



Pte. Thomas Wilson Tassie



Played with Adelaide University



Football Club – 1919-1922

Intervarsity Football (1919-1921)

A Grade and Intervarsity Vice Captain - 1921

Blue – Football (1919)

Degree – MB BS (1924)

Background

Coinciding with the Centenary of Anzacs our incentive behind this series of biographical publications is the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Club's desire to honour our players who served in the Great War (1914 - 1918). These brave men put on hold their academic, professional and sporting careers for King and Country in the name of peace and freedom. The AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee is endeavouring to identify every one of our players who served and prepare life stories on all. This is to ensure their sacrifices and further contributions to society will be recognised by future generations.

On Anzac Day 2015, the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the Adelaide University Oval Pavilion and this was followed by the erection of a picket fence between the pavilion and the scoreboard with each picket bearing a plaque with the name of an AUFC/AUCC player who served.

The following documentation relates to the life of Thomas Wilson Tassie. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.

The AIF Project

<https://aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=294910>



Thomas Wilson TASSIE

Regimental number	55905
Place of birth	Adelaide South Australia
Religion	Presbyterian
Occupation	Student
Address	Kent Town, South Australia
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	18
Next of kin	Father, T Wilson Tassie, 66 King William Street, Kent Town, South Australia
Previous military service	78th Infantry
Enlistment date	22 April 1918
Rank on enlistment	Private
Unit name	General Reinforcements (2nd South Australian)
AWM Embarkation Roll number	23/111/4
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Sydney, New South Wales, on board RMS <i>Orontes</i> on 5 June 1918
Rank from Nominal Roll	Private
Unit from Nominal Roll	12th Field Ambulance
Fate	Returned to Australia 31 March 1919

Service Record

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8098516>

No. 321
A 126723

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. SS905 Name { Surname TASSIE.
in full { Christian Name THOMAS WILSON.
Unit 2nd RFLB "5th" UK
Joined on 22 APR 1918

COMMONWEALTH
EXAMINED
OFFICE

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.
You are hereby warned that if after enlistment it is found that you have given a wilfully false answer to any question set forth in this Attestation Paper, you will be liable to be tried for the offence.

- What is your Name? Thomas Wilson Tassie
- In or near what Town were you born? Adelaide
In the State or Country of SOUTH AUSTRALIA
- Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) Natural Born
- What is your Age? (Date of birth to be stated) 18 1/2 years born Adelaide 13 August, 1899.
- What is your Trade or Calling? Student
- Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, when, to whom, and for what period? No.
- Are you married, single, or widower? Single
- Who is your next of kin? (Address and relationship to be stated)
The answer to this question shall not be construed as in the nature of a Will.
FATHER, TASSIE, THOMAS, WILSON.
66, KING, WILLIAM, ST.
KENT, TOWN.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
- What is your permanent address in Australia? 66, KING, WILLIAM, ST.
KENT, TOWN.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.
- Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge. 4 years Senior Indents & Citizens.
- Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Yes.
- Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? No.
- (If married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)—
Do you undertake that no separation allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach ten shillings per day? No.
- Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and malarial fever? Yes.

12a. (i.) Consumption or Tubercular Disease, or Chronic Cough? No.
(ii.) Fits of any kind? No.
(iii.) Rheumatism or Arteritis? No.
(iv.) Mental or Nervous Disease? No.
(v.) Has any member of your family suffered from any of the above diseases? If so, state particulars. No.

3. Thomas Wilson Tassie do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allow not less than three-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service the support of my wife & children

Date 22 APR 1918 Signature of Person Enlisted. J. H. Tassie

* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.
† Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted.

Biography

Early Life

Thomas Wilson Tassie was born on the 13th of August 1899, at Kent Town, SA, the son of Thomas Wilson Tassie and Jemima Reid Wilson. His siblings were Robert Wilson (b1887), Leslie Gemmel (b1890) and Jean Reid (b1893). His father worked for Messrs. W. Storrie & Co of Rundle Street, Adelaide.

Schooling

Thomas commenced at Prince Alfred College in 1913 and he passed his Primary Examinations that year. He passed his Junior Examinations in 1914, Senior Examinations in 1915 and Higher Public Examinations in 1917. In March 1918 Thomas passed the Special Examinations for those intending to study medicine.

Thomas competed in College and Inter-Collegiate Sports from 1914-17. He was second in the 100 yards flat and 440 yards flat at the Inter-Collegiate Sports in 1915 and won the 100 yards flat and was second in the 220yards flat in 1916. In 1917 he won the 220 yards flat and was second in the 440 yards flat.

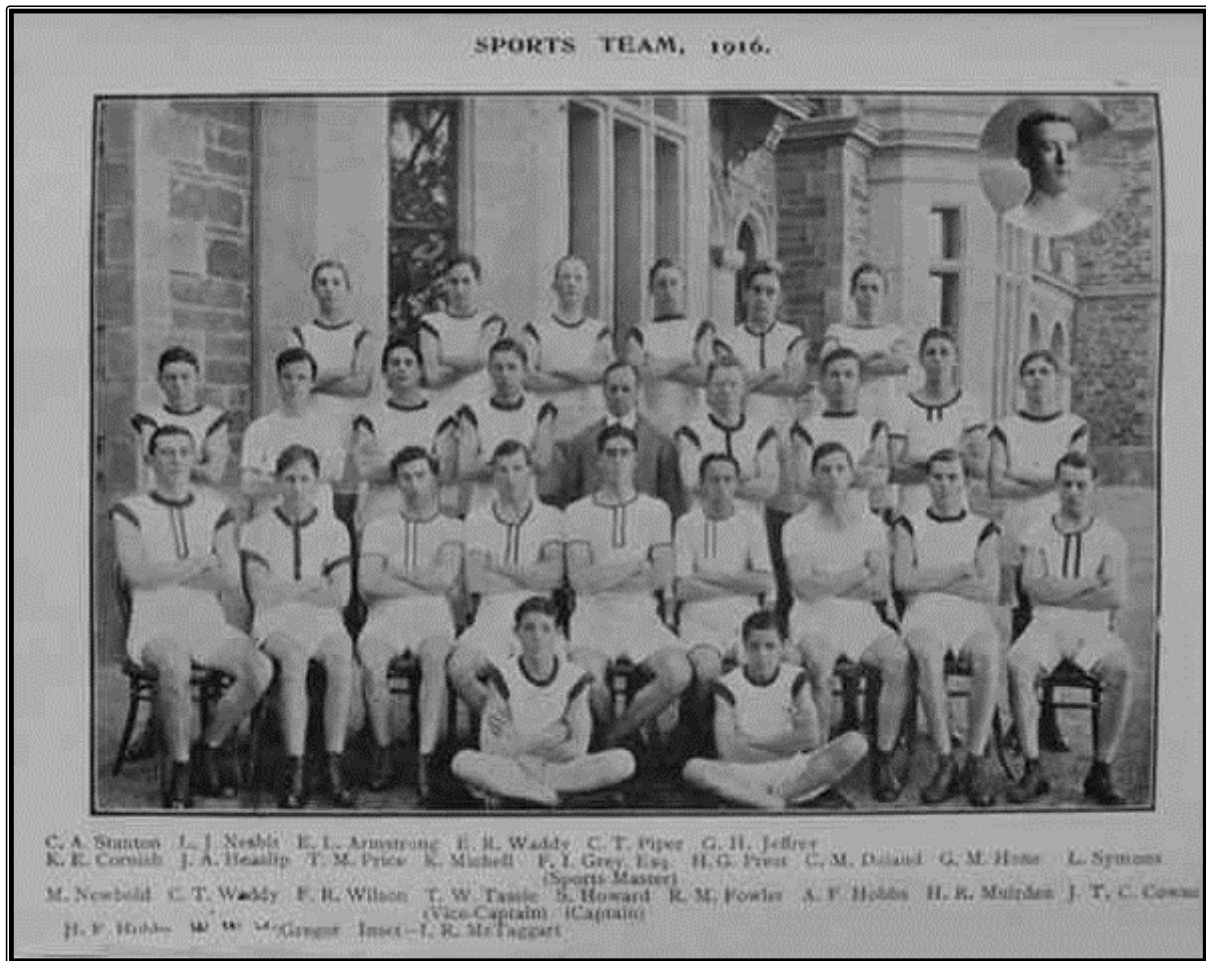
Thomas played Inter-Collegiate Football for PAC in 1915-17.

PAC – Intercollegiate Sports Team 1915



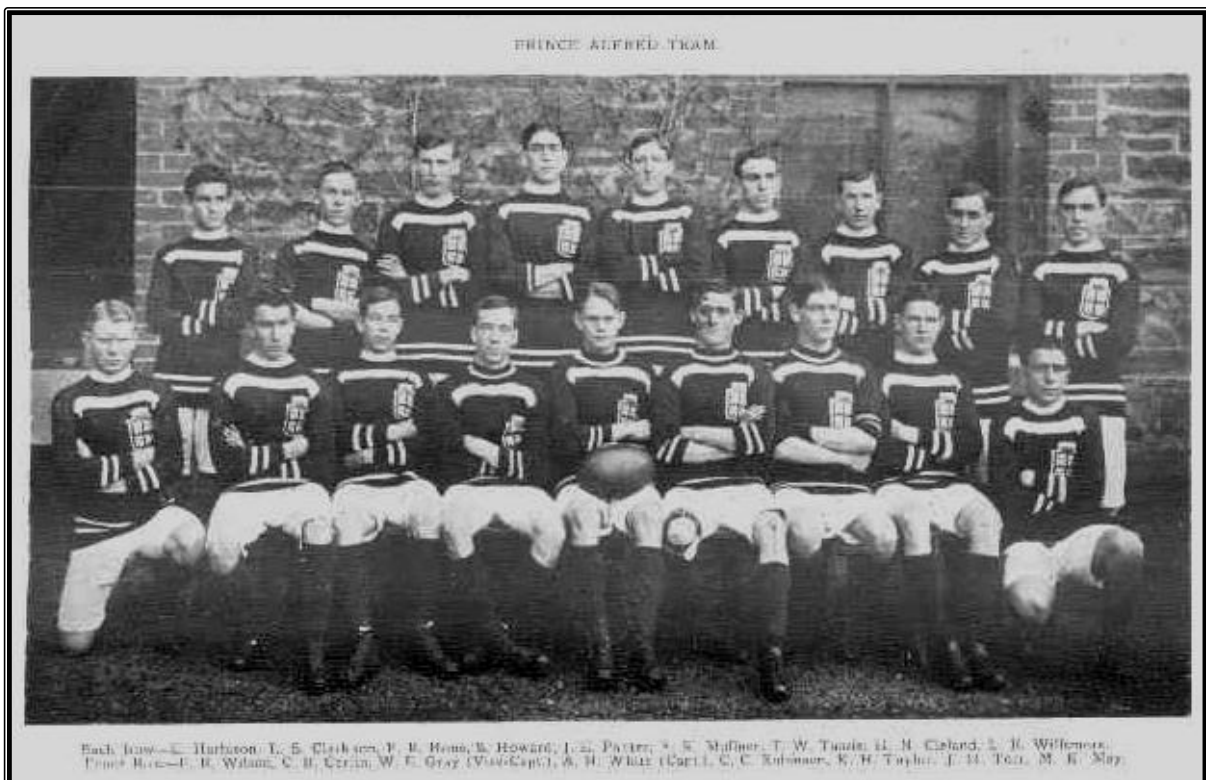
T.W. Tassie – Seated (far right)

PAC – Intercollegiate Sports Team 1916



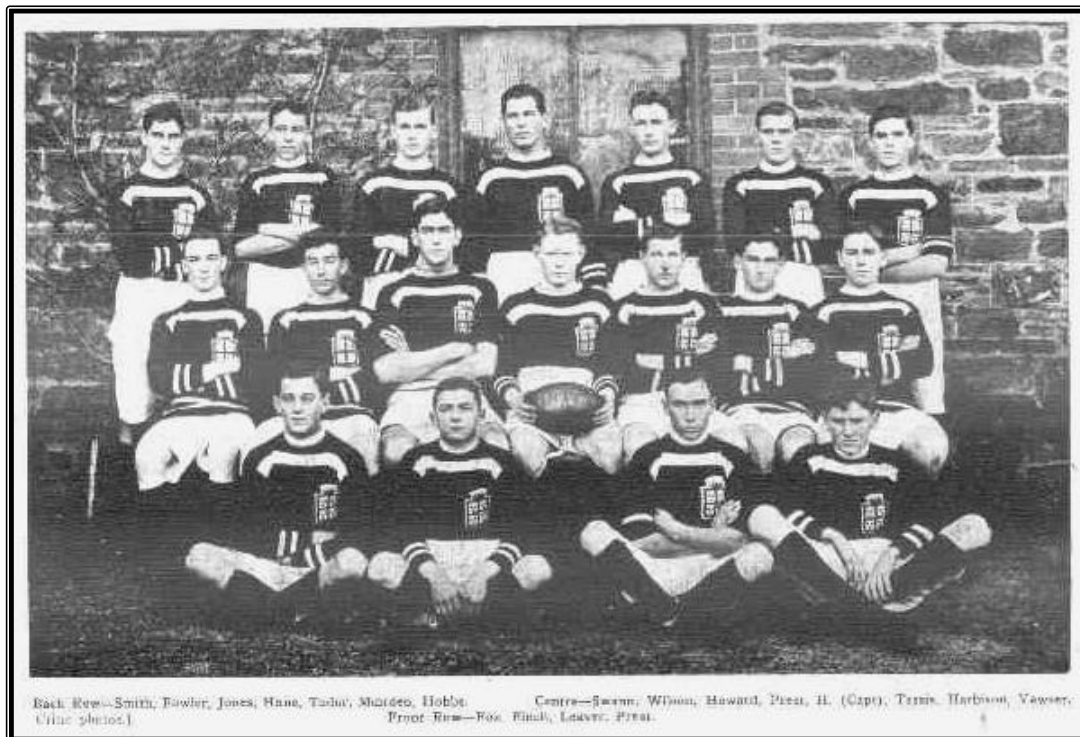
T.W. Tassie – Seated (4th from left)

PAC – Intercollegiate Football Team 1915



T.W. Tassie Back Row (3rd from Right)

PAC – Intercollegiate Football Team 1916



T.W. Tassie – Seated (3rd from right)

World War I

Thomas enlisted on the 22nd of April 1918, he was 18 years and 8 months old and his father, Thomas Wilson Tassie (Senior) of 66 King William Street, Kent Town was listed as his next-of-kin. Thomas was a Private in the 1st to 6th (SA) Reinforcements with Service Number 55905. He had been a Cadet for four years and in the Citizens Forces (78th Infantry). Thomas was 5'9¼", 150 lbs, with a medium complexion, blue eyes and dark brown hair.

Thomas embarked for active service on the 5th of June 1918, onboard the *HMAT Orontes* and disembarked at Liverpool on the 11th of August 1918. He was allotted to the 43rd Battalion while in training at Fovant, Wiltshire, UK. On the 23rd of September 1918, Thomas was transferred to the Australian Army Medical Corps Details and on the 4th of October 1918, he proceeded overseas to France via Southampton. He was then transferred to the 12th Field Ambulance on the 10th of October 1918.

Thomas returned to England for non-military employment on the 16th of March 1919 and he returned to Australia via the *HMAT Khyber* from Liverpool departing on the 31st of March 1919 and arriving in Adelaide on the 9th of May 1919. Thomas was discharged on the 7th of June 1919.

Thomas's brother Major Leslie Gemmel Tassie, A.A.M.C. also served in WWI. When Leslie enlisted, he was a doctor at Port Pirie and during his service was awarded the D.S.O.

Adelaide University

After WWI, Thomas commenced studying medicine at Adelaide University. His elder siblings had all studied at Adelaide University, Robert Wilson Tassie was awarded a BSc in 1907 which he surrendered for BE in 1918, Leslie Gemmel Tassie gained his MB BS in 1912 and Jean Reid Tassie gained her BA in 1914. Thomas Wilson Tassie was awarded his MB BS 1924.

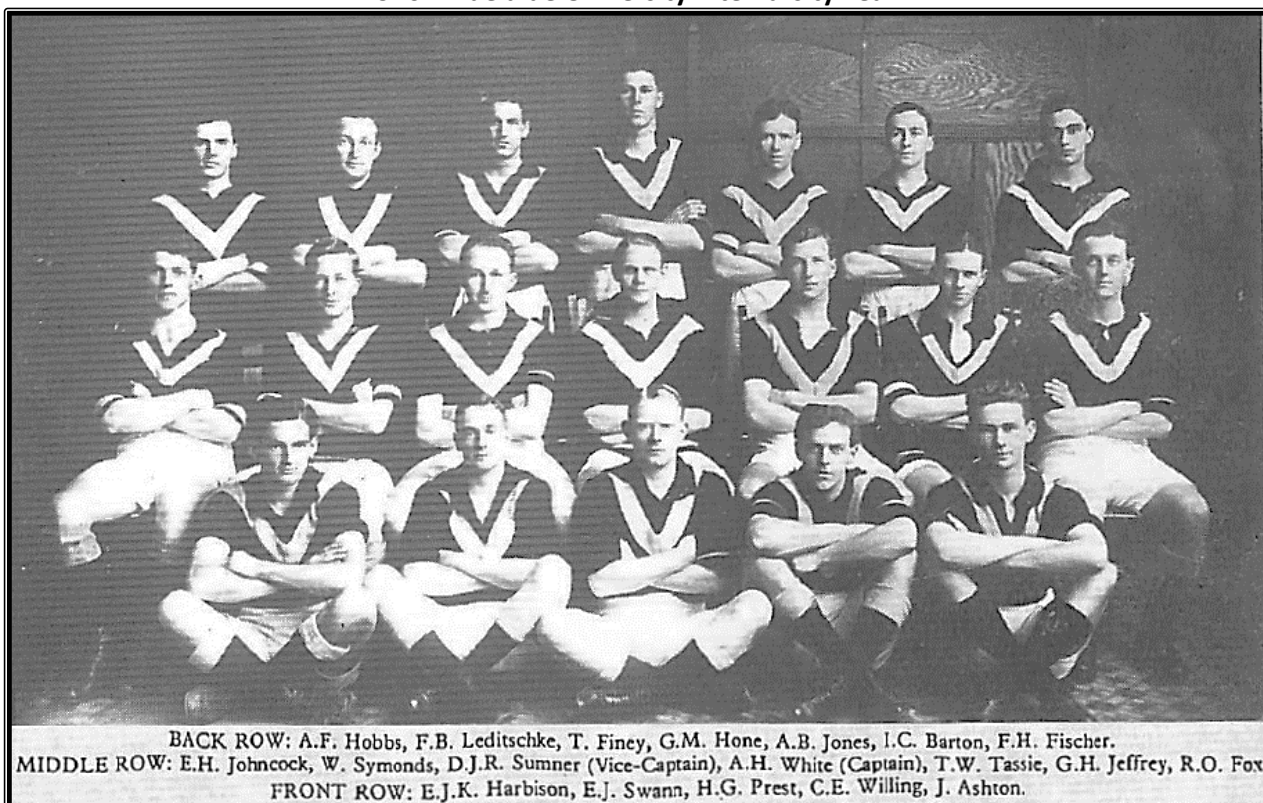
University Sport

Football

Thomas played A Grade football for the Adelaide University Football Club from 1919-1922 and represented the University at Intervarsity matches from 1919-1921. Thomas was a ruckman and follower and was frequently named

in the top goal kickers and best players. He was Vice-Captain of the 1921 A Grade and the Intervarsity teams and was the best player for the Adelaide team in the Intervarsity match that year, scoring three of the teams eight goals. During his time at University Thomas also played in the Old Reds v Old Blues match in 1922.

1920 – Adelaide University Intervarsity Team



T.W. Tassie – Middle Row (3rd from right)

1921 – Adelaide University – A Grade Team

1921 A TEAM



Back Row: _____, J. Ashton, D.K. McKenzie, W. Hutton (Coach), C.K. Haskard, O.L. Ziegler, F.H. Fischer
Middle Row: W.M.C. Symonds, I.C. Barton, T.W. Tassie (Vice Captain), H.G. Prest (Captain), R.O. Fox, G.M. Hone, A.L. Davi
Front Row: T.A. Farrent, C.E. Willing, A.S. deb. Cocks, D.J.R. Sumner, E.J. Swann

T.W. Tassie – Middle Row (3rd from left)

Athletics

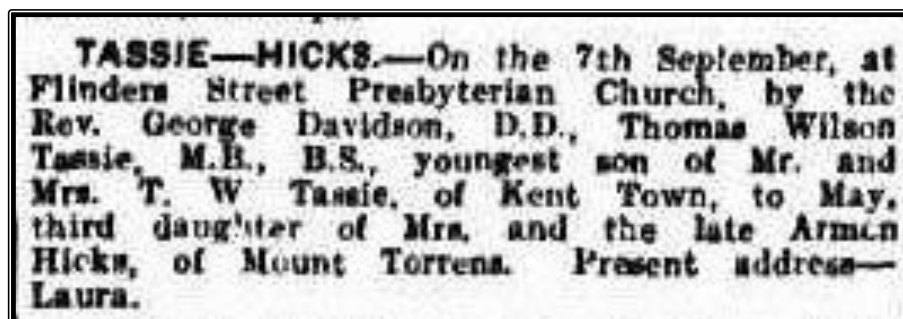
Thomas joined the Adelaide University Athletic Club in 1919 and in August 1919 he was appointed the club's delegate to the SA Amateur Athletics Association council. Thomas was a consistent performer at the first University Sports held in the post war period (1920), he was on the committee to organise the 1921 sports and in 1922 he assisted in the preparatory work for the sports.



Career and Family Life

Thomas became a registered medical practitioner on the 18th of December 1924 and after 12 months at the Adelaide Hospital he took over the practice of Dr H.W. Broadbent at Laura, Wirrabara and Appila, SA. He was appointed Health Officer for Laura in January 1926.

On the 7th of September 1926, Thomas married Eliza May (May) Hicks.



By 1928 Thomas was Vice President of the Laura Tennis Club, but in February 1928, Thomas had to go to the city to undergo an operation for appendicitis.

He became the Honorary Surgeon to the Great Northern Athletic Club from at least January 1929 and in May 1929, Thomas became a member of the committee to supervise the erection of a cottage hospital for Laura and district.



By May 1930, Thomas was President of the Laura Golf Club. He was also actively involved with the Laura Returned Soldiers' Club and won the table tennis tournament at the opening of the clubrooms in September 1933.

Thomas and May (Eliza May) had a son Gemmel Wilson Tassie (born 19th of August 1930) and a daughter Judith Anne Tassie (born 3rd of July 1933).

In 1934, Thomas was the secretary of the Laura branch of the RSL and was involved in the organisation of the annual ANZAC Day commemorations.

In July 1935, Thomas was lucky to escape serious injury in a car accident.



Thomas also held the role of Honorary Surgeon to the Laura Jockey Club from at least 1936.

Sadly, Thomas's father, Thomas Wilson Tassie (Senior) passed away at his residence at 14 Dulwich Avenue, Dulwich, aged 75 years. He left an estate, valued for probate at £2,688.

In December 1936, Thomas played in a cricket match, representing S.J. Condon's North Laura Hotel team and scoring 28 runs.

The foundation stone for the Laura Hospital was laid in November 1937 and the hospital was opened in April 1938.

November 1937 – Laying of the Foundation Stone – Laura Hospital



T.W. Tassie – Front Row (on Left)

Thomas and May's son, Gemmel Wilson Tassie, was in Grade II at Laura in 1937 and daughter Judith Anne Tassie was at school from at least 1939. The family were living at Mill Street, Laura (per the Electoral Rolls of 1939, 1941 and 1943).

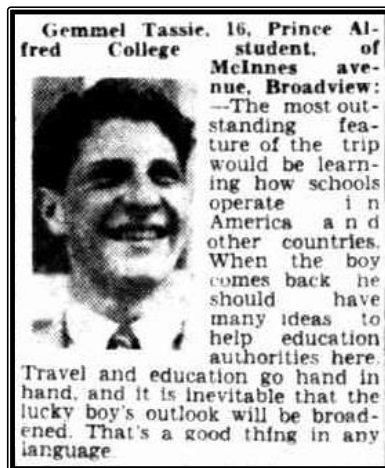
At the outbreak of World War II, Thomas was appointed an honorary captain in the Medical Corps. The Tassie children spent three weeks on vacation with their nurse at the Hotel Brighton in January 1940. Gemmel W. Tassie was awarded a Qualifying Certificate exhibition at Laura Public School in January 1943 and a bursary to attend Prince Alfred College.

A newspaper report in March 1944, stated that Thomas had a metal matchbox made from a piece of Richthofen's plane (Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen (2 May 1892 – 21 April 1918), also known as the "Red Barron", was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I and was the ace-of-aces of WWI).

In May 1946, Thomas sold his furniture and effects at Laura and sold his practices at Laura and Gladstone and the family moved to McInnes Avenue, Broadview.

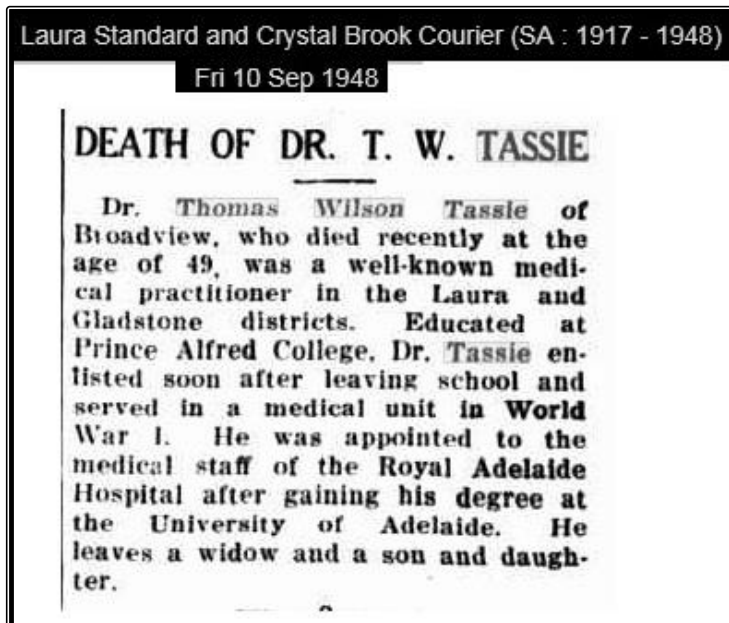
Dr. T. W. and Mrs. Tassie left Laura last week, after a residence in the town of about 20 years. They were well liked and will be missed by a large circle of friends. Prior to their departure, the Dr. was given a Smoke Social at the North Laura Hotel, and was tendered a farewell by the R.S.L., he having served in World War I. Dr. Murray has taken over the practice at Laura.

In December 1947, Thomas and May's son Gemmel travelled to the USA.



Death

Tragically for the Tassie family, Thomas died on the 1st of September 1948, aged 49. It was believed that he had taken an overdose of tablets. He was buried privately at the AIF Cemetery at West Terrace.



Legacy

Both of Thomas and May's children attended Adelaide University and studied medicine. In June 1950, Judith won the Miss University competition. Gemmel qualified MB BS in 1955 and Judith in 1957.



While at Adelaide University Judith was actively involved in basketball and played in the Inter-Varsity contests in 1935 (Hobart), 1936 (Melbourne) and 1937 (Adelaide). Judith Anne Tassie died in 2005.

Gemmel Wilson Tassie was in practice at Gawler, SA from at least 1961-1966. He passed away on the 27th of December 2009, aged 79 years and is buried at Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide.



Inter Varsity Women's Basketball 1937

L.to R: J.Young, M.Richardson, M.Crook, L.Hannan, H.Ferres, J.Hayter, J.Tassie, A.Rix(capt).

Held in Adelaide, won by Melbourne.

Series 524 Sports Association Members and Intervarsity Team Photographs

Profilers Note:- Thomas Wilson Tassie left Australia on the 5th of June 1918 onboard the H.M.A.T. "Orontes" and disembarked at Liverpool on the 11th of August 1918. Also, onboard that ship was Pte. Stanley Digory Isbel Jago (SN 51883), the maternal grandfather of E.E. (Beth) Filmer and Janne L. Filmer (Adelaide University Football Club Historians).

Sources and Acknowledgements:

The AIF Project <https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/>
RSL Virtual War Memorial <https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/>
<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/228496>
The National Archives of Australia <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>
Australian War Memorial <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/>
The Adelaide University <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/records/archives/>
The National Library of Australia <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>
(Trove Newspaper articles tagged – Dr Thomas Wilson Tassie)
SA Genealogy <https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/online-databases.html>
Ancestry.com.au
<https://www.centennialpark.org/>
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gawler_history/sets/72157664344041591/
Rob O'Shannassy AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee Historian