

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 176

SYDNEY JOHNSON

1891-1965



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Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Sydney Johnson was a member of the 25th Battalion in France during the darkest days of 1917 and 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00804

Headquarters of the 25th Battalion near Ypres, 1917

©Saint Andrew's Uniting Church
Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
2017, revised 2018

Go to <http://heritage.saintandrews.org.au/>
for an online copy of this booklet and more pictures .

Private Sydney Johnson

Private Sydney Johnson enlisted in Brisbane on 5 June 1917 and was given the number 3706. Sydney, the son of Hollis and Elizabeth, was born in Brisbane on 3 January 1891.

His father Hollis was born on 25 March 1863, married in 1889 and died in 1930 to be buried in the Toowong Cemetery. Sydney had two siblings Herbert born in 1893 and Pearlie born in 1898 .

Johnson enlisted into the 25th Battalion and according to his Attestation Paper he was single, a grocer by occupation, 5ft 4in (163cm) tall, weighing 132lbs (60kg). His hair and complexion were dark, his eyes were grey. He named his father Hollis Johnson of 125 Terrace Street, New farm as his next of kin and requested that 4 shillings (40 cents) a day be paid to his mother Elizabeth (née Crouch) after he embarked.



The house at 125 Terrace Street, New Farm, as it is today

He embarked in Sydney on 2 August 1917 sailing on the *Miltiades* A28. Two months later on 2 October he disembarked in Glasgow and marched in to the 12th Training Battalion.

Three months later on 8 January 1918 he proceeded to France as a reinforcement to the 25th Battalion and allocated the letter 'a'.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H15936

Morlancourt 1918

The Australian War Memorial says of the 25th Battalion - 1918 was an exhausting year for the 25th Battalion. It fought to turn back the German spring offensive in April, and then participated in battles at Morlancourt, Hamel, Amiens and along the Somme Valley as the German Army was pushed ever closer to defeat. These actions sapped the strength of the AIF, already terribly weak due to earlier casualties and lack of reinforcements. In September, the 25th was one of several battalions ordered to disband to reinforce others. Its troops mutinied, winning the Battalion a temporary reprieve.

On 8 August Johnson was wounded in action and on 12 August was invalided to the United Kingdom and admitted to the 3rd Southern General Hospital in Oxford with gunshot wounds to his legs. The record adds 'sev' but it is not clear whether this means 'severe' or 'several' wounds.

The Third Southern General Hospital was a territorial-force hospital based in Oxford at existing hospitals and other large facilities. It was officially opened at the Examination Schools on 16 August 1914 with a dedication ceremony attended by the Bishop of Oxford. It eventually had at least ten different branches in Oxford, with wards occupying both university and city buildings.

On 20 November 1918, just over a week after the Armistice, Sydney Johnson was returned to Australia per *Suevic* D33, invalided with gunshot wounds to his right leg, and discharged on 31 January 1919. Sydney was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Johnson married Violet née Marshall on 4 February 1922. Violet, the daughter of Thomas and Esme Marshall was born in 1886 and died in 1960. Sydney Johnson died in 1965 and was buried with Violet in the Lutwyche Cemetery.



Reference List

recordsearch.naa.gov.au

http://www.oxfordhistory.org.uk/war/military_hospitals/

Google Maps, 2017

Hollis - Davis - McDougal Genealogy gdavis.id.au/family/p00618.htm

National Archives of Australia, World War 1 military records

First World War Embarkation Rolls

Australian War memorial. awm.gov.au 25th Australian Infantry Battalion

Queensland Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages

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March 2017, revised November 2018



Lest we forget