



## 4518 Private 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. He was a 31 year old, single, labourer from Grangla, Singleton, NSW when he enlisted on 12th September, 1916 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 30th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (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.)

He embarked from Sydney on HMAT Beltana (A72) on 25th November, 1916 & 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. Cowie was admitted sick to Military Hospital at Fovant, Wiltshire from 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott on 17th February, 1917.

Private Alfred James Cowie died at 4.30 p.m. on 3rd March, 1917 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire from Bronchitis. A death for Alfred J. Cowie, aged 31, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire. He was buried on 6th March, 1917, in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire 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.



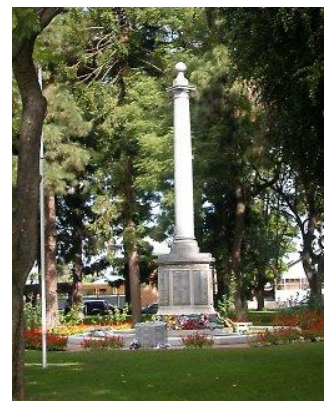
*Rail Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



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

Singleton War Memorial (Photos from Register of War  
memorials in NSW)



Private. Alfred James Cowie was entitled to British War Medal only. (The Victory Medal was awarded to those that had entered a theatre of war on duty between 5 August 1914 and 11 November, 1918). A Memorial Scroll & Memorial

Plaque were also sent to Pte. Cowie's mother – Phoebe Jane Moss (September, 1922 & August, 1922) (Pte. 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. 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 4th March 1917

(52 pages of Pte. 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**

#### **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**

#### **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**

**OPC Note:-** Private. Cowie died at Fovant, Wiltshire England, he did not go to France. Date of death was 3rd not 4th March, 1917

## **Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones**

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased WWI 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 3½d. (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 advises 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 thereof..."

Pte. A. J. Cowie has a personal inscription on his headstone. - The Supreme Sacrifice



Photo of Pte. A. J. Cowie's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire. (Photo Courtesy of CWGC)