

BOY SOLDIER TO HERO



Jack Roy JOHNSON, (John Rollins)

At the start of World War One Jack went to Melbourne to enlist, but he was only 16, he was the youngest of 5 sons. One of his older brothers, who had already gone to Melbourne to enlist, saw him and reported him into the authorities and he was sent home. So he enlisted again under the name of John Rollins and he was still under age as he was 17 years and 6 months.

He enlisted in the 1st Australian Imperial Forces at Claremont Tasmania on 12 February 1915. He stated on the enlistment that was born at Warrnambool Victoria and that he was 19 years of age.

He served overseas at the Gallipoli peninsula, Middle East, England and France with the following units:

- 12th AIF. (Gallipoli, Middle East.
- 52 Bn. (Middle East and France.)
- Reserve Brigade Australian Artillery (England)
- Discharged from the 1st AIF in Tasmania on 12 May 1919.

Honours and Awards

- Military Medal
- 1914/15 Star
- British War Medal
- Victory Medal
- Anzac Commemorative Medal



Thomas Ladas DONNELLY

Thomas Ladas Donnelly, was born in 1900. He enlisted on the 12 August 1915, two days after his fifteenth birthday. On enlistment he gave his name as James Westlake, his mother's maiden name.

Boy soldiers who enlisted under age to serve during The Great War (1914-1918) were universal. It was no different in Tasmania. The term "boy soldiers" is defined as those who joined, lying about their age and in some cases their identity and were under eighteen years of age. A number were just fourteen years old.



THEY CAME FROM FARMS, HAMLETS AND TOWNS ACROSS THE STATE.

THEY JOINED A COMMUNITY OF MEN, OF LARRIKINS, ON THEIR WAY TO A BIG ADVENTURE.

A number were sent home when their true age was recognised. Some of those who were, later rejoined a different battalion under a different name. A number of boys who were of a strong physical stature were never challenged. Mere boys served wherever the Australians fought; Gallipoli, Palestine, the Pacific and the Western Front.

THEY DREAMED OF THE EXCITING THINGS THEY'D SHARE WITH THEIR NEW FRIENDS



AND IT ALL STARTED WITH A GREAT, LONG OCEAN JOURNEY. SOMETHING THEY HAD NEVER DREAMED POSSIBLE!

Their experiences were exactly the same as those with whom they served; all the terror, the squalor and the danger. Some were wounded; while others were killed or died from their wounds

Those who returned were never the same, both physically and psychologically. A number who survived returned, over eighteen years of age, while others who were returned to their island home were still but lads.



WILLIAM GEORGE STONEHOUSE 1901-1965

THE BOY SOLDIERS

In Honour of the Boy Soldiers of Tasmania who enlisted while under-age and who served in World War One. We remember those who died or returned injured and who simply survived the tragedy. Lest we forget.

HONOUR ROLL

BERRY, Peter Private. Enlisted 22 May 1917 aged 16 years 7 months

CAMPBELL, Alec. Aged 16 years

DONNELLY, Thomas Ladas Enlisted as James Westlake 12 August 1915, two days after his 15th birthday (St Leonards)

ECKFORD, Alan Edlinton Enlisted as Allan Lane aged 17 years 7 months

GADD, William Mansfield Private. Enlisted age 16½ years as 18 years. Enlisted 1916, killed April 1917. (Queenstown)

GITTUS, William Henry Albert Private Enlisted 8 November 1915 aged 15 years 5 months. 12th Battalion.

GRAINGER, William Douglas Born 12 April 1900 (Lefroy) Died 28 April 1917, aged 17

HOUSTON, Charles Kimberley Enlisted aged 16 years, (see O'Neil) 2/40th Battalion.

JOHNSON, Jack Roy Enlisted as John Rollins.

PREGNELL, James

MORRISON, William Enlisted aged 15 years

MUCKRIDGE, George Frederick Enlisted September 1916 aged 16. (Launceston) No. 572, 58th Battalion.

NEWLAND, Henry Laurence Enlisted July 1916 aged 17 years

O'NEIL, Snowy Enlisted July 1916 aged 16 years (see Charles Houston), 2/40th Battalion Discharged August 1916 and re-enlisted as Sydney Harold Smith. Killed in action August 1918.

O'NEILL, Stanley Howard Enlisted as Sydney Harold Smith, July 1916, three months short of 17 years. Killed August 1918. 2/12th Battalion

PATTERSON, Albert Enlisted October 1915. Discharged, underage, December 1915. Re-enlisted October 1916, 17th birthday in France.

ROBINSON, Athol Enlisted aged 16 years. Killed in action. 9-22 August 1916 aged 17 years. 12th Battalion.

ROSE, Edward Enlisted December 1916. Died illness in UK, 1 June 1918. Aged 16 years. 12th Battalion

SAULT, Edgar Harcourt Enlisted 14½ years Left Tasmania to join Royal Engineers (English).

STONEHOUSE, William George

YOUNG, Tasman Arthur Enlisted May 1917. aged 17 years, 12th Battalion. Returned to Tasmania.

BOY SOLDIERS, READY TO GO, BUT SENT HOME



The Payne boys: Left: Jack was born John Burnett Payne, 24 Nov 1900 at Zeehan. Tom was born Thomas Alexander Payne also on 24 Nov 1906 in Hobart. He was in the sea scouts.

The boy on the left: Jack Payne ran away and enlisted but was sent back to his parents after they found out. He did not see service. Tom Henry Payne, did not serve. The uniform is of the sea scouts.

Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
 Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
 Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
 Can patter out their hasty orisons.
 No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
 Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
 The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
 And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
 What candles may be held to speed them all?
 Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
 Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
 The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
 Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
 And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

FIRST AUSTRALIAN CLEARING HOSPITAL TO LEAVE ON SATURDAY

The arrangements made with regard to the First Australian Clearing Hospital and their leaving Hobart on Thursday have been altered. By the new arrangement they will now take their departure for Victoria by the steamer Warrimoo on Saturday, proceeding direct to Melbourne.

The Clearing Hospital Unit, comprising approximately 80 men all told, under Lieutenant-Colonel W. W. Giblin, will leave Claremont by special train, and march from the Railway Station to the steamer prior to embarkation.

The Mercury Thursday 26 November 1914



71 men of the 7th Field Ambulance section

Tasmanians who have answered the Empire's call. Tent Sub-division "C" Section, Seventh Field Ambulance, with Doctor and Nurses.



TASMANIAN NURSE AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL

Born: 1891 at Pipers River, Tas. Enlisted: 13 November 1914 Embarked: 20 November 1914 Enlistment ended: 5 March 1919 Died 1952

From an early age, Clare Deacon spoke of her ambition to become a nurse

She became a trainee nurse at the Royal Hobart Hospital and when World War I was declared, Clare was one of the first nurses to offer her services. She embarked for Egypt on the Kyarra with the first contingent.

Clare nursed many of the wounded from Gallipoli through the hot summer in scorching temperatures reaching 117°F at a time when nurses had to wear ankle-length uniforms.

In 1915, Clare was promoted to Sister and relocated to England before being sent to France to join the 2nd Australian General Hospital.

On the night of 22 July 1917, while Clare was serving with the 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station at Trois Arbres near Armentieres, an air raid warning was sounded. Rather than taking shelter in the bunkers Clare, who was off duty at the time, and two other nurses ran into the hospital to rescue patients. They risked their lives by evacuating them from the burning buildings while the station was being bombed.

Later in England, Clare was awarded the Military Medal which was personally pinned on by King George V.

Clare was the only Tasmanian woman to receive this medal.

