



**April 2015**

## **City of Nedlands remembers its local heroes**

The First World War (1914 – 1918) had a significant effect on the Nedlands community. Though the district was sparsely populated at the time of the outbreak of the war, it is known that at least 53 men from the district signed up. They included men from ordinary professions such as carpenters, iron moulders, bakers and bankers.

The majority of those from Nedlands served at the battles of the Somme and Bullecourt in France as well as at Messines in Belgium. A few also served at Gallipoli. Here are some of their stories.

### **Private Quentin Eustace Gaskill**

Private Quentin Eustace Gaskill lived in John Street in Nedlands with his aunt Charlotte, as his parents had died. His maternal grandmother lived in Archdeacon Street. Born in Adelaide, he worked as a labourer in a foundry. Blue eyed and dark haired, he stood only 5 feet, 6 inches tall. He enlisted in November 1915 at the age of 21.

He was a member of the 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Less than a year after enlisting, in August 1916, he would die in Pozieres of wounds from a shell bombardment while in a shell hole in a German trench. He was only 22 years old.

As late as 1921, the AIF was unable to inform his aunt Charlotte as to his final resting place, though later he was included in the memorial at Villers Bretonneux.

“He was a very decent chap,” wrote one of his fellow soldiers.

### **Private John Minitor Rodgers**

Private John Minitor Rodgers was a warehouse salesman who lived on the Esplanade in Nedlands. At the age of 25, he left Fremantle on HMAT Seang Bee in July 1916.

First attached to the army’s 5<sup>th</sup> Cyclist Corps, he would have been responsible for reconnaissance and communications. He was later moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Corps.

He sustained a gunshot wound to his thigh in Etaples in northern France on 3 May 1918. In critical condition when admitted to the 26<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, he became worse and died of his wounds on 8 May 1918.

He was buried at the Etaples Military Cemetery. His mother wrote of him, “A better or more devoted son was never given to any woman and the best of brothers, nothing can be said of him but good.”

Included in the personal effects returned to his mother after his death were a watch, some photos and a lock of hair.

### **Did you know?**

Some street names in the City have their origins in the First World War. These include:

**Birdwood Parade** – named after Field Marshall Sir William Birdwood, a distinguished commander of ANZACs at Gallipoli.

**Lemnos Street** – named after the island of Lemnos in the Aegean Sea, which was the jump-off point for the landing at Gallipoli.

**Monash Avenue** – Sir John Monash was an outstanding Australian commander in World War I.

**Sadlier Street** – Lieutenant Cliff Sadlier won the Victoria Cross in WWI.

**Thomas Street** – named after Thomas Bruce who was killed at Gallipoli. He was the second son of Edward Bruce, the first landowner in the area.

**Verdun Street** – French town where bitter fighting occurred.

**ENDS**

**About the City of Nedlands**

The City of Nedlands is situated 7km from Perth and stretches from the banks of the Swan River to the edge of the Indian Ocean. A population of over 21,000 live in the suburbs of Nedlands, Dalkeith, Mt Claremont, Swanbourne, Karrakatta, and parts of Floreat and Shenton Park.

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