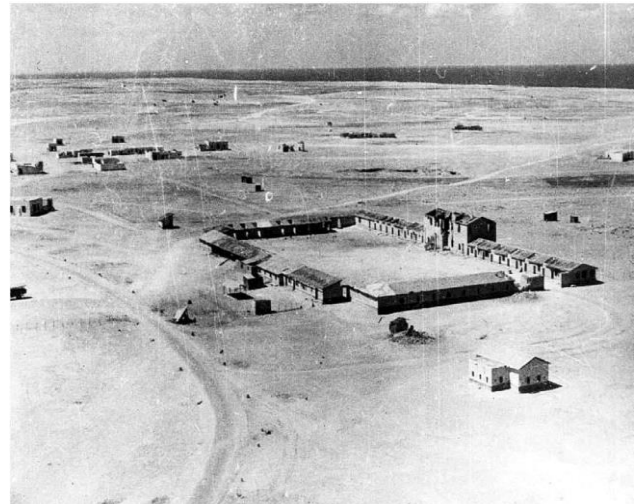


## Historical Officers Report From the Pages of the Camden Advertiser

### 9<sup>th</sup> December 1940 Battle of Sidi Barrani begins



### 12<sup>th</sup> December 1940

Two men had a narrow escape from serious injury when a landslide accrued at Nattai River last week. They were Mr. W. White (manager) and Mr. Jack Roberts (tractor driver), employed by the Wollondilly Collieries. (Fox's Mine.). Hearing the warning rumbling overhead, they raced for safety to the mine tunnel. A few seconds later a large rock and a quantity of earth hurtled down to the spot where they had been standing. A Fordson tractor, a chute and a skip were badly damaged. Rain-softened earth is said to have been responsible for the landslide. The accident held up work for more than a week in this particular mine. About thirty men were temporarily unemployed as a result.

### 24<sup>th</sup> December 1940

#### UNIQUE RECORD Families United by Nine Weddings

Here is a matrimonial record probably unique in Australia. Three Camden district brothers are married to three Picton sisters, whose three girl-cousins also wedded three brothers at Molong, and that is not all: The girls' parents were themselves the principals in triangular sister-brother weddings. The story commenced some years ago at Molong when brothers and sisters of two local families became matrimonial partners.

They were: Francis Farrell to Harriett Hayes, Henry Farrell to Verna Hayes, Maria Farrell to Jack Hayes.

Three daughters of Francis and Harriett Farrell chose three brothers as husbands.

These unions Ethel Farrell to Ray Nolan, Florence Farrell to Jack Nolan, Ida Farrell to Thomas Nolan. (These folks now reside in our Camden district.) Their cousins, three daughters of Maria and Jack Hayes, married three Philpott brothers, as follows: Maggie Hayes to Cecil Philpott. Kathleen Hayes to Rupert Philpott, Florence Hayes to Bert Philpott.

**25<sup>th</sup> December 1940**

**ME Naval Force includes 3 Australian cruisers, 4 destroyers, 2 sloops**

**28<sup>th</sup> December 1940**

**6th Div in first action before Bardia**

The 6th Division first saw action in early 1941, against Italian forces in North Africa, in the advance to Benghazi as part of Operation Compass. By this time, Major General Iven Mackay had taken over command of the division. In June 1940, Italy had declared war on the Allies and began to build up forces in Libya.

In September 1940, the Italian Tenth Army invaded Egypt, a British colony, threatening Allied control of the Middle East and most particularly, the Suez Canal and international supply routes.

British forces under General Sir Archibald Wavell expelled the Italians from Sidi Barrani and pursued them back towards the Libyan border.

In December 1940, the 6th Division was moved forward from training camps around Alexandria to relieve British troops around Bardia and at the end of December they were ordered to prepare to attack.

Ray Herbert  
Historical Officer