




TASMANIAN BORN AIR ACES OF WORLD WAR 1
RAYMOND JAMES (BROWNIE) BROWNELL

Raymond James (Brownie) Brownell

Author: W Dearing, March 2021

	Raymond James (Brownie) Brownell	
	Born:	17 May 1894, Newtown, Tasmania
	Joined:	AIF, 12 September 1914
	Died:	12 April 1974, aged 79, Subiaco West Australia
	Serial Number:	2058

Born in Newtown Tasmania, Brownwell was working as a clerk for a Hobart accounting firm when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) at the outbreak of World War 1. He served as a gunner in Gallipoli, the Western Front and the battles of both the Somme and Pozieres. Whilst serving as a Sergeant with the 5th Battery, 3rd Field Artillery Brigade he was awarded the Military Medal and promoted to Second Lieutenant.

Discharged on 16th March 1917 he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), one of 200 Australians recruited by the RFC, at the same rank. He was transferred to 45 Squadron on completion of training, where he shot down five enemy aircraft over France before the squadron was transferred to Italy in November 1917.

Seven more kills occurred in Italy, notably that of the German Ace, Alwin Thurm on the 31st December 1917, which he shared with Henry Moody. On the 4th March 1918 Raymond Brownwell was awarded the Military Cross the citation is show below:

"2nd Lt. Raymond James Brownell, M.M., R.F.C., Spec. Res.

Military Cross M.C. For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. Within the last three months he has brought down six enemy aeroplanes, four of which were seen to come down in flames, the other two falling completely out of control. The dash, gallantry and offensive spirit displayed on all occasions by this officer are worthy of the highest praise."



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Archive photo of a Sopwith Camel – type flown by Brownwell

Following World War 1, Brownwell returned to Australia, joining the Royal Australian Air Force (R.A.A.F.) serving with Number 1 Squadron from 1926 to 1928 and at RAAF Base Pearce (No 23 City of Perth Squadron) between 1938 and 1940. He further served in the following capacities during World War 2.

- Wing Commander commanding R.A.A.F. Base 'Pearce', Western Australia, in 1939
- Commanded R.A.A.F. units in the Far East 1940-1941. R.A.F. Sembawang (1940-41)
- Air Officer Commanding (AOC) 1 Training Group 1941-1942
- Promoted to Air Commodore and was (AOC) Western Area 1943-1945
- Appointed CBE on 01 January 1945
- Placed in command of No.11 Group, Morotai, on 30 July 1945 – 1946

Brownwell died in Subiaco West Australia on the 12th April 1974, aged 74 years.



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Raymond James Brownell's Victories					
Date	Time	Unit	Aircraft	Opponent	Location
10 Sep 1917	1720	45	Sopwith Camel (B2323)	DFW C	Houthoult Wood
20 Sep 1917	1825	45	Sopwith Camel	C [1]	Paschendaele
01 Oct 1917	1220	45	Sopwith Camel (B2323)	Albatros D.V	Quesnoy
20 Oct 1917	1240	45	Sopwith Camel	Albatros D.V	Kastelhoek
27 Oct 1917	1015	45	Sopwith Camel	Albatros D.V [2]	NE of Comines
31 Dec 1917	0945	45	Sopwith Camel (B2430)	Albatros D.III	Piave de Soligo
31 Dec 1917	1030	45	Sopwith Camel (B2430)	Albatros D.V [3]	Paderno
10 Jan 1918	1615	45	Sopwith Camel (B2430)	Albatros D.III	Portobuffolo
11 Jan 1918	1535	45	Sopwith Camel (B2430)	Albatros D.III	St. Stino
30 Jan 1918	1045	45	Sopwith Camel (B6283)	DFW C	Saletto
17 Apr 1918	0915	45	Sopwith Camel (B3872)	Albatros D.III	Oderzo
18 Apr 1918		45	Sopwith Camel (B3872)	Balloon	Piave River
<p>[1] Shared with Henry Moody and Emerson Smith [2] Shared with James Child and Matthew Frew [3] Shared with Henry Moody</p>					

