

**St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery,
Kensal Green, London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2997 PRIVATE

J. RODGERS

56TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

31ST JANUARY, 1917

James RODGERS

James Rodgers was born at Bendigo, Victoria around 1876.

[Note: Parents' names are not listed on Attestation Papers - so cannot positively identify them]

James Rodgers was a 39 year old, single, Labourer from Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria when he enlisted on 18th June, 1915 at Liverpool, New South Wales with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his brother – Mr John Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria.

Private James Rodgers was posted to 9th Reinforcements of 4th Battalion for recruit training.

Private James Rodgers, Service number 2997, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Argyllshire (A8)* on 30th September, 1915 with the 4th Infantry Battalion, 9th Reinforcements.

Private James Rodgers was admitted to No. 2 Australian General Hospital at Ghezireh on 25th December, 1915 with an injury to his Head. He was discharged to his Unit on 29th December, 1915.

Private James Rodgers joined 4th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 6th January, 1916.

4th Battalion

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

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private James Rodgers was transferred from 4th Battalion to 56th Battalion from 16th February, 1916 at Tel-el-Kebir. He was taken on strength of 56th Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 16th February, 1916.

Private James Rodgers reported sick at Ferry Post on 30th March, 1916. He rejoined his Battalion on 8th April, 1916.

Private James Rodgers embarked from Alexandria on 19th June, 1916 on H. T. *Huntsend* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 29th June, 1916.

Private James Rodgers reported sick at Marseilles on 29th June, 1916. He was admitted to 2nd Australian General Hospital on 30th June, 1916 from H. T. *Huntsend* with Furunculosis & discharged to Anzac Base Details at Mousot on 11th July, 1916. Private Rodgers rejoined 56th Battalion in France on 22nd July, 1916.

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Rodgers, Bendigo Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria, next of kin of Private James Rodgers, on 18th July, 1916 to advise that No. 2997 Private J. Rodgers was in 2nd Australian General Hospital from 30th June, 1916 suffering from furunculosis mild.

Private James Rodgers was awarded 21 days Field Punishment No. 2 on 7th August, 1916 for creating a disturbance in an Estaminet (small café selling alcoholic drinks).

Private James Rodgers was awarded 28 days Field Punishment No. 2 on 10th September, 1916 for being drunk in billets.

Private James Rodgers was sent to A.P.M. (Assistant Provost Marshal), 5th Australian Division on 12th September, 1916 & rejoined his Battalion on 9th October, 1916 from Detention.

Private James Rodgers reported sick on 3rd November, 1916 & was admitted to 36th Casualty Clearing Station in France with Exhaustion. He was transferred to Ambulance Train & admitted to 12th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 5th November, 1916. Private Rodgers was discharged on 9th November, 1916 to Base Depot. He was marched in to 5th Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 11th November, 1916 from Hospital.

Private James Rodgers reported sick on 21st December, 1916 while posted at 5th Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France. He was admitted to 26th General Hospital on the same day with Chronic Bronchitis. Private Rodgers was transferred to Havre on 30th December, 1916 & embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Warilda*.

56th Battalion

The 56th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 14 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 4th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 4th, the 56th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

Arriving in France on 30 June 1916, the battalion entered the frontline trenches for the first time on 12 July and fought its first major battle at Fromelles a week later. The battle was a disaster, resulting in heavy casualties across the division. Despite these losses the 5th Division continued to man the front in the Fromelles sector for a further two months.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private James Rodgers was admitted to 5th Southern General Hospital, Southsea, England on 1st January, 1917.

Private James Rodgers was admitted to King George Hospital, London, England on 30th January, 1917. The Hospital Admissions form recorded "Haemorrhage of brain due to a fracture of the Skull. *Condition on admission – Deep Coma, Pupils – right pin point – Left – slightly dilated. No divergence and no convergence of eyes. Complete paralysis of right side. Double incontinence. Respiration labourer. Patient was unconscious from the time he was admitted until he died at 8.30 am on 31-1-17.*"

Private James Rodgers died at 8.30 am on 31st January, 1917 at King George Hospital, Stamford Street, London, England.

A handwritten note in the Service Record file reads: "*Following message recd per Phone at Non-Effective Records 2 pm 31/1/17. "2997 James Rogers 56 Btn. Died at King Georges Hos. Inquest will be held at Coroner's Court High St Lambeth at 11.15 am tomorrow. Will you detail someone to attend with his records." H.B.*"

Verdict of Coroner's Jury – "*Accidental Death.*" Cause of death from a Fractured Skull through accidentally falling whilst under the influence of drink. (Mr Ingleby Oddie, Coroner).

A death for James Rogers, aged 40, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Lambeth, Greater London, England.

Private James Rodgers was buried on 6th February, 1917 in St. Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green, London, England. A Telegram had been sent from The King George Hospital, London on 1st February, 1917 to The Commandant, Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F., London: "*Funeral late No. 2997 Pte James RODGERS, 56th A.I.F. Tuesday 6th February at Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green. Leaves here 1.0 pm.*"

His burial place is now recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Plot number Australian. 2117 in St Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, London, England. Private Rodgers now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. (Note: His religion on his Attestation Papers was listed as Church of England, however the "Morning State of Sick (Army form A27) recorded his religion as "R.C.").

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria on 20th April, 1920 with the following letter: "*With reference to my communication of the 3rd July, 1918, regarding the regrettable loss of your brother the late No. 2997 Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion, I am now in receipt of further advice which shows that his remains have been exhumed from the former site, and re-interred in grave No. 8, St. Mary's Cemetery, Kensal Green, London. This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.*"

Private James Rodgers requested in his Will, dated 19th February, 1916 at Tel .el.Kebir : *"In the event of my death I give all I possess to my brother John."*

The Savings Bank Department, Sydney, wrote to The Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne on 27th March, 1917 regarding No. 2997 James Rodgers – 9th Reinforcements, 4th Battalion: *"We are advised that the above-named soldier is now deceased. If you have received confirmation of this we shall be glad if you will furnish is with the usual Certificate of Death, also please advise is of the name of the next-of-kin."*

Base Records replied to The Superintendent, Commonwealth Bank, Savings bank Department, Sydney, NSW on 31st March, 1917 advising *"This is to certify that, according to the records, next-of-kin of the late No. 2997, Private James Rodgers, 56th Battalion, is show as:- (Brother) John Rodgers, Bendigo Railway Station, V."*

Base Records contacted Mr J. Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria, on 25th October, 1920 advising that he was noted as the registered next-of-kin of the late No. 2997 Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion, but desired to know if there were any nearer blood relatives than himself & was specifically asked if his father and mother were living, if not, has he 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.

A note in the Service Record file reads: *"Advertisement inserted in Press address of N.O.K. 21.1.21."*

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria on 7th September, 1921 with the following letter: *"With reference to my communication of 25th October last, to which no reply has been received, I shall be obliged of you will advise me whether the parents of the late No. 2997 Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion are still living, and if so, furnish me with their present address. If they are deceased, kindly let me know whether the late soldier has any brothers older than yourself – stating name and address of the eldest. This information is required in order that War Medals etc., issuable on account of the abovementioned late soldier's service may be properly disposed of."*

Communications sent to Mr J. Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria were returned to Base Records in November, 1921 marked *"Left Dept. present whereabouts unknown."*

Base Records wrote to District Finance Officer, 2nd Military District on 21st November, 1921 with the following: *"I shall be much obliged of you will inform me whether the War Gratuity file of the late No, 2997 Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion, discloses the names and addressed of any of deceased's blood relations. Upon enlistment he nominated as next-of-kin his brother, Mr J. Rodgers, c/o Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria, but a communication forwarded to that address has been returned unclaimed."*

The Acting District Finance Officer replied to Base Records on 19th December, 1921 advising that the last known address of the deceased soldier's next-of-kin was Mr John Rodger, Post Office, Bendigo, Victoria.

Base Records wrote to Mr J. Rodgers, Post Office, Bendigo on 3rd January, 1922 with the following letter: *"With reference to my communication of 25th October, 1920 last, to which no reply has been received, I shall be obliged of you will advise me whether the parents of the late No. 2997 Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion are still living, and if so, furnish me with their present address. If they are deceased, kindly let me know whether the late soldier has any brothers older than yourself – stating name and address of the eldest. This information is required in order that War Medals etc., issuable on account of the abovementioned late soldier's service may be properly disposed of."*

Private James Rodgers was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Private Rodgers' next-of-kin but as no next-of-kin could be located the War Medals & Mementoes were sent to "Untraceables". (Scroll sent August, 1922 & Plaque sent July, 1922 – both to "Untraceables".)

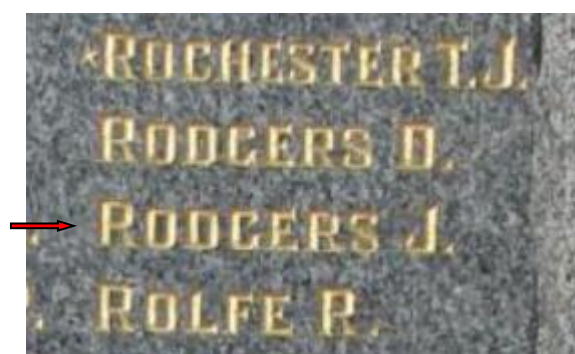
Base Records wrote to Deputy Commissioner of Repatriation, Melbourne, Victoria on 30th November, 1923 asking “....whether any pension is being paid on account of the service of the late No. 2997 Private James RODGERS, 56th Battalion, and , if so, favor me with the name, address, and relationship of the pensioner, stating at what Post Office the grant is being drawn, also Certificate No. of same.”

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private James Rodgers – service number 2997, of 56th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

J. Rodgers is remembered on the Inglewood & District War Memorial, located at Grant & Verdon Streets, Inglewood, Victoria.



Inglewood & District War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Henry Moulds)





INGLEWOOD

JONES A.C.	PARKER G.F.
JONES H.	PARKER T.P.
KITSON E.R.	PERRIN W.E.
KITSON F.	POLLEN H.R.
KNIGHT E.L.	PORTER N.A.
LAWSON D.J.	REIMERS A.
LEIGH C.A.	RICHARDSON I.W.C.
MAKPEACE E.A.	RIRDAN C.
MAKPEACE E.C.	ROBERTS A.E.
MARTIN C.	ROBERTS A.G.
MATTHEWS N.	ROBERTS C.F.
MILLAR R.	ROBERTS W.H.
MILLAR R.T.	ROCHESTER A.W.
MILLER H.W.	ROCHESTER C.
MUNRO C.A.	ROCHESTER T.J.
MURRAY F.	RODGERS D.
MURRAY T.J.	RODGERS J. ←
MCCARTHY P.	ROLFE R.
MCCLADE T.H.	SAUNDERS E.A.
MCLAPEN A.	SAUNDERS J.M.
NEEDS J.M.	SHEPHERD A.C.
NEVINS T.	SHEPHERD E.C.
NIXON A.L.	SIMONS J.J.
NIXON R.C.	SIMPSON J.A.
O'CONNELL A.	SISSONS H.
O'CONNELL J.	SMELLIE C.
O'SHAHNESSY J.V.	SMITH J.
OLSEN E.	SMITH J.R.
PARKER A.A.	STACE F.W.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SERVED
VIETNAM WAR
1962 - 1973

BAMBROOK K.B.	HARDING P.A.
BONEHAM L.A.	KEATES P.J.
BUTLER R.E.	MARTIN R.J.
CAIN P.J.	O'SHEA J.J.
DIERSCH J.E.	TRIPLETT I.C.

Inglewood & District War Memorial

Private J. Rodgers is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 163.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(72 pages of Private James Rodgers' 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 Australia



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

THE CASUALTY LISTS

BENDIGO AND NORTHERN DISTRICT MEN

DIED FROM INJURIES

Pte J. RODGERS, Bendigo, 31/1/17 (previously reported died from illness)

(Bendigonian, Bendigo, Victoria – 22 February, 1917)

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 was sent from Base Records, dated 13th September, 1921, to Mr J. Rodgers, Railway Station, Bendigo, Victoria, advising that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his brother, the late No. 2997, Private J. Rodgers, 56th Battalion, 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.

Information for the Roll of Honour was also sent but not returned.

Private J. Rodgers has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone but no inscription.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, London, England

Kensal Green (St Mary's) Roman Catholic Cemetery contains burials of both wars. Some of the 208 First World War burials are grouped together. The largest, known as the War Plot, contains graves of United Kingdom forces and there are smaller groups of Canadian and Australian graves. The rest of the First World War graves, and all of the 107 Second World War graves, are scattered elsewhere in the cemetery. A Screen Wall and a low kerb bear the names of casualties of both wars whose graves could not be marked individually. In addition to the Commonwealth war graves, the cemetery contains a number of war graves of other nationalities, including a substantial Belgian plot from the First World War.

(Information from CWGC)





St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery (Photo above from Find a Grave – Len)



Cross of Sacrifice (Photo from Find a Grave – Mike Ganley)

Photo of Private J. Rodgers' Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, London, England.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Len)



Australian Plot in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green
 (Photo from Find a Grave – Lighthouseman)

