

**Milton Cemetery,
Portsmouth, Hampshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2882 PRIVATE

J. T. ROBERTS

44TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

11TH NOVEMBER, 1917 Age 28

Duty Nobly Done

Ever Remembered

By Mother, Sister & Brothers

John Thomas (Jack) ROBERTS

John Thomas Roberts was born at Mt. Egerton, Victoria in 1889 to parents William John and Esther Roberts (nee Williams).

The 1916 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kalgoorlie, subdivision of Kanowna, Western Australia listed John Thomas Roberts, Labourer of Bulong.

John Thomas Roberts was a 27 year old, single, Miner from Bulong, Western Australia when he enlisted at Kalgoorlie, Western Australia on 4th October, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2882 & his religion was Congregational. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Esther Roberts, of 22 Herbert Street, Footscray, Melbourne, Victoria. John Roberts had a heart and clasped hands tattooed on his left forearm.

Private John Thomas Roberts was posted to 87th Depot on 16th October, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 44th Battalion on 11th November, 1916.

Private John Thomas Roberts embarked from Fremantle, Western Australia on HMAT *Persic (A34)* on 29th December, 1916 with the 44th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 3rd March, 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 John Thomas Roberts was marched in to Camp Details at Sutton Mandeville, Wiltshire on 3rd March, 1917. He was marched out to 11th Training Battalion at Larkhill, near Durrington, Wiltshire on 8th March, 1917.

Private John Thomas Roberts proceeded overseas to France via Southampton from 11th Training Battalion on 19th June, 1917.

Private John Thomas Roberts was marched in to 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Havre, France on 20th June, 1917. He was marched out to his Unit from 3rd A.D.B.D. on 8th July, 1917 & was taken on strength of 44th Battalion in France on 9th July, 1917.

Private John Thomas Roberts was sent sick to Hospital on 7th August, 1917. He was admitted to 11th Australian Field Ambulance with Influenza & discharged to duty on 14th August, 1917. Pte Roberts rejoined his Battalion from Hospital on 16th August, 1917. Pte Roberts was sent sick to Hospital again on 20th August, 1917. He was admitted to 9th Australian Field Ambulance on 20th August, 1917 with ?Appendicitis then transferred to 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station. Pte Roberts was transferred to Ambulance Train No. 38 on 21st August, 1917 & admitted to 5th General Hospital at Rouen, France. He embarked for England on 26th August, 1917 on Hospital Ship *Essequibo* with acute nephritis.

Private John Thomas Roberts was admitted to 5th Southern General Hospital, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England on 27th August, 1917 with nephritis (slight).

Private John Thomas Roberts died at 12.50 pm on 11th November, 1917 at 5th Southern General Hospital (Milton Military Section), Portsmouth, Hampshire, England from Nephritis.

A death for John T. Roberts, aged 28, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Portsmouth, Hampshire, England.

Private John Thomas Roberts was buried at 3 pm on 14th November, 1917 in Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England – Plot number J, Row 7. Grave no. 239 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Pte John Thomas Roberts - *Coffin was good, polished Elm with brass mountings. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military Funeral. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack Flag. A floral tribute was placed on the coffin. Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers, under the command of an Officer,*

were supplied by the Hants Regiment stationed at Portsmouth. The grave will be turfed immediately and an oak cross will be erected by the A.I.F. Prior to the interment a service was held in the Chapel at the Cemetery. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London, were represented at the funeral. Names of relatives present at the funeral – Brother No. 716 Driver A. B. Roberts, 3rd Coy., A.A.S.C. 1st Div. Train, A.I.F.

A letter was sent from Base Records on 20th April, 1920 to Mrs E. Roberts, mother, of the late Private John Thomas Roberts, advising that her son's remains had been exhumed from the former plot in Milton Cemetery & had been re-interred in Plot H. Row 19. Grave No. 7 in the same cemetery. It was explained that "*this work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain*".

Private John Thomas Roberts stated that his Will previously made was lodged with Miss Margaret McInnes, Government Hospital, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. John Thomas Roberts made his last Will on 28th December, 1916 & bequeathed all his real and personal state to Miss Margaret McInnes whom he also appointed as Executrix.

A War Pension was granted to Esther Roberts, mother of the late Private John Thomas Roberts, in the sum of 26/- per fortnight from 16th January, 1918. She was also granted an increase in her pension in regards to her son Pte Lawrence M. Roberts from 10/- to 14/- per fortnight from 16th January, 1918 in addition to her pension for Pte John Thomas Roberts.

Private John Thomas Roberts was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Roberts' mother – Mrs Esther Roberts, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent March, 1923 & Plaque sent October, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private John Thomas Roberts – service number 2882, aged 28, of 44th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of William John and Esther Roberts, of 56 Stirling St., Footscray, Victoria, Australia. Born at Mount Egerton, Victoria.

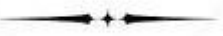
Private J. T. Roberts is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 138.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(65 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

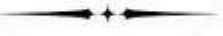


Connected to Private John Thomas Roberts:

Younger Brother – Private Lawrence Moyle Roberts, 3389, 2nd Company, Australian Machine Gun Corps. Enlisted 14th July, 1915. Wounded in action & died of wounds 9th December, 1916 in Birmingham Hospital. Buried in Lodge Hill Cemetery, Birmingham, England. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

Younger Brother – William Clifton Roberts, 3174, 2nd Pioneer Battalion. Enlisted 4th October, 1916. Wounded in action (gassed). Returned to Australia from England & disembarked 13th July, 1919. Entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal.

Younger Brother – Driver Albert Bertram Roberts, 716, 3rd Coy., A.A.S.C. Enlisted 8th August, 1914. Wounded in action. Returned to Australia from England & disembarked 4th October, 1918. Entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal.



Newspaper Notices

PERSONAL ITEMS

Our Bulong correspondent writes: - "Three volunteers for the A.I.F. from Bulong, Nicholas Marich, of the Bulong Hotel, J. T. Roberts, and Norman Turner, lately employed at the magnesite deposit, offered themselves for enlistment in Kalgoorlie last week, and were accepted."

(Kalgoorlie Miner, Western Australia – 14 October, 1916)

THE 371st and 372nd CASUALTY LISTS

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private J. T. Roberts, Footscray

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 22 December, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

ROBERTS – In sad and loving memory of my dear sons and our dear brothers, Private John Thomas (Jack), died of illness on the 11th November, 1917; also Private Lawrence Moyle (Bob), died of wounds on the 9th December, 1916. Late of Mt. Egerton.

We think of them in silence,
No eye can see us weep;
But ever deep within our hearts
Their memories we will always keep.

-(Inserted by their loving mother and brothers, Willie, on active service, Bert, returned Anzac, and Arthur, 22 Herbert-street, Footscray.

ROBERTS – In loving memory of our dear brothers, Private John Thomas (Jack), died of nephritis on the 11th November, 1917; also Private Lawrence Moyle (Bob), died of wounds on the 9th December, 1916.

Duty called them – they were there
To do their bit and take their share;
Their hearts were good, their spirits brave,
Now they are resting in heroes' graves.

-(Inserted by their loving sister and brother-in-law, Daisy and George Tibbett, also little niece Frances.)

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 11 November, 1918)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

ROBERTS – In loving memory of my dear sons and our dear brother, Private J. T. Roberts, died on the 11th November, 1917; also Private L. M. Roberts, died on the 9th December, 1916, late of Mount Egerton.

Never can our hearts forget
The sorrows of the past;
When grief has left so deep a wound
That pain must always last.

-Inserted by their loving mother, brothers and sister, 22 Herbert-street, Footscray.

(*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 11 November, 1919)

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)

A letter from Base Records, dated 29th July, 1921, to Mrs E. Roberts, of 56 Stirling Street, Footscray, Victoria, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her son, the late Pte J. T. Roberts in Milton Cemetery, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

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

Duty Nobly Done Ever Remembered By Mother, Sister & Brothers

Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England

Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth contains 426 Commonwealth War Graves – 192 relating to World War 1 & 234 relating to World War 2. There are 12 Australian War Graves from World War 1 in this cemetery.

It was opened in 1911, and contains war graves of both World Wars. The 1914-1918 burials are mainly in Plot 1. After the war a Cross of Sacrifice was erected on the northern side of the chapel in honour of all the servicemen buried in the cemetery. The 1939-1945 War burials are widely spread throughout the cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



Australian War Graves in Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth *(Photo by Mr Peter Bennett)*

Photo of Private J. T. Roberts' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth, Hampshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Portsmouth Remembers)



Cemetery Chapel at Milton Cemetery, Portsmouth *(Photo by Basher Eyre)*