

NGA

National Gallery of Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEVER BEFORE SEEN TOM ROBERTS PORTRAIT GIFTED TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA

A previously unseen Tom Roberts pastel portrait has been generously gifted to the NGA by the artist's great granddaughter Dr Lisa Roberts.

Dr Roberts was moved to gift the drawing to the NGA after experiencing the Tom Roberts exhibition in December. 'I felt compelled to give this work after seeing the incredible and comprehensive nature of this exhibition,' Lisa said.

The portrait of Tom Robert's only child, Caleb, was drawn in 1898, soon after he was born in his home in Balmain, Sydney. It has remained in his family collection since then, being handed down the generations.

'We are delighted to receive this generous gift from Lisa Roberts and include it in the current exhibition so all Australians can enjoy this tender, personal capturing of his infant son in the context of Tom Roberts' general, public career,' said Gerard Vaughan, NGA Director.

Caleb Roberts, who was affectionately nicknamed 'Ca' by his parents, accompanied them to England in 1903, at the time of the completion of the *Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia by H.R.H. The Duke of Cornwall and York (Later King George V), May 9, 1901*. He graduated from the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst in 1916 and was awarded the Military Cross for his service in WWI. When Tom and his first wife Lillie moved back to Australia in 1923, Caleb and his wife followed. He found work as an assistant highway engineer and eventually became Chairman of the Country Roads Board of Victoria.

The portrait of Caleb now hangs in the Tom Roberts exhibition, alongside portraits of Robert's wife Lillie and a Roberts bust of Caleb as a young boy.

The Tom Roberts exhibition is on until 28 March in Canberra and tickets can be purchased through Ticketek or at the Gallery.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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Image below is courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, 2016.

