

## **Private Albert Victor Roberts**

**Regimental number: 1991**

**3rd Reinforcements, 25th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force**

**born: 18 September 1889 – died: 4 July 1916**

Albert Victor Roberts was born in or near Gympie, Queensland, Australia, on 18 September 1889.<sup>1</sup> His parents, Charles Roberts and Augusta Wint, were married in Queensland on 31 May 1884.<sup>2</sup> The other children of Charles and Augusta Roberts included Ada Anne (born 1885), Flora (1887), Ethel Emanda (1892) and Charles Reinbolt (1895). Gympie's European settlement dates back to the 1860s when gold was discovered.

Soon after war broke out in Europe, life for Albert began to change rapidly. Albert Victor Roberts married Ada Victoria Allan in Queensland on 24 February 1915.<sup>3</sup> Their son, Charles Arthur Roberts, was born in Queensland, 29 April 1915.<sup>4</sup> Albert enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force shortly afterwards, on 25 June 1915.<sup>5</sup>

In early December 1915, Private Albert Victor Roberts and the 3rd Reinforcements of the 25th Battalion were in Gallipoli. After those units were moved to Egypt, Private Roberts spent a month being treated for illness at the 2nd Casualty Clearing Station in Ismailia. Less than a month after being released and fit for duty, those units were again on the move to France.<sup>6</sup>

Private Roberts were seriously wounded on the infamous day that opened the Battle of the Somme, 1 July 1916. He was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station in Bailleul, France, with shell wounds to the breast and to the thigh. He died at that station on the 4th of July.<sup>7</sup>

Bailleul had become an important hospital centre for not just the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station but also for the 1st Australian and five British Army casualty clearing stations. In July 1916, the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station war diary records that the station received 2,810 admissions, of whom 70 died.<sup>8</sup> The station was likely too busy for more detailed entries in the unit's war diaries.

Private Roberts was buried in Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension (Nord), Section II, row E, Grave 92.<sup>9</sup> This cemetery contains 4,403 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, 17 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War and 154 German burials from both wars.

Private Roberts' son Charles Arthur Roberts joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve in 1940. He initially used the family name Drane, but the attestation was then changed to Roberts.<sup>10</sup> According to the military service file for Thomas Ebenezer Drane, Albert's widow, Ada, married Thomas Drane in Brisbane on 28 May 1918.<sup>11</sup> However, no entry for this marriage was found in the Australian marriage index.

Private Roberts' widow Ada stopped using the surname Drane in the 1940s.<sup>12</sup> Ada Victoria Roberts (1897–1963), daughter of Andrew Allan and Bridget Catherine Cosgrove, died in Queensland.<sup>13</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Victor Albert Roberts, Registration place: Queensland, Australia, Registration number: 004802
- <sup>2</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Charles Roberts, Registration place: Queensland, Registration number: 000637
- <sup>3</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Albert Victor Roberts, Registration place: Queensland, Registration number: 000269
- <sup>4</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Charles Arthur Roberts, Registration place: Queensland, Australia, Registration number: 005234
- <sup>5</sup> "Australia WWI Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Albert Victor Roberts
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> "War Diaries – 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," Library and Archives Canada ([collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec\\_nbr=2005082](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=2005082): accessed 23 August 2016)
- <sup>9</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Roberts, A. V., Service No: 1991
- <sup>10</sup> "Royal Australian Navy from 1911," *National Archives of Australia* ([recordsearch.naa.gov.au/NameSearch/Interface/ItemsListing.aspx](http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/NameSearch/Interface/ItemsListing.aspx): accessed 29 August 2016) entry for Charles Arthur Roberts
- <sup>11</sup> "Australia WWI Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Thomas Ebenezer Drane
- <sup>12</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Ada Drane
- <sup>13</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 29 August 2016), entry for Ada Victoria Roberts, Registration place: Queensland, Registration number: B060628