

# Durrington War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



**2707 PRIVATE**

**H. COLES**

**33RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**18TH FEBRUARY, 1917**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte H. Coles is located in Grave Plot # 203  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## Harry COLES

Harry Coles was born at Moss Vale, NSW in 1886. He was a 29 year old, single, Labourer from 97 Burren St, Newtown when he enlisted on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 with the 33<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 2707 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Edwin Coles 97 Burren St, Newtown, Sydney, NSW.

Pte Harry Coles embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Port Napier* (A22) on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1917. Pte Harry Coles was admitted to ship's hospital from 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1916 & discharged 17<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

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

Pte Harry Coles was marched in to 9<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion at Durrington from Australia on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 1917. He was Absent without Leave from 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 and forfeited a total of 6 days pay.

Pte Harry Coles was admitted to Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 with Laryngitis.

Pte Harry Coles died of Broncho-Pneumonia at 9 a.m. on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital, Wiltshire. Pte Victor William Hindhaugh, 6756 from 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Battalion died at 3.15 a.m. on same day, also of pneumonia. Both men were buried next to each other in Durrington Cemetery.

A death for Harry Coles, aged 29, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Pte Harry Coles was buried at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire - plot number 203 on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 and has a Commonwealth War Graves headstone.

Private H. Coles is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 121.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



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

Pte Harry Coles was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Coles' next-of-kin – his eldest brother, Mr James Coles of Paddington, NSW (March, 1923 & August, 1923)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Harry Coles – service number 2707 as being 29 years old & served with 33rd Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

(46 pages of Pte Harry Coles' 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*

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## Newspaper Reports

### **ROLL OF HONOUR**

COLES – Died of pneumonia, Military Hospital, Salisbury Plains, Feb. 18, 1917. Pte Harry Coles, of Newtown, aged 30 years. Inserted by his loving father, brothers and sisters. Deeply regretted.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Wednesday 21 February, 1917)*

## CASUALTIES - 276<sup>th</sup> LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES – DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte H. Coles, Newtown

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Saturday 3 March, 1917)*

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### ON ACTIVE SERVICE

COLES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Private Harry Coles, who died at Salisbury Plains, February 18, 1917. Inserted by his loving sisters and brothers.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW Monday 18 February, 1918)*

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### IN MEMORIAM

COLES – In loving memory of our dear brother, Pte Harry Coles, who died at Salisbury Plains, February 18, 1917.

We pictured your safe returning,  
And longed to see your face again,  
But God has postponed our meeting  
Till we meet in the land above.  
Inserted by his sisters and brothers.

*(The Scrutineer and Berrima District Press, NSW – Wednesday 20 February, 1918)*

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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 Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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, dated 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1921, from Base Records to Mr E. Coles of 97 Burren St, Newtown requested that a communication from Defence Dept. in connection with a permanent headstone for Pte H. Coles had not been replied to & that non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would indicate a non desire to further action.

Pte H. Coles does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Photo of Pte H. Coles' Headstone at Durrington War Graves Cemetery, Wiltshire.



(Photo © Ian King - with permission)