

**Arnos Vale Roman Catholic Cemetery,  
Bristol, England  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3269 PRIVATE**

**T. J. LEES**

**30TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**21ST DECEMBER, 1916 Age 21**

*R.I.P.*

## Thomas Joseph LEES

Thomas Joseph Lees was born in 1895 at Alexandria, New South Wales to parents George and Bridget Jane Lees.

Thomas Joseph Lees attended Newton Public School, Sydney, NSW.

From the New South Wales Police Gazette – 30th June, 1915

### ***Watches and Jewellery Reported Stolen, Missing Etc.***

*12 June, 1915 – Thomas Joseph Lees, 50 King-street, Newtown*

*Gent's silver double-case eight-day watch, minus glass, photo of girl inside back case; rolled gold curb-pattern chain; small gold medal, "Croker" on one side, "won in domino tournament" on the other side; gold ring, minus stone, claw setting.*

Thomas Joseph Lees was a 21 year old, single, Wickerworker from 520 King Street, Newtown, NSW when he enlisted at Casula Camp, Sydney on 11th December, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3269 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his father- Mr George Lees, 520 King Street, Newtown, NSW. Thomas Lees stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously served with 34th Infantry for 3 years & 6 months.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was posted to "A" Company, 17th Battalion Depot in December, 1915 for recruit training. Private Lees was transferred to "C" Company of Depot Battalion at Casula, Sydney, NSW on 13th January, 1916. He was absent without leave from 16th January 1916 to 17th January, 1916 & fined 5/-. Private Lees was transferred to "E" Company Depot Battalion at Casula, Sydney, NSW on 1st February, 1916. He was absent without leave from Tattoo Roll Call at 9.30 pm on 1st February & fined 2/6. Private Lees was transferred to "C" Company, 30th Battalion on 6th March, 1916. Private Lees was absent without leave from 16th to 19th March & fined 10/- and 4 days' pay.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Hororata (A20)* on 2nd May, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 30th Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements & disembarked at Suez (no date recorded).

Private Thomas Joseph Lees proceeded overseas from Alexandria on 2nd August, 1916 per *Franconia*.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was admitted to Marseilles Station Hospital, France on 8th September, 1916 with Influenza. He was discharged to Convalescent Depot at Rouen.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was marched in to 5th A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples from Marseilles on 13th September, 1916. He proceeded to join 30th Battalion from 5th A.D.B.D. on 28th September, 1916 & was taken on strength of 30th Battalion in France on 1st October, 1916.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was absent from Tattoo Roll on 11th November, 1916. He was awarded 6 days Field Punishment No. 2 on 14th November, 1916.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was evacuated sick on 29th November, 1916. He was admitted to 1st Anzac on 29th November, 1916 with Trench Feet then transferred to Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Lees was transferred & admitted to 2nd General Hospital at Havre, France. He was reported as dangerously & seriously ill on 30th November, 1916. Private Lees was invalided to England on 6th December, 1916.

### **30th Battalion**

The 30th Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Liverpool in New South Wales on 5 August 1915. Most of its recruits hailed from the Newcastle region and other parts of country New South Wales, but almost an entire company was composed of former RAN ratings from Victoria.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916.

*(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)*

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was admitted to 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England on 7th December, 1916 with Trench Feet - severe. The Hospital Admissions form reads: "*Both feet attacked, toes of both feet gangrenous. Dorsum of feet blistered, dressed with picric acid. 21.12.16 Sat up in bed to have it made complained of some pain in chest, died in 10 minutes.*"

Private Thomas Joseph Lees died suddenly on morning of 21st December, 1916 at 2nd Southern General Hospital, Bristol, England from Trench Feet, gangrene toes & embolus heart failure.

A death for Thomas J. Lees, aged 21, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Bristol, Gloucestershire, England.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was buried on 27th December, 1916 in Arnos Vale Roman Catholic Cemetery, Bristol, England – Plot number D. 2. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Thomas Joseph Lees was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Lees father – Mr George Lees, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent February, 1922 & Plaque sent August, 1922).

Base Records forwarded on to Mr George Lees, 623 King Street, Newtown, NSW, father of the late Private Thomas Joseph Lees, on 17th June, 1931 a copy of "Western Daily Press" Containing an article referring to the Anzac Day Pilgrimage and Memorial Service held at Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol where the remains of his son were interred. The copies of the newspapers had been forwarded by Mr Robert E. Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.

Base Records forwarded on to Mr George Lees, 623 King Street, Newtown, NSW, father of the late Private Thomas Joseph Lees, on 17th June, 1932, 15th June, 1933, a copy of "Western Daily Press" and "Evening World" featuring the Anzac Day Pilgrimage and Memorial Service held at Holy Soul's Cemetery, Bristol where the remains of his son were interred. The copies of the newspapers had been forwarded by Mr Robert E. Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.

Base Records forwarded on to Mr George Lees, 623 King Street, Newtown, NSW, father of the late Private Thomas Joseph Lees, on 28th June, 1935, 22nd June, 1936 & 12th August, 1937 a copy of "Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror" featuring the Pilgrimage and Commemorations Service held at Bristol on Anzac Day. The copies of the newspapers had been forwarded by Mr Robert E. Bush, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, Bristol.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Joseph Lees – service number 3269, aged 21, of 30th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of George and Bridget Jane Lees, of 623 King Street, Newtown, Sydney, New South Wales.

Private T. J. Lees is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 117.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

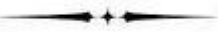
T. J. Lees is remembered on the Newtown Superior Public School Great War Honour Roll, located at corner of King and Newman Streets, Newtown, Sydney, NSW.



**Newtown Superior Public School Great War Honour Roll** (Photo from AWM – Places of Pride – P. Fisher)

(41 pages of Private Thomas Joseph Lees' 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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **FOR AUSTRALIA**

#### **TWO CASUALTY LISTS**

Two casualty lists, the 252nd and 253rd, were issued this morning.....

#### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

##### **SERIOUSLY ILL**

Pte T. J. LEES, Newtown

(*The Sun*, Sydney, NSW – 18 December, 1916)

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### **CASUALTIES**

#### **261st LIST**

Died (Other Causes)

Pte T. J. Lees, Newtown

(*The Land*, Sydney, NSW – 12 January, 1917)

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### **IN MEMORIAM**

LEES – In loving memory of our dear son, Private Thomas Joseph Lees, who die don England of trench feet n December 21, 1916, aged 21 years.

It's just twelve months ago to-day  
Since our great sorrow fell,  
Yet in our hearts we mourn the loss  
Of one we loved so well.

Rest in peace. Inserted by his loving father and mother, Mr and Mrs George Lees, King-street, Newtown.

LEES – In loving memory of our dear nephew and cousin, Private Thomas Joseph Lees, who died in England, December 21, 1916, of trench feet, aged 21 years.

There is one link death cannot sever –  
Loving remembrance remains for ever.

Inserted by his loving uncle and aunt, Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald, Maria Judge, also cousins, Maud, Esmond, Frank, Mr and Mrs Horne, and little Jack. R.I.P.

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW – 21 December, 1917)

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### 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)*

Private T. J. Lees does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*R.I.P.*

### **Arnos Vale Roman Catholic Cemetery, Bristol, England (also known as Holy Souls Roman Catholic Cemetery)**

The cemetery was begun in 1856. During both wars, there were a number of military hospitals at Bristol and the city was the depot of the Gloucestershire Regiment. During the Second World War there were also a number of Royal Air Force stations and prisoner of war camps in the area. Bristol (Arnos Vale) Roman Catholic Cemetery contains 52 First World War burials, mostly of men who died at the local hospitals, particularly the 2nd Southern General and the Beaufort, many of whom were landed at Avonmouth from hospital ships from the Mediterranean. Forty of the graves form a war plot, marked by a screen wall bearing the names of the dead. The cemetery also contains 11 Second World War burials and ten Belgian and Portuguese war graves.

*(Information from CWGC)*



**Holy Souls Roman Catholic Cemetery** (Photos by JohnM – Find a Grave)





**Holy Souls Roman Catholic Cemetery** (Photos by JohnM – Find a Grave)





Photo of Private T. J. Lees' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Arnos Vale Roman Catholic Cemetery, Bristol, England.



*(Photos by JohnM – Find a Grave)*





**Australian World War 1 CWGC Headstones in Holy Souls Roman Catholic Cemetery**

**Private T. J. Lees – Middle row; left**

*(Photos by JohnM – Find a Grave)*