shared sacrifice at Gallipoli.

After reaching Brisbane on the 12th August, Syd was admitted to the military hospital at Kangaroo Point where he spent another two months recuperating. He was officially discharged as medically unfit on 24th November, 1915 and received for his service in the war the British War Medal, the 1914/15 Star and the Victory Medal. He was also allocated a small pension.

With characteristic optimism, he considered himself fortunate. The loss of one eye usually was assessed as a quarter disability and brought a meagre pension of only 5 shillings per week. However Syd was deemed to possess a 50% disability because of his 'marked disfigurement.'¹² His face was scarred and the nature of his wound made it impossible to fix a glass eye properly, causing it to be directed upwards. The Repatriation Board deemed this would hinder his ability to obtain suitable employment and therefore allocated a half pension of 10 shillings per week. It was a better outcome but still insufficient to live on. The 1914 basic wage of 47 shillings per week was more than four times greater.¹³

Solomon Islands:

On leaving the army, Syd's first priority was his financial security. While other returned soldiers could rely on family for support, in Australia Syd was on his own. Fortunately the Solomon Islands Development Company, a subsidiary of Burns Philp Pty Ltd, was seeking a manager to oversee one of its coconut plantations. The plantation was located at Luti on the remote coast of Choiseul, an isolated and dangerous region of the Solomon Islands. It was difficult work for a basic pay of £120 in the first year, increased to £144 in the second year and in the third year, £168,¹⁴ but it suited Syd well. On remote Choiseul, he hoped to escape the haunting memories and nightmares of war plus

avoid the endless questions and awkward looks that his facial scars constantly evoked. A three year contract was signed less three weeks after his discharge.

On arrival at Luti in January, 1916, Syd was greeted by a multitude of challenges. In the first month, the island was battered by the worse cyclone that the Solomons had experienced in a decade. Much of the plantation was destroyed.¹⁵ Clearing the damage and replanting was a formidable task. But even more daunting was the urgent need to secure his ascendancy over the local chiefs and their warriors. Headhunting remained a common practice on Choiseul and he was the sole white man on the central coast. The nearest law enforcement was more than 400 kilometres away on Tulagi Island. Six months after his arrival, Australian newspapers were reporting that headhunting raids were being revived on Choiseul at an alarming rate. "A bag of 16 heads at one small village is a poor night's work, and as the raids are almost perpetual there has been a terrible decrease in the population."¹⁶

An early confrontation with the one of local chiefs, Lakiti ended fortunately in Syd's favour. Early one morning, Syd was with the workers in the field when his house-boy arrived to report an angry Chief was up at his bungalow demanding to see him. Syd immediately recognized trouble because it was strictly forbidden for any natives to go near the Manager's house. The Chief was there to complain that too many of his men were working for the white-man and, as a result, they were neglecting their gardens. It was a legitimate grievance, but Syd had to gain the balance of power if he was to survive at Luti.

A plan was quickly conceived. On the pretext of showing the Chief the plantation's new stores, he invited Lakiti and his warriors into the shed. He opened the lid of one of the big bins to show the grain stored inside. Lakiti, bewildered by this strange place, was taken off guard. As he put his head into the bin for a look, Syd and his 'boss-boy' grabbed his legs, up-ending him, head-first, into the bin. When the lid was quickly slammed closed, Lakiti's men panicked at the strange sight of their chief disappearing and ran for the door. In leg irons, Lakiti was removed to the beach where he was chained to a coconut tree. For the next couple of days and nights, a circle of his men squatted around him, unable to do anything, except wail and chant. Syd had successfully asserted his authority. Sometime later, peace was brought to their relationship through an exchange of gifts.¹⁷

From a distance, the small plantation at Luti appeared idyllic. The Manager's residence stood on a hill overlooking a picturesque bay, fringed by coconut groves, and surrounded by tropical forest. But closer examination revealed there was nothing grand about Luti. Syd's home was a ramshackle highset structure in a state of great disrepair. When the government surveyor and author, S.G.C. Knibbs visited, he was shocked by its rickety nature and concluded it unsafe to dwell in. During his stay on Choiseul Island, Knibbs enjoyed Syd's hospitality and company. In his book, "The Savage Solomons" he described Syd and some of their experiences together, detailing a journey they made, through impenetrable jungle, and then by canoe, to Torombangara, the mountain village of local chief, Liliboi. His book reveals a great admiration for Syd's resourcefulness and optimism. He wrote, "A stocky little Cockney was Davies of Lutee..... Lutee is remote from any other white habitation, and any overseer stationed there would, one would imagine, be sure to become a crusty misanthrope. It was not so with Davies, however. A likeable little man, the least thing would bring

from him the hearty, deep-voiced roar of hilarity. He possessed but one eye, but with that he was given to winking prodigiously, rolling his head to one side and roaring with laughter... I imagine I can hear him now as I conjure up visions of the times spent with him upon the verandah of the little house on the top of the hill overlooking the bay.”¹⁸

England via America:

On the completion of his 3 year contract, Syd was eager to enjoy some leisure time. He farewelled the Solomons on the 4th January, 1919, travelling on the Burns Philp steamer, Mindini to Sydney. From there he indulged himself with a 26 day cruise, travelling on the ocean liner, ‘SS Niagara’ to Vancouver. Upon arriving in America, he travelled across the United States to New York and from there departed for England, arriving at Liverpool on 9th March 1919¹⁹.

Syd was eager to re-connect with his family, especially his sisters. He had not seen them for more than 10 years. It was a joyful reunion. He was welcomed as a war hero and his parents were especially proud of their son’s achievements. For many years after, they displayed the gifts he brought them from the Solomons in the hallway of their home at 27 Kirkley Road, Merton Park, Wimbledon.²⁰

Vancouver:

Syd attempted to settle London. He found work but remained restless and dissatisfied with English life. Three months after arriving home, he returned to Vancouver where he invested in a business selling automobiles. Sadly, the venture became the victim of fraud and within 12 months failed. Disillusioned and desperate to retrieve some of his money, Syd sued his business partner but, although the court found in his favour, no money could be returned to him.²¹

Ubobo Soldier Settlement Scheme:

When all seemed lost, news of the new Soldier Settlement Schemes in Australia reached Syd. His optimism returned when he learnt that, as a returned soldier, he was eligible for a grant of farming land and could also apply to the Agricultural Bank for assistance of up to approximately \$1400 to develop the property and purchase stock. He arrived back in Australia in March, 1920 and spent the next few months “travelling all over Queensland with the object of taking up land.”²²

His interest was captured by a new scheme in the Boyne River valley, west of Gladstone, the ‘Ubobo Soldier Settlement Scheme,’ that was opening that year. Its wide valley and backdrop of forested hills reminded him of the countryside of central Burma. He applied immediately and was overjoyed to receive one of the first of the 54 farm blocks that were surveyed off. His Portion No. 115, consisted of 95 acres of undeveloped open forest and river flats on the Boyne River, a few kilometres from the railway siding that was Ubobo.

With his few possessions, Syd moved onto the property and immediately began the hard work of turning it into a farm. Fences and yards had to be built, scrub cleared and paddocks cultivated. For the first few months his home was a tent at the edge of the property but, by the end of 1920, a small, high-set, timber cottage had been built on the ridge overlooking the river flats. Its design was

the standard government plan of three rooms and a kitchen with verandahs opening to both the front and the rear. Despite its simplicity, Syd was immensely proud of his home and the farm he was creating. He employed a photographer and had postcards produced which he mailed to friends and family overseas. The building still stands today on the Gladstone-Monto road and is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register. It has been restored by his son Hector as a memorial to his father and the other soldier settlers of the district.²³

Syd put enormous energy into developing his farm. A newspaper article, dated 1921, described his achievements after only 18 months on the land,

A little further south, and on the same line, is situated the farm of Mr R.S. Davies. This holding also extends to the banks of the Boyne River, and contains about 100 acres, consisting of open forest lands and partly of rich river flats. Mr Davies is an Englishman, and besides serving in the recent world's war, in which he lost an eye and suffered shellshock, participated in the argument with the Boers in South Africa, and holds the medal and clasp awarded for that sultry clash. When the last war broke out Mr Davies was working on a plantation in the New Hebrides and hastened to this State, where he enlisted. Now that he has "gone on the land" on his own account, he principally devotes his energies to the dairying industry, and at the present time is milking 15 cows. His herd is a well-chosen one, being comprised of Illawarras, whilst his Shorthorn bull is a proud nobleman possessing a family sire of ancient standing. To supplement the dairy cheque, he breeds a pure strain of Berkshire pigs. When he first cultivated his land he raised a crop of maize. Now he has planted lucerne on that area, and it is doing very well. The total area under cultivation, apart from the lucerne, amounts to eight acres, and this is sown with maize, and pumpkins between the rows. Although only 18 months on the land, Mr Davies, who is a "grafter and sticker," has accomplished wonders. He is a bachelor, and far prouder of his ability to bake a good loaf of yeast bread than to the fact that he will be a sure winner as far as the farm is concerned.²⁴

Most Soldier Settlement Schemes were doomed to fail. In the Boyne Valley, the small size of the farm blocks and the lack of infrastructure made it difficult to make a living as a dairy farmer. As early as 1923, several soldier settlers had abandoned their blocks and others were to follow. They left the district bitter and disillusioned. However Syd refused to give in. With great determination and hard work, he battled to make his farm a success. He decided wisely not to rely solely on dairying. By diversifying into breeding pigs and the cultivation of lucerne and other crops, he created more opportunities to make some profit. Also being a bachelor gave him an advantage. Without a family to support, less financial pressure was placed on the farm.

The farm's heavy workload allowed little time for leisure and other interests. However, Syd was eager to promote the growth of a Ubobo community and he, therefore, became active in many of Ubobo's first organisations such as the school committee, the Masonic Lodge and the RSL. The blight of fellow soldier settlers also inspired his spirited involvement in local politics. He campaigned strongly for the election of local Gallipoli veteran, James Murray in the 1923 state election. All of the many newspaper advertisements for Murray's election were authorised by R.S. Davies of Ubobo.²⁵

The key issues that they championed were government assistance for Ubobo soldier settlers and the construction of a Ubobo railway station.

During his first 8 years at Ubobo, Syd remained a bachelor. He resigned himself to a busy but solitary life. However, a brief visit to Southport brought an unexpected change. He was about 45 when he met Evelyn Hallett, a domestic working at the Southport School. The couple greatly enjoyed each other's company but Syd had to return to his Ubobo farm and it seemed unlikely their paths would cross again. Fortunately Evelyn was a determined woman. In 1929, on the pretext of taking a holiday in the district, to the farm of an old family friend, she travelled by train to the Boyne Valley. When the train made a brief stop at Ubobo Station, Evelyn loudly made casual inquiries about the wellbeing of Syd Davies. In the small community, news travelled fast. The next day, a nervous but elated Syd rode to the property where Evelyn was staying. Within days they were engaged to be married and they wed later that year.

Syd and Evelyn's first child, Hector Sydney, was born on 17th July, 1930. Two years later, Stanley Graham arrived, and on 27th September, 1933, a daughter, Valmae Evelyn was born. Although life on the farm continued to be a struggle, Syd worked hard and somehow managed to provide for his growing family. He had not expected the blessings that life at Ubobo had brought. He proudly named his property 'Hecstanvale' after his three children.

Sadly, Syd's good fortune did not last. By December 1937, he began to experience severe leg pain. Torturous cramps and soreness made walking difficult. Sometimes his feet turned cold and blue. Doctors determined the blood vessels in his legs were narrowing and diagnosed the rare artery disease, Buerger's Disease (thromboangiitis obliterans).²⁶ They warned there was a high risk of blood clots and possible amputation and advised Syd to remain close to immediate medical attention in the event of amputations being necessary. At Ubobo, this was not possible. The nearest doctor was 50 miles away.

He returned to Ubobo with the devastating news. Evelyn agreed the risk of remaining on the farm was too great. But for Syd, selling 'Hecstanvale' was not an option. It was his life. He argued because the farm was not making a profit, a sale would not be viable. Instead arrangements were made for the property to be leased on half shares to local farmer, Norman Dicker and his wife, and later to Mr and Mrs A. Simpson.²⁷

Syd, Evelyn and their three young children left Ubobo with much regret in October 1938 for Brisbane. Hector was only 8 years old and Valmae, the youngest, was about to start school. With borrowed money, they placed a deposit on a home, which they fondly named "Ubobo," at Crown Street, Bardon.

Unable to work, Syd applied for his pension to be increased to a full war service pension. He was confident his war service and his declining health would justify a compassionate increase. However the Repatriation Board returned an unexpected decision. As well as denying his application, they advised he would lose all his pension benefits if he continued to reside in Brisbane. The Ubobo property was no longer his principal place of residence and therefore would be regarded as equity that would disqualify all pension entitlements.

For more than 12 months, Syd desperately fought the decision. He used all his connections in the Masonic Lodge, RSL and politics to argue for a favourable review, but it was to no avail. With no other option, Syd and Evelyn were forced to sell the Bardon house and move back to Ubobo. To add to their woes, they arrived home, on 1st February, 1940, in the midst of a severe drought. Syd wrote, *"I arrived at Ubobo to find the farm in a very bad state, every paddock burnt brown, hardly a green blade of grass and the cattle very weak, so far I have lost 20 head, the young pigs all stunted through lack of skim milk and green feed, will have to get rid of them Mr and Mrs Simpson have done their best but the weather has given them no chance."*²⁸ As most farm work was beyond Syd's capability, the Simpsons agreed to stay on temporarily. Their share farming agreement was changed to a small wage of £8 per month. It was all that Syd could afford.

The responsibility for the farm work fell on the children as they grew older. By 1943, in a letter to the Repatriation Board, Syd explained that the farm no longer employed workers. It was now being run by his boys, aged 12 and 13, with the help of his wife. It was a difficult time for the young family. The herd of approximately 60 cows²⁹ had to be milked every day by hand and there was cultivation to tend to plus a multitude of other jobs.

In 1943 Syd's eldest son gained a scholarship to attend the Gatton Agricultural College. Syd believed in the importance of education and insisted Hector take up the opportunity. However, his departure only left Graham and his Mum to do the dairying. It was a heavy workload and Evelyn's hands were often crippled with pain. With little alternative, Syd was forced to take on a major debt. In late 1943, £170 was borrowed to install milking machines.³⁰ Fortunately cream prices were high.

The farm was making a profit when Buerger's Disease finally took its toll. In January, 1949, the amputation of Syd's leg was urgently needed. Bravely he made the journey alone by train to Brisbane General Hospital. Many years had passed since the first diagnosis and he was mentally well prepared. The stoicism he bore was conveyed in a letter written to his brother-in-law shortly after his return from the operation,

Dear John,

I arrived home OK. I got fixed up with a Sleeper in fact I had a Compartment to myself. The Ambulance man asked the people in the next compartment if I wanted anything would they get it for me which they did, so I had a good trip back.

The country looks nice and green from Brisbane to Ubobo, there has been fair rain right along the countryside..... Graham met me at the station. Streeters drove me home. What a pleasure it was to be back. Called at the Gladstone Doctor and had a long talk. He said as soon as I notice a change to come in straight away, waste no time.

*So that's that.*³¹

Five years later, Syd was back in hospital. After being admitted to the Bundaberg Hospital, he was sent to Brisbane General in January, 1954 for further tests. Sadly, the diagnosis was prostate cancer, and because of his weak heart, doctors advised against operating. Nothing could be done. Before returning to Ubobo, he expressed a wish to visit his daughter who had recently married and was

now living at Kilcoy. It was a happy visit but, within weeks, his health deteriorated. Syd was admitted to the local Hospital where it was discovered the cancer had moved to his lungs. After 3 months of treatment at the Kilcoy Hospital, the doctors could do no more for him.

Towards the end of 1954, Syd returned to Ubobo in a very poor state. The last months of his life were spent sitting quietly on the small verandah of his soldier settler's house. From the comfort of an old couch he looked across the river flats and reflected on a life well lived. The great adventures he had as a young man inspired much storytelling. Although the Boer War and Gallipoli left him with injuries, disfigurement and shell shock, to the very end, Syd maintained his optimistic and jovial outlook. Years of isolation and solitude in Burma and the Solomon Islands taught him courage and a strength of mind that assured his success as a soldier settler and pioneer of the Boyne Valley. He faced many obstacles but always without complaint. He took an active interest in the development and the welfare of the Ubobo community and became a respected citizen through service on the local school committee, the RSL and the Masonic Lodge. Syd believed his greatest achievement was his farm, 'Hecstanvale', and the family he left behind.

Robert Sydney Davies, the last of the original war service selectors of the Ubobo Soldier Settlement, died at the Gladstone District Hospital on February 8, 1955. He was buried in the Gladstone Cemetery.

¹ Essex Regimental Gazetteer, October 1909, page 52

² Knibbs, S.G.C., *The Savage Solomons as They were and are*. London, Seeley, Service & Co, 1929. page 83

³ 'Obituary. Mr R.S. Davies' Unidentified newspaper clipping. Family scrapbook of Evelyn Davies.

⁴ Essex Regimental Gazetteer, October 1909, page 52.

⁵ NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124

⁶ NAA: B2455, Davies Robert Sydney : SERN 1124 : POB Exeter England : POE Townsville QLD : NOK M Davies

⁷ 'Anzac Day Ninth Battalion Mr. R.S. Davies, of Ubobo.' Unidentified newspaper clipping. Family scrapbook of Evelyn Davies.

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Harvey, N.K., *From Anzac to the Hindenburg Line. The History of the 9th Battalion A.I.F.* Uckfield, East Sussex, The Naval & Military Press, 1941. page 70.

¹⁰ AWM4, 9th Infantry Battalion, May 1915.

¹¹ Diary extracts of Edward Reed, 5th Batt., Courier Mail, April 23, 1994.

¹² NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124

¹³ 'Average Wages'. Sydney Morning Herald, 8th June 1914. page 9.

¹⁴ NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124.

¹⁵ Daily Telegraph (Sydney) 7th July 1916. page 8.

¹⁶ 'Misdemeanours. Deeds of Lawlessness'. Farmer & Settler (Sydney) 13th June 1916. page 4.

¹⁷ Letter by Hector Davies, Ubobo via Gladstone, dated 20th November 1990.

¹⁸ Knibbs, S.G.C., *The Savage Solomons as They were and are*. London, Seeley, Service & Co, 1929. page 80.

¹⁹ The National Archives of the UK; Kew, Surrey, England; *Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and successors: Inwards Passenger Lists.*; Class: BT26; Piece: 652

²⁰ Record of interview with Gladys Hill (niece) at Painswick, England, December 1979.

²¹ Letter by Hector Davies, Ubobo via Gladstone, dated 20th November, 1990.

²² NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124.

²³ Queensland Heritage Register. <https://apps.des.qld.gov.au/heritage-register/detail/?id=602229>

²⁴ Unidentified newspaper clipping. Family scrapbook of Evelyn Davies.

²⁵ 'Advertising'. Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton), 10 May 1923. Page2ay 1923. page 2.

²⁶ NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124.

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ Letter to Edith Hallett from Syd Davies, Ubobo, dated 21 November 1939.

²⁹ Report by Bureau of Rural Development, dated 6 September 1939, recorded “60 milking cows, 30 heifers, 13 young calves, 3 bulls, 2 plough horses, 3 saddle horses and 2 sows.” NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124.

³⁰ NAA: BP709/1, M35187. DAVIES, Robert Sidney [aka Robert Sydney] - Service Number – 1124.

³¹ Letter to John Hallett, Redbank Plains, from Syd Davies, Ubobo, dated 11 February 1949.