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Bro. DOUGLAS WILLIAM FOSTER

Doug Foster of Pymble was just sixteen when he went to war in North America. As the youngest serving soldier in the World War 2 Tobruk campaign his mates christened him, "The Baby of Tobruk."

Doug died in September 2006 aged 82 years. He was the last soldier left of six who charged the German lines with John Edmonson during the Easter Battle of Tobruk on the night of April 13, 1941.

In a 2001 interview with the North Shore Times on the 60th anniversary of the battle, Doug vividly recalled the events of that night.

"In the middle of the night, black as anything about 40 or 50 Germans broke through the wire near our post," he said. "It was decided we would do a bayonet charge on them and get them back out through the wire."

A party of seven, including Private Foster and Corporal John (Jack) Edmonson, took part in the charge to defend Tobruk from the German attacks. Corporal Edmonson was wounded by machine gun fire but continued to advance under heavy fire to assist Lieutenant Austin Mackell.

"Jack had half his back blown out by a bullet but he still managed to save Mackell's life," Doug said, tears welling in his eyes. "Teddy Smith and I carried Jack out but we couldn't get him out of the pit. They were blasting Hell out of us." Corporal Edmonson died from his wounds and was posthumously awarded the Australia's first Victoria Cross of World War 2.

"I reckon I had the worst job in the war," Doug said. "I brought his personal gear home for his mother and father and he was their only son."

Doug was a fitter and turner after the war.

With acknowledgment to the North Shore Times.

Douglas FOSTER was initiated in Lodge Naremburn No 809 UGL of NSW on 18th August 1950, passed and raised on 30th November 1950 and 20th January 1951 respectively. He called off that lodge on 20th April 1956 after being a foundation member of Lodge West Pymble, No 889 on 20th August 1955. Following consolidation of lodges Doug was a member of Lodge French's Forest United, No 927 at the time of his death.



Doug Foster (above) and (far left) with his platoon. Corp John Edmondson VC is far right of main photo.