



When Our Jack Went to War

Sandy McKay

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A powerful and moving YA story about two brothers, one of whom goes off to fight in World War

One. It's 1917 and Jack enlists. And although 13-year-old Tom is envious of his elder brother, he soon changes his mind as the reality of war becomes more apparent. We follow Jack's story through his letters home and through the eyes of his younger brother. Tom writes about life at home in New Zealand: living with Mum and their young sister, Amy, learning to hunt with his uncle, getting a puppy and learning to knit for the war effort. Jack writes of his first-hand experience in Trentham, the troop ship, Britain, France, the Battle of Messines and finally, Passchendaele. Sadly the story ends with Jack being killed at Passchendaele along with hundreds of other Kiwis. (Of the 180 soldiers in the 2nd Otago Division, 148 lost their lives in one day in New Zealand's worst ever military disaster.) *When Our Jack Went to War* is a fictional account of a real life tragedy, based on the author's research into the death of her own great uncle, who died in 1917. The NZ Post Award-winning Sandy McKay ably conveys how war affects everyone - it's a superb meditation on war and its devastating effect on soldiers and their families.



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