

**Sutton Road Cemetery,  
Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**4554 PRIVATE**

**J. T. ROBERTS**

**3RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**18TH FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 20**

*In Memory Of  
The Dearly Loved Son  
Of Mr & Mrs Roberts  
Of Adamstown*

## John Thomas ROBERTS

John Thomas Roberts was born at Adamstown, New South Wales in November, 1897 to parents Thomas John and Elizabeth Roberts

John Thomas Roberts attended school at Adamstown, NSW.

John Thomas Roberts was aged 18 years & 9 months, single & a Wheeler from Bruncker Road, Adamstown, NSW when he enlisted at Newcastle, NSW on 31st August, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4554 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. T. Roberts, Bruncker Road, Adamstown, NSW. John Thomas Roberts stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 3 years in Senior Cadets & had previously been rejected as physically unfit for His Majesty's Service.

Private John Thomas Roberts was posted to recruit training then on 30th December, 1915 he was transferred to 14th Reinforcements of 3rd Battalion.

Private John Thomas Roberts embarked from Sydney, NSW on RMS *Osterley* on 15th January, 1916 with the 3rd Infantry Battalion, 14th Reinforcements.

### 3rd Battalion

The 3rd Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 1st, 2nd and 4th Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these battalions, formed the 1st Brigade.

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

Private John Thomas Roberts embarked from Alexandria on Troopship *Transylvania* on 29th March, 1916 for B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 4th April, 1916.

Private John Thomas Roberts was taken on strength of 3rd Battalion in France on 8th June, 1916 from Reinforcements.

Private John Thomas Roberts was written up for a Crime – Absent from 16.15 hrs Parade on 30th November, 1916. He was awarded 5 days Field Punishment No. 2 on 3rd December, 1916.

Private John Thomas Roberts was admitted to 1st Australian Field Ambulance on 9th February, 1917 with Appendicitis. He was transferred to Casualty Clearing Station on 9th February, 1917 & admitted to 1/1 S.M. DOCS on 10th February, 1917 with Pneumonia. Private Roberts was transferred to Hospital then embarked from Calais for England on 17th February, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen* with Broncho Pneumonia.

Private John Thomas Roberts was admitted to H. M. Queen Mary's Royal Naval Hospital, Southend-on-Sea on 17th February, 1917. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "*Admitted from France 17.2.17 in very exhausted state with much wasting. Rales & Rhonci all over both chests – much blood stained purulent sputum. Distended abdomen, constipation & vomiting – bowels acted after burp – suddenly collapsed & died 5.30 pm 18.2.17.*"

Private John Thomas Roberts died at 5.30 pm on 18th February, 1917 at H. M. Queen Mary's Royal Naval Hospital, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, England from Acute Miliary Tuberculosis, Exhaustion & Heart Failure.

A death for John Roberts, aged 20, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Rochford, Essex, England.

Private John Thomas Roberts was buried on 21st February, 1917 in Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England – Plot number E. 3441 and now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

From the burial report of Private John Thomas Roberts - *Coffin was good - Pine. Military Funeral. Rev. Chaplain J. Williams, 23rd Training Battalion conducted the burial with a Firing Party & Band. The Funeral was attended by Pte Roberts' uncle who came from Newcastle for that purpose. Mr Roberts – School House, Cramlington.*

Private John Thomas Roberts was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Roberts' father - Mr T. J. Roberts, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Thomas Roberts – service number 4554, aged 20, of 3rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Thomas John and Elizabeth Roberts, of Bruncker Rd., Adamstown, New South Wales.

Private J. T. Roberts is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 38.



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

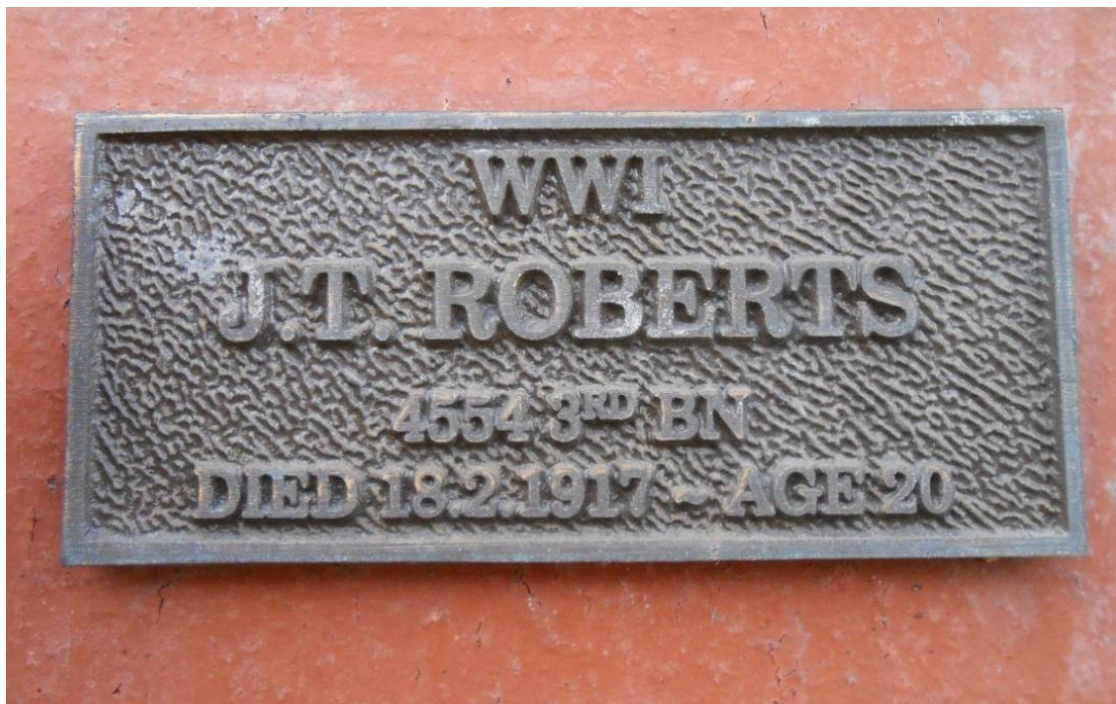
J. T. Roberts is remembered in the Clarence Jeffries V.C. & William Currey V.C. Memorial Wall, located in Sandgate Cemetery, Maitland Road, Sandgate, NSW with an individual plaque.



**Clarence Jeffries V.C. & William Currey V.C. Memorial Wall, Sandgate Cemetery**

*(Photo above from Monument Australia; below from Sandgate Newcastle Virtual Records)*



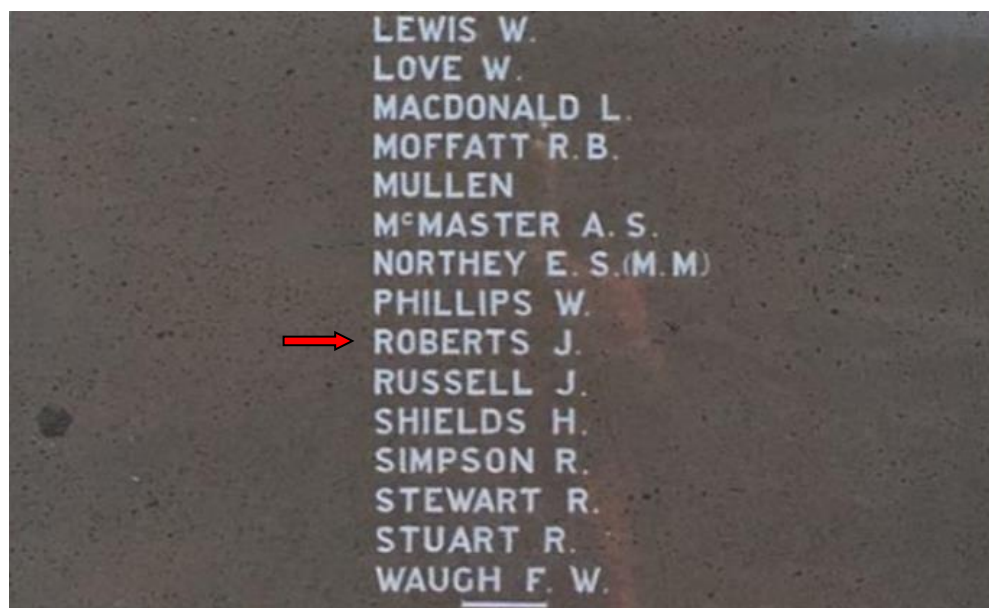




J. Roberts is remembered on the Adamstown War Memorial, located outside Adamstown RSL, Brunner Rd, Adamstown, NSW.



**Adamstown War Memorial** (Photo from AWM – Places of Pride – Gary Mitchell)



(29 pages of Private John Thomas Roberts' 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**

### **News of Soldiers**

Mr Thomas Roberts, of Bruncker Road, Adamstown, received word last evening that his son, Private J. T. Roberts, had died in hospital, his death being caused by acute pneumonia. Private Roberts left with the 30th Battalion. Widespread sympathy is expressed with the bereaved parents.

*(Northern Times, Newcastle, NSW – 27 February, 1917)*

---

### **Australian Casualties**

#### **Lists Nos 274 and 275**

Dangerously Ill

Pte J. T. ROBERTS (Adamstown)

*(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 28 February, 1917)*

---

## **DISTRICT CASUALTIES**

### **DIED OF ILLNESS**

PRIVATE ROBERTS – Mr and Mrs T. Anderson, of Bruncker-road, Adamstown, have been informed that their son, Private J. T. Roberts, died in Queen Mary's Hospital, London, on February 16th, of acute tuberculosis.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 28 February, 1917)*

---

### **ADAMSTOWN**

Mr. and Mrs. T. Roberts, of Bruncker-road, Adamstown, received a message on Monday evening, through the Rev. A. T. Anderson, of Hamilton, that their son, Private J. T. Roberts had died in hospital in London from acute tuberculosis. On the 23rd instant the parents received a message that their son was dangerously ill. Private Roberts left fourteen-months ago with the \_\_\_\_ Reinforcements. He was 20 years of age, in November last, and was born in Adamstown. He was a young man respected by all who knew him, and prior to enlisting was a wheeler in Dudley Colliery. Last week his parents received a letter from him, telling them he would be going on furlough, and requesting them to forward some money. The money was cabled away a couple of days before the message arrived that he was seriously ill; in fact, his death had taken place before the request for the money was received. Private Roberts was through some of the most severe battles in the big advance.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 28 February, 1917)*

---

## **CASUALTIES**

### **277th LIST**

#### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

##### **DIED OF WOUNDS OR OTHER CAUSES**

Pte J. ROBERTS, Adamstown

*(Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga, NSW – 9 March, 1917)*

---

### **Roll of Honour**

Private John Roberts, son of Mr and Mrs T. Roberts, of Bruncker-road, Adamstown, died of illness, Queen Mary's Hospital, England, February 18, 1917; aged 20 years. – He gave his life for his King and country.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 10 March, 1917)*

---

### **Roll of Honour**

ROBERTS – In sad but loving memory of Private J. T. Roberts, who died of pneumonia February 18, 1917. – His duty noble done. – Inserted by his loving father and mother, and family, Adamstown.

ROBERTS – In loving memory of Private J. T. Roberts, died at Queen Mary's Naval Hospital February 18, 1917, of pneumonia; aged 20 years.

We pictured our brother returning,  
And long to clasp his hand;  
But God has postponed the meeting,  
Till we meet in a better land.

Inserted by his loving brother and sister, Harry and Lizzie, and niece, Gladys Robinson, Adamstown.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 18 February, 1918)*

---

### **In Memoriam**

ROBERTS – In loving memory of Private John Roberts, died Queen Mary's Hospital, February 18, 1917; aged 20 years. Also Harry Roberts, killed at Adamstown August 27, 1913, aged 11 years. Also Elizabeth Robinson, died at Newcastle Hospital March 5; aged 28 years. – At rest.

-Inserted for parent and family, Adamstown.

*(Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate, NSW – 18 February, 1919)*

---

John T. Roberts is remembered on the family headstone in Sandgate Cemetery, Newcastle, New South Wales – Presbyterian, Section 21SE; Plot 106.



*(Photo from Find a Grave)*





Roberts Family Headstone (Headstone photos from Sandgate, Newcastle Virtual Records – Gary Mitchell)



Also JOHN T. ROBERTS

Late A.I.F. Son of Above

Died 18TH Feb 1917 Aged 20 Years



### 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 J. T. Roberts has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone with the following inscription:

*In Memory Of The Dearly Loved Son*

*Of Mr & Mrs Roberts Of Adamstown*

### **Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England**

This cemetery contains 127 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war and 152 burials of the 1939-45 war, including 1 unidentified seaman of the Merchant Navy. In addition there are 4 Foreign National war burials here. There are 2 small Screen Wall memorial panels naming those of the 1914-1918 war whose graves are not marked by headstones.

*(Information from CWGC)*



*(Photo from Find a Grave – Hawk Moth)*





*(Photo from CWGC)*



**Row of 7 Australian WW1 Headstones** *(Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)*

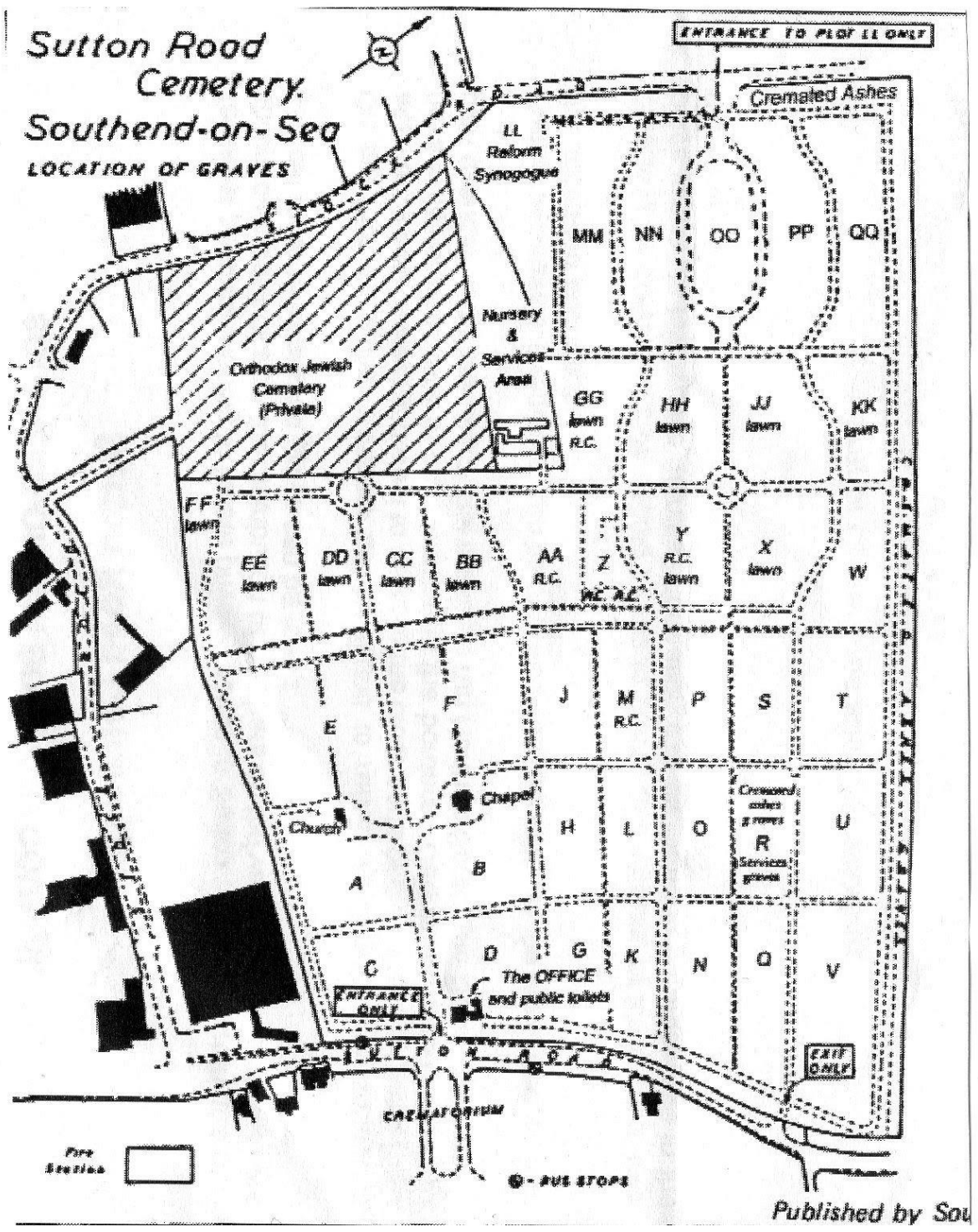


Photo of Private J. T. Roberts' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Sutton Road Cemetery, Southend-On-Sea, Essex, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Gillon)*





(Find a Grave – J Keefe)