St. Edith's Churchyard,

Baverstock, Wiltshire, England

War Graves

Lest We Forget

World War 1

2582   LANCE CORPORAL

T. ROACH

36TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

21ST JANUARY, 1918   Age 30

Rest In Peace

Thomas ROACH

Thomas Roach was born at Myalla, near Cooma, New South Wales on 17th March, 1887 to parents Thomas & Mary A. Roach (nee Mulhern).

Thomas Roach joined the NSW G.R. & T on 30th October, 1910 as a Labourer in the Southern Division of the Railways Permanent Way Branch. He became a Fettler on 25th May, 1911 & was assigned to the Lockhart to Clear Hills section of the branch line.

A marriage was registered in the district of Temora in 1911 between Thomas Roach & Ida May Hillard. A birth was registered in the district of Lockhart, NSW in 1912 for Vera M. Roach – parents Thomas & Ida M. Roach.

Thomas Roach transferred to the Junee to Albury section of the Main Southern Line on 30th July, 1912 as a Fettler & the family resided at Culcairn.

Mary Ann Roach, mother of Thomas Roach, died on 15th March, 1913 at Newtown, Sydney, NSW.

The 1913 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Albury, subdivision of Culcairn, NSW recorded Thomas Roach, Farmer & Ida May Roach, domestic duties, of Culcairn, NSW.

Thomas Roach transferred back to the Southern Division on 1st April, 1916 & on 1st July, 1916 he was given leave to join the Expeditionary Forces.

Thomas Roach was a 29 year old, married, Railway Fettler from Culcairn, NSW when he enlisted at Cootamundra, NSW on 3rd August, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2582 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his wife – Ida May Roach of Culcairn.

Private Thomas Roach was posted to "C" Company, 1st Depot Battalion at Cootamundra, NSW for recruit training on 3rd August, 1916. He was transferred to "A" Company of 1st Depot Battalion (no date recorded). Private Roach was transferred to Kiama, NSW on 28th August, 1916 & posted to 8th Reinforcements of 45th Battalion on 29th August, 1916. He was transferred to 5th Reinforcements of 39th Battalion at Kiama on 22nd September, 1916 then transferred on 8th November, 1916 to 5th Reinforcements of 36th Battalion.

Private Thomas Roach embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Benalla (A24)* on 9th November, 1916 with the 36th Infantry Battalion, 5th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 9th January, 1917.

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.

Private Thomas Roach was marched in to 9th Training Battalion at Durrington Camp, Wiltshire from Australia on 9th January, 1917.

Private Thomas Roach was admitted sick to Fargo Hospital on 26th January, 1917 from 9th Training Battalion at Durrington Camp & discharged from Fargo Hospital on 12th February, 1917.

Private Thomas Roach proceeded Overseas to France via Folkestone on 28th March, 1917. He was marched in to 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 29th March, 1917. He was marched out to his unit on 31st March, 1917 & taken on strength of 36th Battalion in the Field on 1st April, 1917.

Private Thomas Roach was detached to A. P. M. (traffic control) on 26th May, 1917 & rejoined his unit in Belgium from Police Duty on 12th June, 1917.

Private Thomas Roach was sent sick to 10th Australian Field Ambulance in Belgium on 25th June, 1917 & admitted on 26th June, 1917 with a cut finger. He was discharged to duty on 4th July, 1917 & rejoined his Unit in Belgium on 6th July, 1917.

Private Thomas Roach was admitted to 11th Australian Field Ambulance with Influenza on 24th July, 1917. He was transferred to 3rd Divisional Rest Station on 26th July, 1917 & rejoined his Unit on 30th July, 1918.

Private Thomas Roach of 36th Battalion was promoted to Lance Corporal on 21st August, 1917.

Lance Corporal Thomas Roach was Wounded in Action in Belgium on 1st October, 1917. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 1st October, 1917 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to left thigh. Lance Corporal Roach was transferred to 3rd Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 1st October, 1917 & transferred the same day to Ambulance Train. He was admitted to 83rd General Hospital in France on 1st October, 1917. Lance Corporal Roach embarked for England on 5th October, 1917 on Hospital Ship *St. Denis*.

36th Battalion

The 36th Battalion was raised at Broadmeadow Camp, in Newcastle, New South Wales in February 1916. The bulk of the battalion's recruits had been enlisted as a result of a recruiting drive conducted amongst the rifle clubs of New South Wales by the Minister for Public Information in the New South Wales government, Ambrose Carmichael. Thus, the battalion became known as "Carmichael's Thousand". Carmichael led by example and enlisted as well, serving in the battalion as a captain.

The 36th Battalion became part of the 9th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division. ……

The battalion had to wait until the emphasis of British and Dominion operations switched to the Ypres Sector of Belgium in mid-1917 to take part in its first major battle; this was the battle of Messines, launched on 7 June. With the 9th Brigade held in reserve during the battle for Broodseinde Ridge on 4 October, the 36th's next major battle was around Passchendaele on the 12th.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 36th Battalion

1st October, 1917: Enemy Shelling country in rear of our position and along ZONNEBEKE ROAD – our Artillery replying. We advanced our right 50 yards closer to Hill 40 in the early morning. Sniping still continues and M.G. Fire along the whole front. Patrols out in "No-man's-land" accounted for a number of enemy in vicinity of LEVI Cottage at dawn. At 2 am. a heavy bombardment was opened by our guns and again at dawn. The enemy replied fairly vigorously.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lance Corporal Thomas Roach was admitted to Whipps Cross Hospital at Leytonstone, England on 5th October, 1917. He was discharged to furlo from 28th November, 1917 to 12th December, 1917 where he was to report to No. 3 Command Depot.

Lance Corporal Thomas Roach was admitted to Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire seriously ill on 16th January, 1918. The Hospital Admissions form recorded that Lance Corporal Roach had double pneumonia.

Lance Corporal Thomas Roach died at 3.30 p.m. on 21st January, 1918 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire from Pneumonia.

A death for Thomas Roach, aged 30, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Lance Corporal Thomas Roach was buried on 24th January, 1918 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

From the burial report of Lance Corporal Thomas Roach – *The deceased soldier was buried with Military Honours. The Coffin was of polished Elm.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing File for Lance Corporal T. Roach contains the following letter regarding his death from Military Hospital, Fovant:

"*Re Pte Roach. I beg to say I wrote to his friends just after his death – giving them what particulars I could. He was admitted into hospital on the 15.1.18 complaining of pain in the chest and head, he was very ill on admission and from the first we had little hope of his recovery. He died on the 21st Jan. of Pneumonia.*"

A War Pension was granted to Ida May Roach, widow of late Lance Corporal Thomas Roach, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 24th March, 1918. A War Pension was also granted to Vera May Roach, daughter of late Lance Corporal Thomas Roach in the sum of £1 per fortnight from 24th March, 1918.
Lance Corporal Thomas Roach was entitled to British War Medal & Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lance Cpl. Roach's widow – Mrs Ida M. Roach (Memorial Scroll sent December, 1921 & Memorial Plaque sent October, 1922)

(Ida May Roach remarried in 1923 to William C. Lilford. The marriage was registered in the district of Holbrook, NSW.)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lance Corporal Thomas Roach – service number 2582, as being 30 years old & served with 36th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas and Mary Roach; husband of Ida May Roach, of Culcairn, New South Wales. Born at Myalla, New South Wales.

Lance Corporal T. Roach is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 127.

(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)

Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

Thomas Roach is also remembered at the Cooma Monaghan Hayes Place Memorial located at corner of Massie & Vale Sts, Cooma, New South Wales – on the John Mack Memorial Wall.

Cooma Monaghan Hayes Place Memorial

(Photos from Monument Australia)

John Mack Memorial Wall where Brothers William & Thomas Roach are remembered

(Photo from War Memorials Register NSW – Sandra Young)

T. Roach is remembered on the Culcairn Railway Department WW1 Honor Roll, located at Culcairn Railway Station, Olympic Highway, Culcairn, NSW.
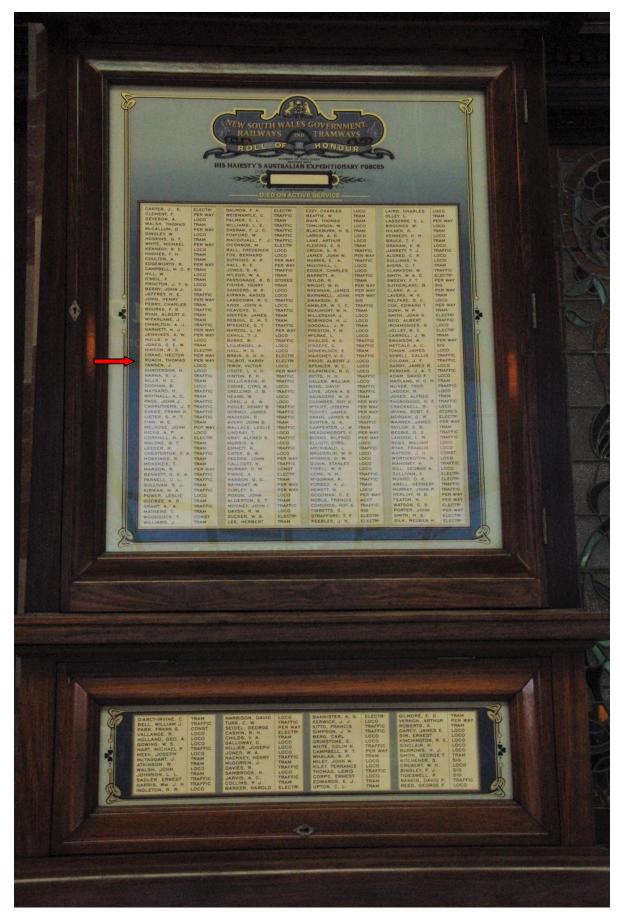

Culcairn Railway Department WW1 Honor Roll *(Photo from War Memorials Register NSW)*

Thomas Roach is remembered on the Central Station Honour Boards, located at Central Station (Country Train Concourse), Sydney, NSW.

Central Station Honour Boards *(Photo from AWM – Places of Pride)*

Central Station Honour Boards *(Photo by Jennifer Edmonds)*

(59 pages of Lance Corporal Thomas Roach's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives

—➤·◄—

**Brothers of Lance Corporal Thomas Roach - Matthew & William Roach both died of wounds.

Gunner William Roach 28176 – 5th Brigade Australian Field Artillery died 9th October, 1918 & is buried in Tincourt New British Cemetery, France.

Corporal Matthew Roach 494 – 25th Battalion A.I.F. died 4th August, 1916. Buried in Puchevillers British Cemetery, France.

—➤·◄—

Newspaper Reports

LATE DISTRICT NEWS – CULCAIRN

…. A social evening and presentation was tendered Lance-Corporal R. Lowe and Private T. Roach at the residence of Mr B. G. Odewahn. Both were on final leave. Mr H. J. Moss presided, and presented R. Lowe with a shaving set and pocket wallet and T. Roach with a case of pipes and a pouch. A very pleasant evening was spent. Mr H. Prescott acted as organiser.

(*Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, NSW – Friday 17 February, 1916)

WAR CASUALTIES

NEW SOUTH WALES LOSSES – 382nd LIST

Died of Illness

Pte T. Roach (Culcairn) 21/1/1918

(*Evening News*, Sydney, NSW – Saturday 9 February, 1918)

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 at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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)

Lance Corporal T. Roach does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Rest In Peace

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock contains 32 World War 1 War Graves – 3 London Regiment Graves in the south-west corner & 29 Australian War Graves.

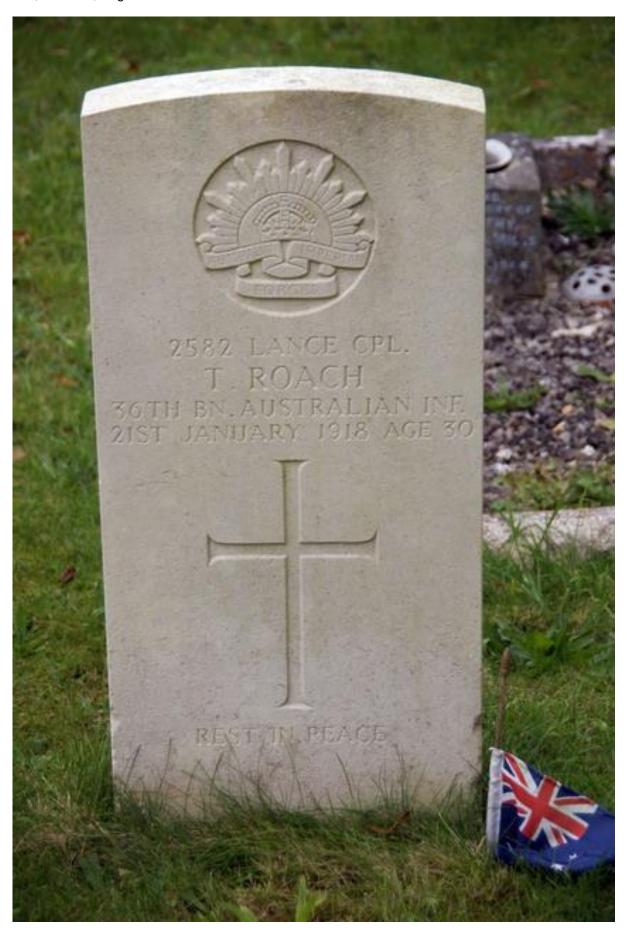**St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock** *(Photo courtesy of Helen Roberts)*

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock *(Photos courtesy of Helen Roberts)*

Photo of Lance Corporal T. Roach's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England.

(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)