

ERNEST QUARLESS

A boy soldier

Lying about his age

Ernest Quarless was one of the many 'boy soldiers' who lied about their ages and joined up during the First World War. He was born in Liverpool in 1905 to a couple from Barbados and Jamaica. Somehow, Ernest managed to join the British West Indies Regiment in July 1917 when he was just 11 years and 9 months of age at the time of his enlistment. He even managed to be issued with the war medal and the victory medal when the war finished.

After the war

He later went on to serve in the Second World War and lived to a ripe old age, marrying twice.

[The youngest soldier proven to have served on the Western Front was Edward Barnett, a 13 year old lad from Salford. He enlisted in the 7th Manchester regiment in May 1915 but a week later his age was discovered and he was discharged. The very next day he managed to sign himself up with the 19th Manchester's. He lasted four months at the Western Front before his real age was discovered again, and he was sent home.]



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