

**St. Edith's Churchyard,  
Baverstock, Wiltshire, England**

**War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**4518 PRIVATE**

**A. J. COWIE**

**30TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**3RD MARCH, 1917    Age 31**

*The Supreme Sacrifice*

## Alfred James COWIE

Alfred James Cowie was born at Singleton, New South Wales in 1885, to parents James and Jane Cowie (nee Cameron). His birth was registered as James A. Cowie.

Alfred James Cowie attended Public School at Singleton, NSW.

Alfred James Cowie was a 31 year old, single, Labourer from Grangla, Singleton, NSW when he enlisted on 12th September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 4518 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his Aunt – Sarah Amos, Grangla, Singleton, NSW. (On his Attestation Papers, Alfred had stated that he had previously served 5 months with 4 Regt. D. Coy but had been discharged for being Absent without Leave.)

Private Alfred James Cowie was posted to Recruits Show Ground Camp, Sydney, on 12th September, 1916. He was transferred to Dubbo Depot Battalion on 15th September, 1916 then transferred to "B" Company, Depot Battalion at Bathurst, NSW on 22nd September, 1916. Private Cowie was transferred to 12th Reinforcements of 30th Battalion at Liverpool, Sydney, NSW on 13th November, 1916.

Private Alfred James Cowie embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Beltana* (A72) on 25th November, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 30th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29th January, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Alfred James Cowie was admitted sick to Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire from 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott on 17th February, 1917. The Hospital Admissions form recorded that Private Cowie was seriously ill with acute Bronchitis.

Private Alfred James Cowie died at 4.30 p.m. on 3rd March, 1917 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Bronchitis.

A death for Alfred J. Cowie, aged 31, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Private Alfred James Cowie was buried on 6th March, 1917, in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire, England and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

Private A. J. Cowie is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 116.

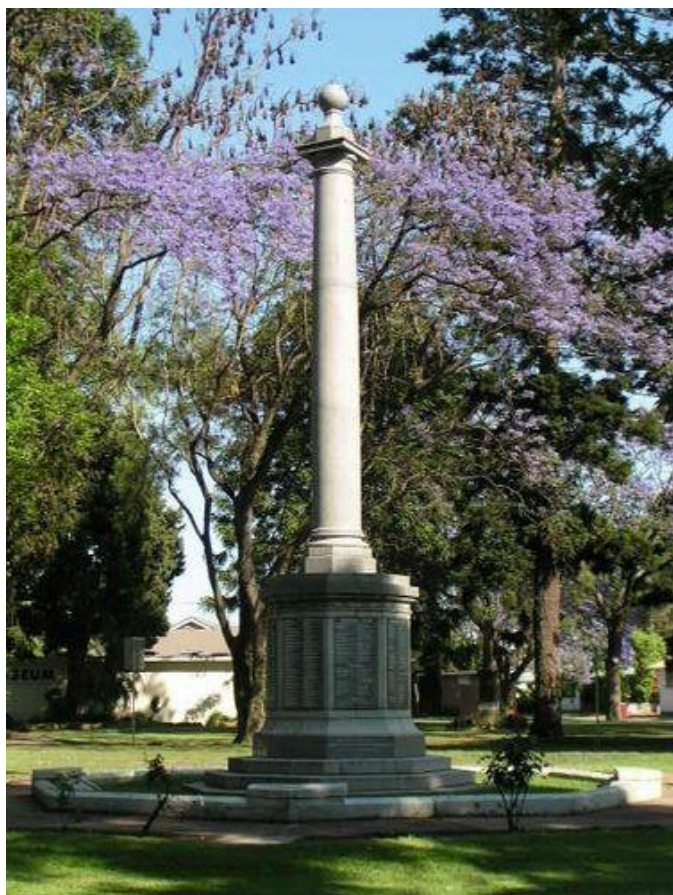


(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A.J. Cowie is remembered on the Singleton War Memorial located in Burdekin Park, George Street, Singleton, NSW.



**Singleton War Memorial** (Photos Monument Australia)

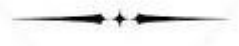
A War Pension was granted to Phoebe Jane Moss, of York St, Singleton, Widowed Mother of the late Pte Alfred James Cowie, in the sum of £2 per fortnight from 4/3/17.

Private Alfred James Cowie was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Cowie's mother – Phoebe Jane Moss (September, 1922 & August, 1922) (Private Cowie's mother had remarried in 1903 – to Conrad Moss).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred James Cowie – service number 4518 as being 31 years old & served with 30th Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of James and Phoebe Jane Cowie, of Pitt St., Singleton, New South Wales.

(52 pages of Private Alfred James Cowie'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*







## **Newspaper Reports**

### **WAR CASUALTIES**

DIED OF ILLNESS

PRIVATE J. A. COWIE

Private James Alfred Cowie, son of Mrs Conrad Moss, Singleton, succumbed to illness on March 3.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Tuesday 13 March, 1917)*

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## **IN MEMORIAM**

COWIE – In loving memory of Private A. J. Cowie, No. 4518 34th Batt., who died while on active service, March 3rd, 1917.

No loving mother's gentle hand  
    To wipe the death-dew from his brow;  
No token of love in that far off land  
    To mark the spot where he sleepeth now.

Inserted by his loving Mother, Sister and Brother.

*(Singleton Argus, NSW – Saturday 1 March, 1919)*

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## **ROLL OF HONOUR**

COWIE - In memory of my beloved Son, Pte Alfred James Cowie, 30th Battn. Killed in action in France, 4th March, 1917.

Rest in the Saviour, sweetly rest;  
They miss you most who love you best.

Inserted by his loving mother, Mrs C. Moss, Pitt-street.

*(Singleton Argus, NSW – Tuesday 3 March, 1925)*

\*\* NOTE – Pt Cowie died at Fovant, Wiltshire England. He did not go to France. Date of death was 3rd not 4th March, 1917

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## **ROLL OF HONOUR**

COWIE – In loving remembrance of my dear Son, Alfred James Cowie, who was killed in action in France 3rd March, 1918.

A loving memory left behind  
Of a loving one, true and kind;  
We have lost, but Heaven has gained,  
One of the best this earth contained.

Inserted by his loving Mother, Phoebe Moss, Sister, and Brother.

*(Singleton Argus, NSW – 4 March, 1932)*

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## 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. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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 from Base Records, dated 28th July, 1921, to Mrs P. J. Moss of Pitt Street, Singleton advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of the late Pte A. J. Cowie exceeded the limit imposed by the War Graves Commission & the request for the Star of David was pointed out to be the emblem of the Jewish faith . A reply was sent from Athol G. Coughlan, late Graves Services A.I.F., dated 4th August, 1921, on behalf of Mrs P. J. Moss advising that *"this old lady can neither read or write. She has asked me to communicate with you.....As regards the inscription the following will do in place of the one selected previously "The Supreme Sacrifice".....With reference to the request for the Star of David can be deleted and the cross inscribed in lieu there of..."*

Private A. J. Cowie does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*The Supreme Sacrifice*

## **St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England**

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock contains 32 World War 1 War Graves – 3 London Regiment Graves in the south-west corner & 29 Australian War Graves.



**St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock** *(Photos courtesy of Helen Roberts)*





**St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock** (Photos courtesy of Helen Roberts)





Photo of Private A. J. Cowie's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England.



*(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)*