

**Tidworth Military Cemetery,
Tidworth, Wiltshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



20255 SAPPER

R. J. HAMPTON

AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

6TH MARCH, 1918 Age 21

Gone But Not Forgotten

Robert John HAMPTON

Robert John Hampton was born at Dungog, NSW in 1896 to parents Henry James & Mary Ann Hampton (nee Guiren).

Mary Ann Hampton, mother of Robert John Hampton, died on 4th May, 1900 at Dungog, NSW.

Robert John Hampton was a 21 year old, single, Bus Driver from Dungog, NSW when he enlisted on 5th June, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 20255 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his brother – James Hampton, Dungog, NSW. Robert Hampton stated on his Attestation Papers that he had been an apprentice Engineer for 2 years with Post & Telegraph Dept, Newcastle, NSW.

According to information supplied by his father for the Roll of Honour – Robert John Hampton was chiefly connected to the town of Girvan, in the district of Stroud, NSW. He listed his Postal address as Girvan P.O., via Maitland, NSW on the “*Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force*” form.

Private Robert John Hampton was posted to Show Ground Camp, Sydney, NSW on 2nd July, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to Engineer Reinforcements on 5th July, 1917 as Sapper. Sapper Hampton was transferred to No. 2 Equstation (?) School at Roseville, NSW on 8th September, 1917. He was transferred to Engineer Reinforcements on 3rd November, 1917.

Marked across the top of the Attestation Paper – Page 1 of Robert John Hampton’s Service Record file – in red is “*Has had Final Leave from 28.10.17 to 31.10.17.*”

Sapper Robert John Hampton entrained from Sydney on 18th November, 1917 & embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Nestor (A71)* on 21st November, 1917 with the Field Companies Engineers – September, 1917 Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez on 15th December, 1917. Sapper Hampton was sent sick to Hospital on 23rd December, 1917. He was admitted to Government Hospital, Suez on 23rd December, 1917 with Pyrexia (Fever of unknown origin). Sapper Hampton was discharged t duty on 14th January, 1918 & was taken on strength of Miscellaneous Details, Australian Camp, Suez on 14th January, 1918.

Australian Engineers in the First World War

Engineers, also known as sappers, were essential to the running of the war. Without them, other branches of the Allied Forces would have found it difficult to cross the muddy and shell-ravaged ground of the Western Front. Their responsibilities included constructing the lines of defence, temporary bridges, tunnels and trenches, observation posts, roads, railways, communication lines, buildings of all kinds, showers and bathing facilities, and other material and mechanical solutions to the problems associated with fighting in all theatres.

(Description of Engineers Information from The Australian War Memorial)

Sapper Robert John Hampton was transferred to Alexandria on 22nd January, 1918 for embarkation overseas. He embarked from Alexandria on 29th January, 1918 on H.M.T. *Abbasiah* & disembarked at Taranto, Italy. Sapper Hampton later disembarked at Southampton, England on 16th February, 1918.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Sapper Robert John Hampton was marched in to Details No. 3 Camp at Parkhouse, Wiltshire, England on 16th February, 1918 from Australia.

Sapper Robert John Hampton was sent sick to Delhi Hospital on 25th February, 1918 from No. 3 Details Camp. He was admitted to Hospital at Tidworth with Pleurisy the same day.

Sapper Robert John Hampton died at 5.50 pm on 6th March, 1918 at Military Hospital, Tidworth, Wiltshire, England from Broncho Pneumonia. A Telegram from C. O. No. 3 Camp, Parkhouse to Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F., London, was sent to advise of Sapper Hampton’s death. The place of death was listed as “*Delhi Hospital.*”

A death for Robert J. Hampton, aged 21, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Andover, Hampshire, England.

Sapper Robert John Hampton was buried on 9th March, 1918 in Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire, England – Plot number C. 253 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Sapper Robert John Hampton – *Contract coffin of Elm with brass fittings. He was buried with full Military Honours. The Firing Party and Pallbearers consisted of his comrades and a great number also followed the cortege to the graveside as evidence of the esteem in which he was held.*

Mr J. Hampton, Dungog, NSW, the registered next-of-kin of Sapper Robert John Hampton, was advised by Base Records on 8th March, 1918 that Sapper R. J. Hampton had been admitted to the Tidworth Military Hospital, England on 25th February, 1918 suffering from pleurisy.

Sapper Robert John Hampton, stated that his Will was lodged with Charles Thos Hampton, Victoria St. Kurri Kurri, NSW.

Mr H. J. Hampton, Dungog, NSW wrote to Base Records on 20th March, 1918 asking for any particulars on how his son *“made his Will in favour of & who has been drawing his pay. I received word yesterday of his Death in Hospital in England on the 6th of this month. I would be very thankful if you can give me any particulars.”*

Base Records replied to Mr H. J. Hampton, Dungog, on 26th March, 1918 to state that the only information regarding his son *“was that contained in the cable message – “Died, 6-3-18, Broncho Pneumonia, at Tidworth Military Hospital.” Later official advice coming to hand by mail will, it is anticipated, give further particulars, and these, on receipt will be promptly transmitted to next-of-kin, show as brother, Mr J, Hampton, and will be available to you on application at a later date.”*

Mrs Mary Brooker, c/- G. A. Brooker, Lord Street, Dungog, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 27th March, 1918: *“I am writing to ask you if you can get me my brother’s death Certificate No. 20255 Sapper R. J. Hampton, September Reinforcements Field Coy Engineers AIF. Abroad. Also any parcels that come to hand to please send them to my address as my brother made everything in his Will to me. I received the Will yesterday.”*

Mrs Mary Brooker, Lord Street, Dungog, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 28th April, 1918 asking *“can you inform me where I have to apply to for the Amount of Deffered Pay due to the above deceased. Also asking you to forward personal effects of deceased soldier. Also Death Certificate.”*

Base Records replied to Mrs M. Brooker on 3rd May, 1918 stating that *“all military financial matters, will in this instance, be dealt with by the District Paymaster, Victoria Barracks, Paddington, Sydney, NSW, and in order to prevent unnecessary delay, any further enquiries should be address direct to that Officer.*

Sufficient time has not yet elapsed for his personal effects to have filtered through the usual channels between France and Australia, but any coming to hand will be promptly forwarded either to next-of-kin, or in accordance with other testamentary instructions.

A certificate of report of death will be despatched to you on receipt of necessary official confirming documents from abroad.

As you hold the Will of this soldier it is requested you forward same, or Probate when granted to this Office for notation, when it will be passed to the District Paymaster for similar action, and return to you, so that his military affairs may be dealt with according to his testamentary instructions.”

Mrs Mary Brooker, Lord Street, Dungog, NSW, wrote to Base Records on 30th May, 1918 stating she had received the death certificate & wanted *“to know if any of my brother’s personal effects come to hand yet No 20255 Sapper R. J. Hampton September Reinforcements Field Company Engineers Australian Imperial Force. As you said in your last letter this would be forwarded to either or next of kin or to any other instructions. But I think that as my Brother left all is personal effect to me I think that I am the one that everything should be sent to. Trusting you will send same to my address when they arrive.”*

Base Records replied to Mrs M. Brooker on 6th June, 1918 stating that no personal effects of the late Sapper R. J. Hampton had been returned from abroad. The letter went on to say *“As you state you have your brother’s Will I should be obliged if you would forward it, or Probate if taken out, in order that his wishes may be complied with in the event of effects coming to hand. It will also be necessary to produce the Will, or Probate, to the District Paymaster, Victoria Barracks, Paddington, New South Wales, for necessary action.”*

Mrs M. Brooker wrote to Base Records again in July, 1918 asking if her brother’s personal effects had arrived from abroad *“as I have been waiting to here of them I have the paper with Probate in. If you should want me to send paper with it in will you please let me know.”*

The personal effects of the late Sapper Robert John Hampton were sent from England per *Barunga* on 20th June, 1918 & sent to Mr James Hampton, Dungog, New South Wales who was named as the next of kin by Robert John Hampton on enlistment.

Base Records contacted Mr J. Hampton, Dungog, NSW in June, 1921 stating that he was registered on the records of the late Sapper R. J. Hampton as the next of kin but requested to know if there were any nearer blood relatives & specifically asked if his father and mother were living or if there were any brothers older due to the “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc.

Mr Henry James Hampton wrote to Base Records on 3rd July, 1921 stating *“there are no nearer blood relations than myself as I am his father and he was an unmarried man...”*

Sapper Robert John Hampton was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Sapper Hampton’s father – Mr H. J. Hampton, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent August, 1922 & Plaque sent October, 1921).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Sapper Robert John Hampton – service number 20255, aged 21, of Australian Engineers. He was the son of Henry James Hampton, of Chapman St., Dungog, New South Wales, and the late Mary Ann Hampton.

Sapper R. J. Hampton is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 27.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

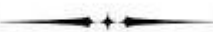
R. J. Hampton is remembered on the Booral and District Honour Roll, located in Booral Soldiers Memorial Hall, 2296 Buckets Way, Booral, NSW.



Booral and District Honour Roll (Photo from War Memorials Register NSW)

(52 pages of Sapper Robert John Hampton's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

The 387th Australian casualty list was issued yesterday....

DIED OF ILLNESS

Spr. R. J. Hampton, Dungog, 6/3/18

(*Sunday Times*, Sydney, NSW – 31 March, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

HAMPTON – Sapper R. J. Hampton, died in England 6th March, 1918, aged 22 years.

We pictured him safe returning,

 We longed to clasp his hand,

But God has taken His hero,

 'Twill be in a better land.

 Rest in peace.

Inserted by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Mary and George Brooker.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 5 April, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOR

HAMPTON – In loving memory of our dear brother, Sapper Robert John Hampton, Field Engineers, died of Bronchial Pneumonia on 6th March, 1918, in Tidworth Hospital, England, aged 21 years and 11 months.

And now lest we forget

 A memory let us keep

Of those who never will return

 Who sleep the last long sleep

Inserted by his only Sister and Brother-in-law, Mary and George Brooker.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 7 March, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

HAMPTON – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Sapper Robert John Hampton, who died at Tidworth Hospital, England, on the 6th March, 1918, of bronchial pneumonia.

He sailed away so bravely,

That brave Australia lad,

To fight for Britain's honor

And to uphold the dear old Flag.
When we look up at his photo on the wall
Of one we will never see again,
Our gallant soldier son and brother,
That stands there in khaki.

Inserted by his loving Father and step-mother and sister, James, Eva and Alma Hampton.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 11 March, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

HAMPTON – In loving memory of my dear brother, Sapper Robert John Hampton, who died at Tidworth Hospital, England, on the 6th March, 1918, of bronchial pneumonia.

We pictured him safe returning,
 We longed to clasp his hand,
But God postponed our meeting,
 We will meet in a better land.

Inserted by his only sister and brother-in-law, Mary and George Brooker.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 12 March, 1920 & 16 March, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

HAMPTON – In loving memory of my dear brother, Sapper Robert John Hampton, who died at Tidworth Hospital, England, on the 6th March, 1918, of bronchial pneumonia.

Inserted by his only sister and brother-in-law, Mary and George Brooker.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 8 March, 1921)

IN MEMORIAM

HAMPTON – In loving memory of our dear brother, Sapper Robert John Hampton, who died at Tidworth Hospital, England, on the 6th March, 1918, of bronchial pneumonia.

At rest.

Inserted by his only sister and brother-in-law, Mary and George Brooker.

(Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, NSW – 7 March, 1922)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Sapper R. J. Hampton does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Gone But Not Forgotten



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00327

The AIF Tidworth cemetery under snow. – March 1919.

Identified graves marked by a cross and headstone in the foreground

Front row: 50727 Private Rowland James Dickson, Australian Machine Gun Corps, died 14 October 1918.

Second row, left to right: 18282 Driver John Thalma Jackson, Details Australian Engineers, died 30 October 1917; 17445 Pte Roland Travers Woodville, Australian Army Medical Corps, died 13 September 1917; 31712 Gunner John Alexander McDonald, 15th Field Artillery Brigade, Australian Field Artillery, died 30 July 1917, aged 37, at Tidworth Military Hospital; 3062 Pte Even Thomas Kennedy, 3rd Australian Pioneers, died 7 August 1917.

Note Gunner McDonald has a large headstone which reads in part 'erected by his sorrowing comrades of the Australian Field Artillery. His duty done.'

Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire, England

Tidworth Military Cemetery, which contains burials of both wars, was directly connected with training grounds on, or near, Salisbury Plain.

During the First World War, the cemetery was used for burials from Tidworth and Fargo Military Hospitals and the 417 graves, many of them of Australian or New Zealand servicemen, are scattered throughout the cemetery.

There are 106 Second World War graves in the cemetery, two substantial groups of which can be found in sections F and D. The rest are scattered.

The cemetery also contains 40 war graves of other nationalities, many of them Polish.

(Information from CWGC)



Tidworth Military Cemetery *(Photo by julia&keld – Find a Grave)*



Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire *(Photo courtesy of John Prestidge)*



Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire *(Photo by Chris Talbot 2009)*



(Photo courtesy of Portsmouth Remembers – Kevin)

Photo of Sapper R. J. Hampton's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Tidworth Military Cemetery, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Selena Hardie)

