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Collection Explorer

White wooden 'make-do' stool made by soldier settler Harry Newman at Narrogin, Western Australia, in 1922

1999.0007.0001



White wooden 'make-do' stool made by soldier settler Harry Newman at Narrogin, Western Australia, in 1922

Description

Soldier settler, Henry 'Harry' Newman made this stool around 1922 from pine kerosene packing cases and broom handles. The stool served many uses within his growing family. Originally a kitchen stool, its legs were shortened and it was adapted for use as a nursing stool. Kerosene was commonly used on farms and kerosene containers were adapted into numerous farm implements such as water troughs, water carriers and containers for feeding farm animals.

Newman served in the AIF during the First World War. In 1920 he was granted a 4000 acre pastoral lease at Narrogin, WA under the Soldier Settlement Scheme. The Australian Government repatriated more than 100,000 returned soldiers and their families to farms throughout Australia. Western Australia was seen as having an abundance of suitable and accessible Crown Land ideal for settlement but these were often in the dry eastern and heavily timbered south-western margins of the wheat belt.

Physical description

A white painted wooden 'make-do' stool. It has a rectangular box seat made from pine packing cases for Rose brand kerosene tins, and four round legs made from cut-down broom handles. It has been constructed using metal nails. A rose pattern with words can be seen stencilled on the underside of one of the planks of wood. There is a cream and green coloured sticker adhered to one side with a note handwritten in black pen.

Statement of significance

This 'makedo' stool is a testament to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the World War I Australian Soldier Settlers.

The Soldier Settlement Scheme was established in Australia to deal with the huge influx of returned servicemen during and after WWI. This collection will enable the Museum to better interpret the harsh conditions and consequences that resulted from the repatriation scheme.

The 'makedo' stool originally belonged to Henry and Natalie Newman, a WWI soldier settler family who were allocated land in the Western Australian Wheatbelt area. The 'everyday' materials used to construct the stool reflect the limited resources available to the remote farms and the need to be innovative and recycle a variety of household items in order to survive. The family kept the stool as a reminder of their uncertain times.

Educational significance

Defining Moment: Federal-state agreement for soldier settlement (1916)

Curriculum: History, Geography

School years: 9, 10

Object information

What

Type	Stools
Collection	Harry and Natalie Newman collection
Dimensions	W 365mm x H 388mm
Material	Wood , Paint - non specific
Related links	Federal-state agreement for soldier settlement (1916)

When

Date made	Period of use
1922	1922-1990
Associated period	
1916-1919	
Henry Newman served as a stretcher bearer in the AIF from 1916-1919 and he was awarded the Military Medal and Distinguished Service Order for bravery. He was critically wounded in 1918 and returned to Australia in 1919	

Who

Maker	User
Mr Henry '. Newman	Mrs Natalie A. Newman
Associated organisation	
Australian Army	

Where

Place made	Place used
Narrogin Agricultural Area, Western Australia, Australia	Narrogin Agricultural Area, Western Australia, Australia
Place used	Place used
Perth, Western Australia, Australia	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

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