

John was born John Henry Parsons on 20th December 1894, the son of John Parsons and his then wife, Alice Maud, nee Rock. The Parson's lived in New Zealand when Alice left her husband and moved to Sydney, where John was born. Alice eventually married John Facey in 1900 and John adopted his stepfathers name.

On 11th August 1914 John joined the AN&MEF stating that he was a Smallgoods Man and single. He returned from Rabaul and was discharged on 4th March 1915 having completed 206 days service.

On 13th April he joined the AIF, regimental number 62, was promoted sergeant the next day and attended various Signals Courses at Liverpool. He was transferred to the 7th Reinforcements, 13th Battalion as a sergeant signaller and then to the 30th Battalion on 6th August. He left Sydney on 9th November 1915 aboard the BELTANA, arriving in Suez on 11th December 1915. He left Alexandria for Marseilles on 16th June 1916 and appointed 2nd Lt on 2nd August. On 25th November 1916 he was promoted Lieutenant.

He was hospitalised in the UK with Bronchitis brought on by being gassed on 12th December, rejoining his unit on 26th Jan 1917. On 3rd May 1918 he was placed under arrest and charged with disobeying a lawful order, and faced a Court Martial on 24th May. He pleaded guilty stating that he refused to obey the order to take command of an infantry platoon as he was not qualified to do so, having spent his whole war service in signals. He was found guilty and was dismissed from the Service with effect from 22nd June 1915.

The final note on his file states that he failed to embark when ordered, for return to Australia.

In the early 1920's, John requested a copy of his discharge papers as he claims to have lost his when the SS BARUNDA was sunk off Sicily in July 1918 and he was aboard.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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The SS BARUNGA was carrying 800 sick and wounded soldiers on board when it was struck by a German torpedo. All on board were saved and returned to Plymouth. The manifest is missing so there is no way of verifying John's claim, although given that he was married and his wife was with him in the UK, the ship was carrying the sick and wounded and John had already been dismissed, it seems improbable.

Because of his dismissal, John forfeited his claim to any medals.

Whilst he was in service, he married Wilhelmina Fairbairn – Clark at Wiltshire on 3rd March 1917.

Wilhelmina died in 1945 and John, a very active member of the Fishing Community, died on 10th April 1957.