

PRIVATE JAMES GEORGE COLEMAN

1735, 15th Battalion, Australian Infantry, Australian Imperial Force

Died aged 28 on 8 August 1915

Remembered with honour on *Lone Pine Memorial*; 45

Commemorated in Tewkesbury at the Cross, in the Abbey and on the Grammar School Memorial



*Lone Pine Memorial,
Turkey*



*J. G. Coleman
Australia 1912 (Graphic)*



*Australian Infantry,
A.I.F*

JAMES GEORGE COLEMAN was born in 1887 in Tewkesbury to James William Coleman and Eliza (formerly North). Eliza was born in Chelsea, then Middlesex, the daughter of printer, William North. James was the grandson of James G. Coleman, owner of an outfitting business located at 6 and 11 the High Street (in 2015 'Rage' Hairdressers and 'Gregg's the Bakery'). In 1901 the extended family, including James, was living at 11 High Street. Both James and his brother, Raymond Noel, were educated at Tewkesbury Grammar School.

In 1911 the two brothers emigrated to Australia, sailing from Liverpool on *SS Dorset*, bound for Brisbane in Queensland, arriving on 18 May. On a 1912 Christmas card they were photographed 'camping in their tent in the Bush'; it stated that Raymond had been an apprentice of the *Echo* newspaper in Cheltenham before he emigrated. (The Passenger manifest described James as a Bookseller, and his brother as a Machinist.) Raymond returned to the UK in 1914 but James decided to remain in Australia.

However, like many emigrants, James volunteered for war service, enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force on 23 January 1915 at Goondiwindi in Queensland. He was posted to the 15th Battalion, which was raised in September 1914 and came under the command of the 4th Australian Brigade. The Brigade was sent to Egypt early in 1915 as part of the Australia and New Zealand (ANZAC) Division. The brigade then sailed for the Gallipoli peninsula, landing at Anzac Cove late on 25 April 1915. The battle had become deadlocked, so on 6 August 1915 a

final attempt was made by the British to break out of the perimeter to seize control of the peninsula. The *Battle of Sari Bair* (6-21 August 1915) was one of the constituent battles (also known as the August Offensive). The 15th Battalion was part of a subsidiary attack on 6 August against the Abdel Rahman Bair heights, known as 'Hill 971'. The attack was a failure and, by 8 August, the three participating Australian battalions had suffered 765 casualties; the 15th battalion alone was reduced to 30% of its normal strength.

Private James George Coleman was initially declared missing, no doubt a casualty of the attack on Hill 971. He was later judged by a Court of Enquiry to have been killed in action on 8 August 1915. His body was not recovered and he is commemorated on the *Lone Pine Memorial* on the Gallipoli peninsula. He was awarded the Australian '1914-1915 Star' as well as the British *Victory* and *War* Medals. Somewhat unusually, he nominated his older brother, Hubert, as his next-of-kin rather than his parents and he received James's Memorial Plaque and Scroll in 1922. James George Coleman's name will be projected onto the exterior of the Hall of Memory on the Australian War Memorial in Canberra on seven specific occasions between 24 December 2014 and 21 October 2015.

James's younger brother, **Private Raymond Noel Coleman** [†] of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, was killed in action in August 1917 during the *Battles of Ypres 1917*. After the war, James's parents retired to Southcroft, Bredon's Norton.