

## RENNIE, John Andrew Gibson



J.A.G. Rennie 4 - 26, one of the soldiers photographed in *The Queenslander Pictorial*, supplement to *The Queenslander*, 1916. (2014). John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

Rank: Private

Service Number: 2158

Unit: 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement

Place of Birth: Bundaberg, Queensland

Date of Birth: 9 March 1897

Enlisted at: Brisbane, Qld, on aged 18 years 3 months.

Next-of-kin was firstly father, William Rennie, Mount Larcom, Queensland then his wife HGJ Rennie, Marylebone, London, W1.

On enlistment he was 5 feet 5.5 inches and weighed 141 lbs. His chest measurement was 36-37.5 inches. His occupation was farmer. Unit embarked from Brisbane, Queensland, on board HMAT A26 *Armada* on 20 September 1915. He joined his Unit at Tel-el-Kebir on 11th January, 1916. On 15th March, 1916 Private Rennie proceeded from Alexandria to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 21st March 1916. Wounded in action near Albert, France 4 August 1916. He was in a charge when struck by a fragment of shrapnel. Taken to Boulogne Hospital. Remained there for a fortnight. Then transferred to England to Wandsworth

hospital. GSW to head/GSW to both eyes causing blindness. He was unfit for duty & was transferred to St. Dunstan's Hostel, Regent's Park, London, England\* on 7th September, 1916 to await final instructions. Married on 3 March 1918 to Harriet Gertrude Jane MAY. Daughter Joyce Agnes Louisa Rennie born in March quarter 1918. Discharged medically unfit 5 October 1918. He and his wife and daughter returned separately to Australia. They departed Sydney and returned to England via Canada. Arrived England 2 September 1920. Another daughter, Vera Jean Rennie born 21 October 1920 in London. Private John Rennie died England 9 December 1920 aged 23 years. Place of burial St Marylebone Cemetery (Plot 3, Row 14, Grave No. 126), Middlesex, England (now known as East Finchley Cemetery).

*\* St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blind Soldiers and Sailors: In 1914 St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blind Soldiers and Sailors was founded by Sir Arthur Pearson, author of Victory over Blindness. A year later it moved to a property in Regent's Park. The idea was to provide a hostel where ex-servicemen would go after they had received hospital treatment to 'learn to be blind'. The legacy of the war meant that in 1921 men were still waiting to be accommodated, with 57 men awaiting admission. By 1929 there were still two thousand men in their care. The intake included 103 colonial ex-servicemen who were trained during their time at St Dunstan's.*

*The emphasis of the organisation was training, which often involved varying forms of technology that enabled the men to utilise their skills. This included adapted typewriters and telephones, with standardised assessments to encourage employment. St Dunstan's often found itself in the papers and, as a more understood form of 'disability', attracted public sympathy.*

*(National Archives UK)*

File on JAG Rennie on Australian burials in East Finchley Cemetery: Compiled by Cathie Sedgwick 2021. Gives a full account of John Andrew Gibson Rennie's service.

[rennie\\_john\\_andrew\\_gibson.pdf \(weebly.com\)](#)

Service Record: [View digital copy \(naa.gov.au\)](#)

*Paulette Flint, 2024*