



War time letters written by members of the Balmain Rowing Club during WWI

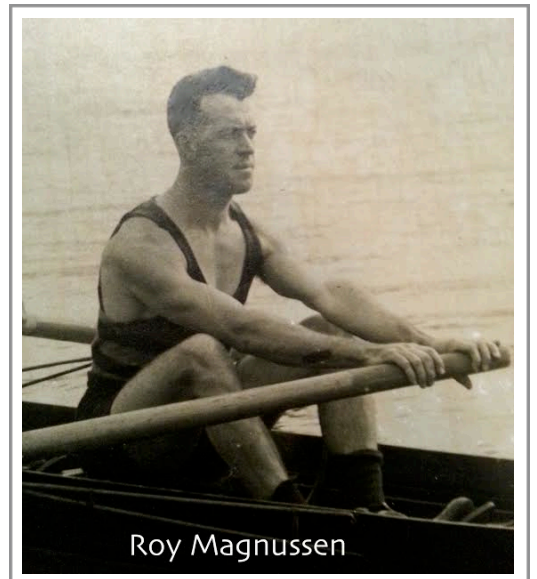


Mr Sid Grant, the well known Balmain Rowing club Interstate oarsmen has written the following letter to Mr O J Wood of the Balmain Rowing Club. It is dated December 25, 1915 and written from Suez Canal;

"We have just come off duty after spending all the night in the trenches amid rain and cold. We have overcoats, head and neck mufflers, and gloves. Early next week we will be off out into the desert. I believe it is dangerous country; in fact, where we are now is not too safe. We arrived at Suez on about the 8th of this month, then we were moved to a place just outside Heliopolis. We were there for a week and then packed up suddenly for our present address on the bank of the Suez Canal. Jack Goodsir is A1, in fact, he holds the floor of the tent at present, and is a regular hard case. Tas Vale has been made a lance-corporal. I Will close with hearty good wishes to all the rowing boys."

Gunner Roy Magnussen, of the Balmain Rowing club, has written the following letter from Egypt to Mr Chidgey, hon secretary of BRC. 11 November, 1916

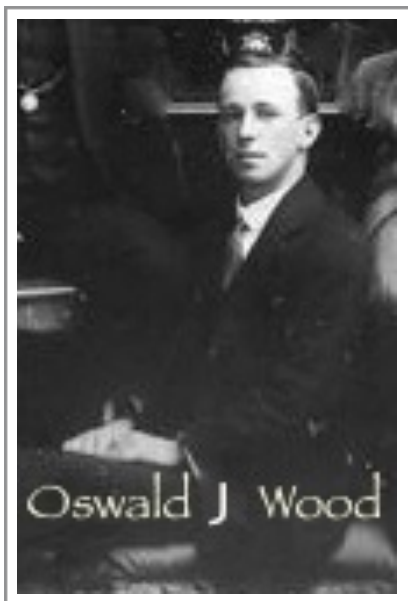
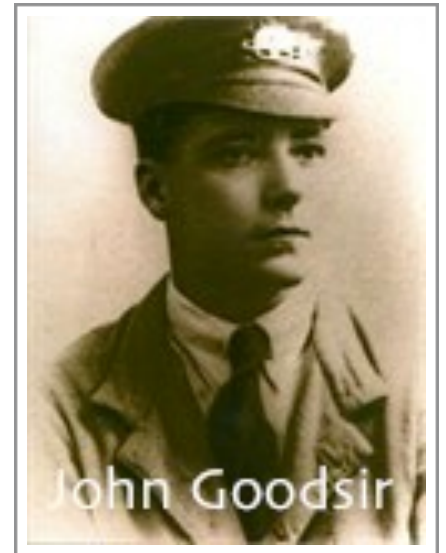
"I'm having a quiet time, and I think I'm losing weight, but I feel as fit as a fiddle. I am in Oasis Camp, with Eugene MacNamara. How is your secretarial work going? I had a good row with an eight in Melbourne while I was there. We went over the Henly course, and right up past the wharves. Just as I am writing this, orders have come to pack up, as we are to go to Gallipoli at 8.45 tomorrow morning, and we have a special guard on camp this afternoon to stop us leaving. Well, Jack, I'll have to cut this short for obvious reasons, and so will say good-bye, and wish you and all the Balmain Rowing Club boys the compliments of the season."





Private Jack Goodsir of the Balmain Rowing club has written the following letter to Mr Con MacNamara, captain of the Balmain Rowing club. 22 January 1916

“Sid Grant, Tas Vale, and myself are doing all right. We are having the time of our lives aboard ship and getting as fat as pigs. We are being treated like lords and I think I’ve put on a stone. The officers are the best and likewise the food. We have a swimming bath on board and don’t the Balmain boys enjoy it. I suppose by the time you get this we will be right in the thick of it and we will try to make a good name for the Balmain Rowing club. Remember me to all the boys”



Mr O J Wood of the Balmain Rowing Club has written from “Some where at sea.” 21 June 1916

“So far, we have had splendid weather, the sea being as smooth as glass. The conditions on board, including meals, are all that could be wished for; in fact, a great deal better than I expected. My chum is a chap named Billy Kerr, son of Mr W T Kerr, of George Street. Yesterday I met a man named W Scribner, late hon, secretary of Wagga Wagga Rowing Club, and we had a good rowing yarn. There is a Stobo aboard (probably Tom Stobo, “Stroke-Side”), who says he was a member of the old Mercantile Club. I hardly need remind you that a stray “Referee” or ‘Saturday Referee’ [news paper] will be very welcome. Although it is only a short time since I left Sydney, I am already thirsting for news. It is one of the unkindest cuts of all to be without news of dear old Sydney and everything around about”.

