

**St. John the Evangelist Churchyard,
Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England**

War Graves

World War 1



Lest We Forget



198 PRIVATE

A. J. THOMSON

26TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

15TH FEBRUARY, 1919 AGE 22

In Memory Of

Loved Son Of

Late Mr. & Mrs. J. Thomson

Of Atherton

*CWGC Headstone for Pte A. J. Thomson is located in
Grave Plot # 51. D. 25. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Albert John THOMSON

Albert John Thomson was born at Irvinebank, Queensland on 12th November, 1896 to parents James and Hannah Thomson (nee Martin). His birth is registered under Albert John Thompson. (James Thomson married Hannah Martin in 1890).

Albert John Thomson was an 18 year old, single, Labourer from Atherton, Queensland when he enlisted at Atherton, Queensland on 17th February, 1915 with the 7th Infantry Brigade, 26th Infantry Battalion, "A" Company of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 198 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. Thomson of Atherton, Queensland. As Albert John Thompson was under the age of 21 years, his parents' consent was required so that he could enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. James Thomson, father of Albert John Thomson, signed on 17th February, 1915, as consent to allow his son to enlist. A death for Hannah Thomson was registered in 1915 in Queensland.

Private Albert John Thomson was written up for the Crime of Gambling while at Enoggera Camp on 21st April, 1915. Five witnesses were listed & the charge was admonished on 22nd April, 1915.

Private Albert John Thomson embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 24th May, 1915 & disembarked at Egypt (date not recorded).

Private Thomson disembarked at Alexandria from Mudros on 9th January, 1916.

The District Paymaster, Brisbane advised on 8th March, 1916 that the allotment (of 2/6d per diem) for 198 Private A. J. Thomson previously paid to Mr J. Thomson was cancelled on account of Mr J. Thomson's death. The allotment was now on favour of Miss F. M. Thomson, sister of Private A. J. Thomson, who was entirely dependent upon him.

Private Thomson proceeded to join the B.E.F (British Expeditionary Force) at Alexandria on 15th March, 1916 & disembarked at Marseilles, France on 21st March, 1916.

Private Thomson was wounded in action on 6th July, 1916 in Belgium & taken to 73rd Field Ambulance with a bullet wound to arm and leg. He was transferred to No. 2 Casualty Clearing Station then transferred to Ambulance Train to France on 7th July, 1916. Private Thomson was admitted to No. 3 Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne on 7th July, 1916 with multiple shrapnel wounds. Private Thomson was invalided to England on 10th July, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Cambria*.

Private Thomson was admitted to Harefield Hospital in Middlesex, England on 24th July, 1916 with gunshot wounds to right thigh & right arm. He was discharged on 7th August, 1916.

Private Thomson was marched in to No. 1 Command Depot at Perham on 7th August, 1916 & medically classified as Class A – fit. He was transferred from No. 1 Command Depot to 7th Training Battalion on 26th August, 1916.

Private Thomson was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital on 23rd September, 1916, cause not yet determined.

Private Thomson was marched in to 7th Training Battalion & taken on strength from Hospital on 13th October, 1916.

Private Thomson was written up for an Offence while attached to 7th Training Battalion. He was reported for "Overstaying leave from 2400 on 23.10.16 until reporting at 9.45 on 6.11.16." He was awarded 14 days' detention by Commanding Officer of 7th Training Battalion on 7th November, 1916 & forfeited a total of 28 days' pay.

Private Thomson proceeded overseas to France via Folkestone on 13th December, 1916 aboard SS *Victoria*. He was marched in to 2nd Divisional Base Depot at Etaples on 14th December, 1916.

Private Thomson was admitted to 18th General Hospital at Camiers on 20th December, 1916 with suspected mumps. He was transferred to the Isolation Hospital at Etaples the same day. Pte Thomson was discharged on 9th January, 1917.

Private Thomson was marched in to 2nd Divisional Base Depot at Etaples on 9th January, 1917. He proceeded to join his Unit on 4th February, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 5th February, 1917.

Private Thomson was sent to Divisional Bombing School on 26th June, 1917 & rejoined his Battalion on 1st July, 1917.

Private Thomson was written up for an Offence on 6th August, 1917 – Absent without leave from 7.45 am on 4th August, 1917 to 9 pm on 4th August, 1917. He was awarded 7 days Field Punishment No. 2 & forfeited a total of 8 days' pay.

Private Thomson proceeded on English Leave from Belgium on 11th January, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion on 29th January, 1918.

Private Thomson was detached to Divisional Bombing School on 10th March, 1918 & rejoined his Battalion on 23rd March, 1918.

Private Thomson was sent sick to Hospital on 24th March, 1918. He was taken to 5th Australian Field Ambulance with Scabies then transferred to 7th Australian Field Ambulance. Private Thomson was discharged to duty on 29th March, 1918. & rejoined his Battalion from Hospital on 31st March, 1918.

Private Thomson was wounded in action (2nd occasion) in France on 10th April, 1918. He was taken to 5th Australian Field Ambulance with a gunshot wound to right leg. He was transferred to 56th Casualty Clearing Station then transferred to Ambulance Train the same day. Private Thomson was admitted to 5th General Hospital at Rouen on 11th April, 1918. He embarked for England on 13th April, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Western Australia*. Pte Thomson was admitted to 5th Southern General Hospital at Portsmouth, England on 16th April, 1918 with a machine gun bullet to right calf (severe). Private Thomson was transferred to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford on 12th July, 1918.

Private Thomson was on furlo from 17th to 31st July, 1918 & was then to report to No. 4 Command Depot.

Private Thomson was reported as Absent without Leave by Australian Headquarters, London on 31st July, 1918.

Private Thomson was declared an illegal absentee on 27th August, 1918 by a Court of Inquiry at London.

Private Thomson was apprehended on 2nd October, 1918.

A Court Martial was held at Warwick Square on 7th October, 1918 for Trial of 198 Private A. J. Thomson. The charges were: *"(1) London, AWL from 31.7.18 until apprehended by the Military Authorities in London 2.10.18. (2) London, Conduct to the prejudice of good order & Military discipline in that he made use of a document purporting to be a genuine pass, in which the dates had been improperly altered."* Pleading – Guilty to both charges. Finding – Guilty of both charges. Sentence – 6 months Detention. Total forfeiture of 250 days' pay.

Private Thomson was admitted to 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford, Wiltshire on 9th October, 1918 with VD & discharged to Lewes Detention Barracks on 17th October, 1918. (HM Prison Lewes was signed over to A.I.F. which then raised the A.I.F. Detention Barracks at the site in the town of Lewes, near Brighton on the Sussex coast).

Private Thomson was discharged from Lewes Detention Barracks on 6th January, 1919 due to a remission of his sentence. His Sentence was reduced from 6 months to 89 days. Private Thomson was marched in to Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire on 6th January, 1919.

Private Albert John Thomson died at 10.35 pm on 15th February, 1919 at the 1st Australian General Hospital, Sutton Veny of broncho pneumonia (Influenza).

A death for Albert J. Thomson, aged 21, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Albert John Thomson was buried on 18th February, 1919 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 51. From the burial report of Private Thomson - *Coffin was Elm with Brass Mounts – Deceased was buried with full Military Honours, the coffin draped with the Australian flag being borne to the graveside on a Gun Carriage preceded by a Firing Party from No. 1 Command Depot A.I.F. Sutton Veny. The funeral was attended by 2 Officers and about 50 N.C.O.'s and Men of A.I.F. who followed the remains and were present at the graveside ceremony. Headquarters A.I.F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

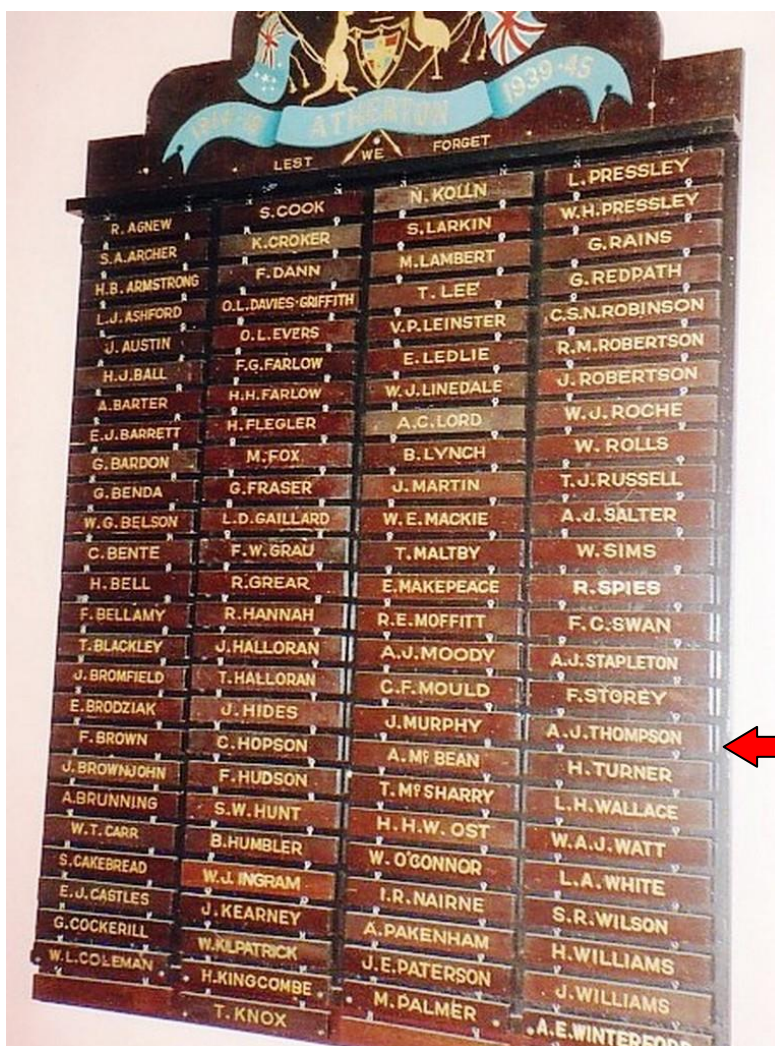
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Private A. J. Thomson is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 109.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. J. Thomson (spelt as Thompson) is remembered on the Atherton RSL Honour Roll located on Kennedy Hwy, Atherton, Queensland.



Atherton RSL Honour Roll (Photo from Queensland War Memorial Register – Dennis Stocks)

Private Albert John Thomson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also to be sent to Pte Thomson's next-of-kin.

A report from Cairns Police District, Atherton Station, dated 8th February, 1921 states that Miss Thomson, sister of late Pte A. J. Thomson was interviewed (for the purpose of ascertaining the next-of-kin ?) & she informed the Police that her parents were both deceased – for the past 5 years. She also stated that she had a married sister, who resided at Tumoulin with her husband. The eldest brother – Sydney James was living with his brothers and sister on Herbarton Road, near Atherton. Miss Thomson stated she was the eldest sister unmarried, living at home & that she kept house for her three brothers and two sisters. From this investigation the War Medals & Mementoes were awarded to Pte Thomson's eldest brother – Mr Sydney James Thomson of Atherton, Queensland (Scroll sent August, 1921 & Plaque sent January, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Albert John Thomson, 198, of 26th Battalion, Australian Infantry, A.I.F., as the son of James and Hannah Thomson. Born at Irvinebank, Queensland.

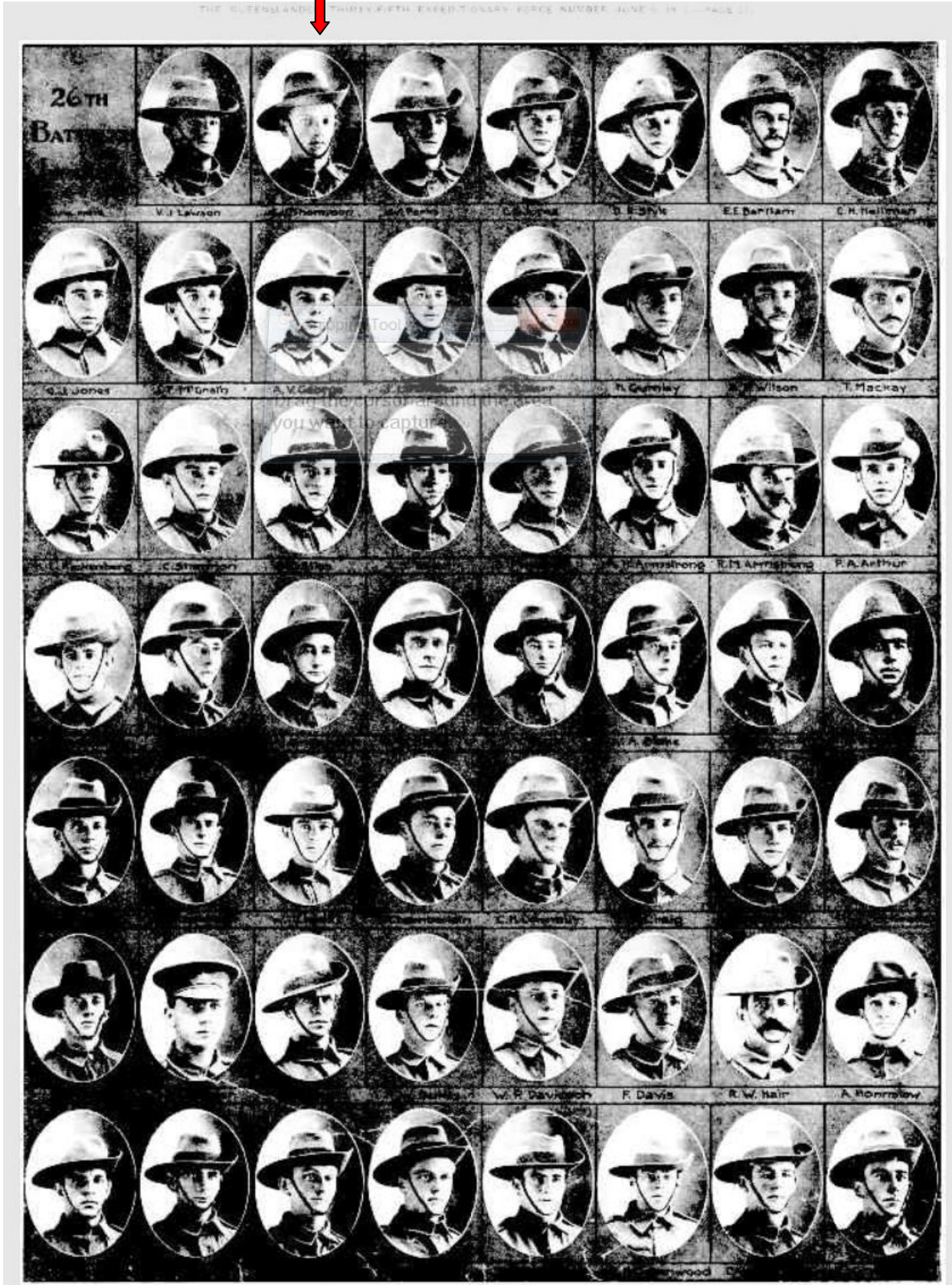
(63 pages of Private Albert John Thomson's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives.



(*The Queenslander* – 5 June, 1915)

26th Battalion Infantry



Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

WOUNDED

Private A. J. Thomson (Atherton – second occasion)

(The Capricornian, Rockhampton, Qld – Saturday 18 May, 1918)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LIST No. 461

Died, from Other Causes

Private A. J. Thomson (Atherton).

(Morning Bulletin, Rockhampton, Qld – Wednesday 19 March, 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 at St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny. 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 Albert John Thomson does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Memory Of Loved Son Of Late Mr. & Mrs. J. Thomson Of Atherton

St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards. The 26th Division was concentrated at Sutton Veny in April 1915 and No 1 Australian Command was there from the end of 1916 to October 1919. There was also a hutted military hospital of more than 1200 beds at Sutton Veny for much of the war and No 1 Australian General Hospital was stationed there after the Armistice. Sutton Veny (St John) Churchyard contains 168 First World War burials, 167 of them in a plot at the north west corner of the church. Of these, 143 are Australian. There is only one Second World War burial in the churchyard.

(Information & colour photos from CWGC)



War Graves at Sutton Veny (Photo from CWGC)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00376



War Graves at Sutton Veny *(Photo from CWGC)*

Photo of Private A. J. Thomson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)