

Sutton Veny War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I



3605 PRIVATE

J. BAXTER

52ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

17TH JANUARY, 1918 Age 26

He Did His Duty

May His Soul Rest In Peace

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte J. Baxter is located in
Grave Plot # 317. D. 7. of St. John the Evangelist Churchyard, Sutton Veny*

Jack BAXTER

Jack Baxter was born at Cooktown, Queensland in 1891 to parents Thomas Albert & Emma Baxter (nee Dear). He was a 26 year old, single, Miner from Cooktown, North Queensland when he enlisted at Cairns, Queensland on 8th June, 1917 with the 52nd Infantry Battalion, 10th Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 3605 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Emma Baxter of Shipston's Flat, Cooktown, North Queensland.

Pte Jack Baxter embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Euripides (A14)* on 31st October, 1917 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 26th December, 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 Jack Baxter was marched in to 13th Training Battalion, Codford, Wiltshire on 26th December, 1917.

Private Jack Baxter was sent sick to Group Hospital at Codford with Influenza (Bronchitis & Asthma recorded on Hospital Admissions form) on 2nd January, 1918.

Private Jack Baxter was transferred & admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 7th January, 1918 with Bronchitis.

Private Jack Baxter died at 1.45 a.m. on 17th January, 1918 at the Military Hospital, Sutton Veny of Bronchitis purulent. A Post mortem examination was completed on 18th January, 1918 – diagnosis – death from acute purulent bronchitis.

A death for Jack Baxter, aged 24, was registered in the March quarter, 1918 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire.

Private Jack Baxter was buried on 21st January, 1918 in St. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny - Grave no. 327. From the burial report of Pte Jack Baxter – *The deceased was accorded a Military Funeral. The Coffin was of good Elm – The matron informed me that he was sick only a very short time. For days before his death he was in a dazed condition, and the only thing he said was "Give my love to Mother." He was thought very highly of by his friends, a good many of whom came to see him buried.*

Pte Jack Baxter requested in his Will, dated 10th August, 1917, that the whole of his property to be given to his brother Mr Thomas Albert Baxter of Shipton's Flat, Cooktown.

A War Pension claim was made by Thomas Albert Baxter of Shipton's Flat, Cooktown. This was rejected on grounds "that claimant was not dependent upon his deceased brother during the 12 months prior to his enlistment."

Private J. Baxter is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 154.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(51 pages of Pte Jack Baxter'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

ROSSVILLE NOTES

Saturday, February 2nd, was a busy night in Rossville. We had a joyful time, as in addition to a Red Cross dance, arranged some months ago, we had the pleasure of welcoming another of our returned soldiers, Mr W. Colley.

.....Mr. F. J. Francis then spoke of the Work of the Rossville Patriotic Society, and appealed for funds for the Red Cross. He spoke appreciatively of Mr; Colley, as a good Australian and a good mate, who had given his country, two years two hundred and eighteen days of strenuous service. He mentioned the loss sustained by the community by the death on active service of Mr. Jack Baxter, a member of our committee, and a constant, subscriber to the funds. He (Mr. Baxter) was a good son, a good mate, quiet and modest in his life, yet showed he was of the stuff of which heroes are made. The sympathy of all would go to Mr. and Mrs. Baxter in their great bereavement.....

(The Northern Herald, Cairns, Qld – Thursday 14 February, 1918)

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

Private J. Baxter, Cooktown, died of illness.

(The Northern Miner, Charters Towers, Qld – Wednesday 27 February, 1918)

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. John the Evangelist Churchyard at Sutton Veny. 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)

Pte Jack Baxter does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

He Did His Duty May His Soul Rest In Peace

Photo of Pte J. Baxter's Headstone in St. John the Evangelist's Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.



(Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



War Graves at Sutton Veny *(Photos from CWGC)*

