

Francis William (Frank) ROBERTS



Regimental No. 6874
Place of birth Albert Park, Melbourne, Victoria
Religion Church of England
Occupation Orchardist
Address Upper Hawthorn, Victoria
Marital status Married
Age at embarkation 27
Next of kin Wife, Mrs Ruby May Roberts, 17 Hastings Road, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria

Previous military service Nil
Enlistment date 23rd February 1916
Place of enlistment Melbourne, Victoria
Rank on enlistment Private
Unit name 21st Battalion, 19th Reinforcement

AWM Embarkation Roll No. 23/38/4
Embarkation details Unit embarked from Melbourne, Victoria, on board HMAT A11 *Ascanius* on 11th May 1917 with (Voyage Only) rank of Sergeant. Disembarked Devonport, England on 20th July 1917 and marched into 6th Training Battalion, Rollestone.

Rank from Nominal Roll Private
Unit from Nominal Roll 21st Battalion
1917 19th September 1917 Appointed Acting Sergeant.
1917 29th September 1917 Reverted to the ranks and same day appointed Acting Lance Corporal.
1917 6th November 1917 Proceeded overseas to France.
1917 14th November 1917 Joined 21st Battalion in the field.
1918 2nd March to 11th March On leave in Paris.
1918 August Back in forward trenches through the great push of August 1918.
1918 1st September Killed in Action in France at Mont St. Quentin after 2 years and 4 months service with the 21st Battalion. With all those who fell about him at the taking of Mont St. Quentin he was first buried where they fell at Mont St. Quentin. Later re-buried in the Peronne Cemetery.
Fate Killed in Action 9th September 1918

Other details



Medals: 1914 - 15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal
Son of John Garibaldi and Roberta (Ruby) Roberts, 'Sunnyside' South Sassafras, Victoria
Described as Height - 5' 9", Weight - 129 lbs
Age at death from cemetery records 30
Buried in an isolated group of graves in a shell hole in a valley near a lane, just East of Mont St Quentin, and 1 mile North of Peronne.
Peronne Communal Cemetery Extension (Plot III, Row L, Grave No. 35), France Panel No., Roll of Honour, Australian War Memorial - 94

Frank Roberts and Ruby Barrett married while Frank was still in training at Royal Park. When Frank left Australia he had something to look forward to - Ruby was pregnant. Ruby and Frank's daughter Nancy was born in November 1917. As the War reached its climax in 1918, Ruby decided to send Frank one of Nancy's leather booties and kept the other one at home with her. She was waiting and hoping for Frank's return, to bring the bootie with him. It wasn't to be. Frank Roberts was killed in action.

The single bootie was returned to Ruby, stamped "undeliverable". Frank's father Garry, received the dreaded telegram 12 days after the battle. It was, as Garry described it, "the most awful day in our lives."