

Naours Silent Soldier Profile

MATHEWSON, John Trevallon called

“Jack “

Enlistment Number 3229



Source: Qld State Library

Name: John Trevallon Mathewson
Service Number: 3229
Rank: Private
Occupation: Photographer

Place of Enlistment : Brisbane
Enlistment: 30th August 1916
Marital Status: Single
Age at Embarkation: 25
Place of Birth: Brisbane Queensland
Family Information Sister. Ms Jane Mathewson,
Auchenflower Brisbane

Enlisted with: 41st Battalion 7th
Reinforcements

Date of embarkation: 7th February 1917
Place of embarkation: Sydney
Ship embarked on: HMAT A 18 Wiltshire
Ship returned on :
Other details:
Military Career: Royal Australian Flying Corps,
3rd Squadron.

Fate: Returned on 6th May 1919

Miscellaneous:

Known as Jack.
With soldiers near Corbie on the day the Red Baron was shot down.
Father was a photographer in Brisbane.
Studied Theology and became a missionary in China.
Wrote articles about his life in China called, The diary of Jack Mathewson.
Was thought to be assassinated in Tibet
Returned to Brisbane in 1928.
Married in September 1928.
Lived near Melbourne and returned to Brisbane
Died April 17th 1974
Daughter and grand-daughter now professional photographers

Biographie.

Gilles Prilaux

John Trevallon Mathewson, surnommé Jack, était le ls de Thomas Mathewson qui est aujourd'hui considéré comme le « Père de la photographie dans le Queensland ». Il ouvrira de nombreux studios de photographie et sa société portera respectivement les noms de « *Mathewson Artiste photographique, Mathewson & Co., et Thos Mathewson & Co* ». Jack, a ainsi travaillé dans l'atelier de son père vers 1910 , jusqu'à son enrôlement le 30 Août 1916 dans le 3^{ème} escadron de l'*Australian Flying Corps* pendant la Première Guerre mondiale (comme mécanicien mais aussi comme photographe). Il servira ensuite en France et au Royaume-Uni de 1916 à 1920. Tout prédestinait Jack à poursuivre l'œuvre de son père mais il en décidera autrement. En effet, après la guerre, il reprend pendant quelques temps son travail dans le studio familial avant de s'inscrire en théologie à l'Institut biblique de Melbourne en 1922. Il travaillera comme missionnaire en Chine. Il sera déclaré mort assassiné près de la frontière tibétaine en 1927, puis quelques temps plus tard la famille sera avertie qu'il était toujours en vie. Il rentrera à Brisbane en 1928 et épousera Leila Davis le 20 Septembre 1928. Ils ont vécu près de Melbourne, puis de nouveau à Brisbane. Jack mourra le 17 Avril 1974.

J. T. MATHEWSON
BRISBANE

The Story of John Mathewson

John Trevallon Mathewson, nicknamed Jack, was the son of Thomas Mathewson who is now considered the "Father of photography in Queensland." It had many photography studios and bore the names of "Mathewson photographic artist & Co. Mathewson, and Thos Mathewson & Co". Jack worked in the studio of his father in 1910, until his enlistment on August 30, 1916 into the 3rd Squadron of the Australian Flying Corps. During the First World War Jack was a mechanic and also a photographer. He served time in France and the United Kingdom from 1916 to 1920. Although it was believed that Jack was predestined to continue the work of his father as a photographer, he decided otherwise. After the war, he resumed his work for a while in the home studio before enrolling in theology at the Melbourne Bible Institute in 1922. He then worked as a missionary in China. It was believed that he was assassinated near the Tibetan border in 1927, but sometime later the family was informed that he was still alive.

He returned to Brisbane in 1928 and married Leila Davis on September 20, 1928. They lived near Melbourne, then went back to Brisbane. Jack died on April 17, 1974.



Jack Alexander (Left), Jack Mathewson (Centre), and Harold Edwards (Right), 3 AFC.
[from Harold Edwards' photo collection]



Source: The Queenslander.

Source; National Archives Australia.

Jack's unusual middle name is believed to come from the name of a home in which the family lived. This house was opposite the home of the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane "Bishopbourne."

When Jack returned from the war, he worked in the family's Brisbane Regent photographic studio for a short time before he embarked on his missionary calling. The love of photography certainly ran in the family. In 1922, the Regent Studios were sold to two of Thomas Mathewson's staff whom he had trained, Cooper and Gillespie. Jack's uncle Peter also had a photographic studio in Brisbane called Austral Studios. It was eventually run by Peter's sons. Thomas' (Jack's Father) three daughters were trained in photography too but as was the custom in those days, once they married, they could no longer work. It is pleasing to say that nowadays, Jack's grand-daughter Dani and daughter-in-law Sharyn are following in Thomas' Mathewson's footsteps as professional photographers.

When it was believed that Jack had been killed near the border of China and Tibet, an actual memorial service was held in Brisbane for him.

When Jack married Leila Davis in 1928, this wonderful article was written in the Qld Courier.

THE SOCIAL SPHERE.

WEDDINGS.

MATHEWSON-DAVIS.

A wedding which created much interest last evening was celebrated at the Albert-street Methodist church, the bridegroom being Mr. Jack Trevallon Mathewson (youngest son of Mr. Thomas Mathewson and the late Mrs. Mathewson, Auchenflower), and the bride being Miss Leila Gwendolyn Davis (second daughter of the late Mr. W. H. Davis and of Mrs. Davis, Toombul). Much interest has been centred round the bridegroom, as some-time ago when conditions in China made it impossible to carry on his missionary work there, he set out with others to traverse the Forbidden Land, and later was reported dead. However, he is now home again, and recovering his health and strength. The church had been prettily decorated by the bride's friends with arum lilies and Iceland poppies. The bridal pair stood beneath an arch of greenery from which was suspended a floral wedding bell. Rev. Henry Gainford, assisted by the Rev. W. L. Slater, officiated, and Mr. R. J. Archibald presided at the organ. A special service was printed for the occasion, and both the Milton Congregational Choir and the Nundah Methodist Choir were in the choir stalls. During the signing of the register, Miss Gladys Wasley rendered avocal solo, with a violin accompaniment, played by Miss Edith Larwill.

The bride, who was given away by her brother (Mr. W. M. Davis), chose a gown of ivory crepe de Chine, made with a cross-over bodice and a skirt draped to tone side finished with embroidered panels. She also wore an embroidered net veil in cap effect with a wreath of orange blossoms, and carried a bouquet of eucharist lilies, gerberas, and white sweet peas set in white tulle and tied with ribbon streamers. Miss Annis Mathewson, who attended as bridesmaid, chose a frock of pale pink tulle fashioned with a plain bodice and a full skirt, finished at the waist with a tulle sash. She also wore a large tulle hat, turned off the face, and her Early Victorian posy was of pink rosebuds. The duties of best man were carried out by Mr. Joseph Cribb. The bride's mother wore a black beaded mariette frock, and a black straw hat, trimmed with purple flowers. Her posy of cinerarias and sweet peas was tied with purple ribbons. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Mathewson left for their honeymoon, which will be spent at Spring Bluff. On leaving for the honeymoon the bride wore travelling frock of saxe blue silk crepe, with a cinnamon silk coat and a champagne straw hat, finished with blue flowers. Incidentally it might be mentioned that the "Courier" has acquired the exclusive rights of publication in Queensland of Mr. Mathewson's articles describing his terrible experiences in China and Thibet, and his eventful journeyings and escapes from death.

(Brisbane Courier (Qld: 1864-1933) Fri 21 Sep 1928 Page 20. In the Social Sphere.)

Jack released his missionary stories in a diary format to the public. It was written during his 13 month adventure through China, Tibet and India. It tells of the dangerous and close death experiences Jack endured during his time in this part of the world. It is called, Diary of Jack Mathewson, 1927.

Sources;

1. <http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/ww1/2013/11/11/qld-faces-of-wwi-jack-mathewson/>
2. <http://www.3squadron.org.au/subpages/edwardsstory.htm>
3. <http://www.3squadron.org.au/subpages/edwardsstory>.
4. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/204706667?q&versionId=224702901>
5. <http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/330387>
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