

# Baverstock War Graves



*Lest We Forget*

## World War 1



4253 PRIVATE

**T. BAXTER**

31ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

8<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 1917 Age 23

*As The Ivy Clings To Oak*

*Our Memory Clings To Thee*

## Thomas BAXTER

Thomas Baxter was born in Rochford, Queensland around 1893, to parents John & Alice Baxter (nee Thommason). He was a 23 year old, Stockman from Charters Towers, Queensland when he enlisted on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1916 with the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 4253 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Alice Poschalk, Kirk River, N.Q.R., Queensland. (Thomas' mother had remarried in 1901 to Augustus Poschelk as his father had died in 1897).

Pte Thomas Baxter embarked from Brisbane on HMAT *Kyarra (A55)* on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 & disembarked at Plymouth, England on 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

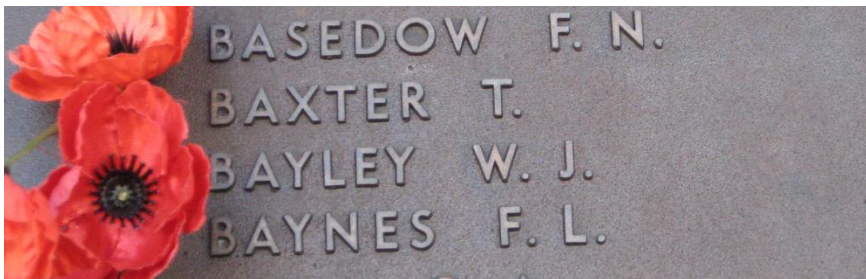
Private Thomas Baxter was admitted sick to Fovant Hospital from 8<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 1917.

Private Thomas Baxter died at 9.50 a.m. on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 at Fovant Military Hospital, Wiltshire from pneumonia.

A death for Thomas Baxter, aged 23, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

Private Thomas Baxter was buried on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

Private T. Baxter is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 118.



*(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)*



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

Charters Towers War Memorial Cenotaph, located on Gill Street, Charters Towers, does not have individual names listed.



**Charters Towers War Memorial Cenotaph**

*(Photo by Merle Scott 2012)*

Pte Thomas Baxter was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Baxter's mother – Mrs A. Poschalk (July, 1922 & November, 1922). (In a letter to Australian Imperial Forces, dated 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1921, from the stepfather of Thomas Baxter, Mr A. Poschalk indicates that his wife, the mother of Pte Baxter is deceased.)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Thomas Baxter – service number 4253 as being 23 years old & served with 31st Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of John and Alice Baxter, of Marion St, Charters Towers, Queensland.

(51 pages of Pte Thomas 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

Charters Towers, October 2.

Twenty volunteers left to-day for Enoggera. They were – Messrs C.E. Bennion, R.E.J. Weston, W.D. Fitt, E. Morissey, T. Baxter, .....

(*Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Qld – Monday 2 April, 1917)

---

### DEATH

#### THE ROLL OF HONOUR

BAXTER. —In a Military Hospital, in France, Private Thos. Baxter, died of illness, March 8th, aged 22 years, dearly beloved brother of H. J. and R. Baxter, of Kuridala, Mrs M. Spillane, Charters Towers, and J. Baxter, and Mrs Crees, of Heathfield.

May his Soul Rest In Peace.

(*Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Qld – Monday 2 April, 1917)

---

#### ROLL OF HONOUR

BAXTER.—In fond and loving memory of my dear son, Private Thomas Baxter, who died of pneumonia, March 8th, 1917, Military Hospital, England, Fovant).

Oh, how my heart does ache  
To think of how you died;  
To think I could not say good-bye  
Before you closed your darling eyes.  
Far and oft my thoughts do wander  
To the grave so far away,  
Where they laid our darling Thomas  
Just three years ago to-day.

(Inserted by his loving mother, Mrs. A. Poschalk, and brother, James Baxter, Marion Street.

BAXTER.—In loving memory of our dear brother, Private Thomas Baxter, who died at Salisbury Plains, England, March 8th, 1917, aged 23 years.

We pictured his safe returning,  
We longed for a clasp of his hand;  
But God has postponed our meeting—  
We shall meet in a better land.  
He sleeps, not in his native land,  
But under foreign skies,  
Far from those who loved him dearly  
In a soldier's grave he lies.

(Inserted by his sorrowing sisters and brothers, Mr. and Mrs. A. Crees (Charters Towers), Mr. and Mrs. J. Baxter (Emuford), Mr. R. Baxter (Hamford), Mr. and Mrs. H. Baxter (Cairns).

(*The Northern Miner*, Charters Towers, Qld – Monday 8 March, 1920)

---

### 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 2nd July, 1921, to Mrs A. Poschalk, Marion St, Charters Towers, Qld., advises that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription for the headstone of the late Pte T. Baxter had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken. From letters in Pte Baxter's Service Record file it is believed that his mother – Mrs A. Poschalk died sometime between 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1921 & 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1921.

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

*As The Ivy Clings To The Oak Our Memory Clings To Thee*



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

*(Photo from CWGC)*



Photo of Pte T. Baxter's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.



*(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)*

