

## A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 5234  
Name: Thomas Frederick VOCE (VOSE)  
Nickname: Tom



### *Medals and Decorations*

British War Medal

Victory Medal

Rank: Private

Service: Army

Enlisted: 23 Dec 1915

Discharge: 10 Apr 1919

Tom was born on 19 Nov 1896 at Norwood (SA) to Frank Voce and Minnie Voce (nee Hutchins): the family name is spelled both Voce and Vose on school and Army documentation: it is recorded as Vose on the Tumby Memorial. There were 3 children in the family, 2 boys and a girl, of which he was the eldest. His family lived at Norwood in Adelaide before moving to Tumby Bay in Sep 1907, where they remained for just over 12 months before relocating to Port Lincoln. It is thought that his father was a stone mason.

Tom went to school at Norwood, transferring to the Tumby Bay School and later the Port Lincoln School on relocation of his family. On completion of schooling he returned to the Tumby area with his brother Les and worked on farms in the area until his enlistment in the Army at Norwood at the age of 19: both Tom and his brother, Les, enlisted on the same day! At that time Tom recorded his occupation as labourer.

On enlistment Tom was sent to 2<sup>nd</sup> Depot Battalion (Bn) at Mitcham for training before being allocated to 16<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements/10<sup>th</sup> Bn. He embarked on 25 Mar 1916 aboard HMAT "*Shropshire*" bound for UK via Alexandria. On arrival he undertook further training before embarking for Etaples (France) on 9 Aug 1916 and was taken on strength by his unit on 22 Aug 1916.

In Feb 1917 he was admitted to 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Ambulance in France with Trench Fever before being transferred to the HS "*Aberdonian*" at Calais and evacuated to the East Suffolk Hospital, Ipswich (UK) on 12 Mar 1917. He was released from hospital in May 1917 and rejoined his unit (10<sup>th</sup> Bn) on 15 Jun 1917.

Tom was wounded in action (WIA) during the battle of Polygon Wood on 7 Oct 1917 and was again admitted to hospital, this time remaining in France: he rejoined his unit on 17 Nov 1917.

After a further 8 months he was again WIA, this time being admitted to hospital with gunshot wounds to his left knee sustained in heavy fighting near Merris on the French/Belgian border; he was evacuated through 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Ambulance to 55<sup>th</sup> General Hospital and then via the HS "*Jane Peydel*" to the London War Hospital (UK), where he remained until 19 Nov 1918, a week after the end of the war.

On release from hospital Tom returned to Australia aboard the "*City Of York*", embarking at South Hampton on 14 Jan 1919 and disembarking at Adelaide on 24 Feb 1919. He took his discharge from the Army in 4<sup>th</sup> Military District (Adelaide) on 10 Apr 1919.

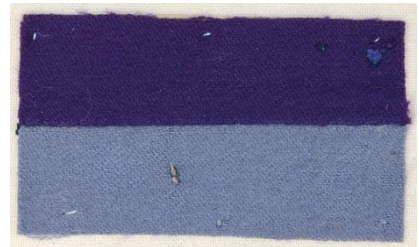
On discharge Tom remained in Adelaide, initially with his parents at Norwood. In 1925 he met his wife to be, Freda Louise Nosse at Unley; they were married at St. Augustines Church at Unley on 18 Jun 1927 and continued to live in the Adelaide area. Tom suffered from poor health as a result of his war wounds, often needing to spend periods at the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital. He died at Daw Park on 31 Aug 1971.

It seems hard for us to believe that a person who had been wounded in action on 2 occasions and returned to the front line on each occasion would not have been recognised with a bravery award. It is also hard to believe that this person would not apply for a veterans pension, but that appears to be the case, and is an indication of the pride of our men at the time.

Tom's initials were incorrectly recorded on the Tumby Memorial, rather than those of his brother Les, who also served in WW1, and was killed in action serving with 32<sup>nd</sup> Bn in France.



**British War Medal    Victory Medal**



**10<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF  
Unit Colour Patch**