

**Sergeant George Alfred Blunt**<sup>©</sup>  
**Regimental number: 4747**  
**55th Battalion, Australian Infantry Force**

**born: 1891–died: 1916**

George Alfred Blunt was born in Orange, New South Wales (NSW), Australia, in 1891, the son of Charles and Fanny Blunt.<sup>1</sup> He was one of ten children born to Charles and Fanny: the others were Mary Ellen (b. 1884),<sup>2</sup> Charles E. (b. 1886),<sup>3</sup> Frederick James (b. 1888),<sup>4</sup> Alma Emily (b. 1890),<sup>5</sup> James Edwin (b. 1893),<sup>6</sup> William Harold (b. 1895),<sup>7</sup> Harry Clifton (b. 1897),<sup>8</sup> Amy May (b. 1899)<sup>9</sup> and Nellie Isabel (b. 1901).<sup>10</sup> Four of them did not live more than a few years: Mary Ellen died after 1 year,<sup>11</sup> Charles E. after about 8 years,<sup>12</sup> James E. after 2 years,<sup>13</sup> and Harry C. after 4 years.<sup>14</sup>

George's father Charles (known as Chas) was one of nine children of Charles Sr., who came from England, attracted by the gold rush of 1851. They settled in Lucknow, NSW, where Charles Sr. opened the Victoria Hotel.<sup>15</sup> Chas operated a butchery in Lucknow before venturing into grazing.<sup>16</sup> In 1883 he married Fanny Agland,<sup>17</sup> but she died in 1902,<sup>18</sup> a year after giving birth to the last of their ten children. Chas lived another 42 years.<sup>19</sup>

Not too much is known about George. He was listed as a farmer in the 1913 Electoral Rolls,<sup>20</sup> probably working for his father. He was also well known in football circles, and at the time of his enlistment was engaged to be married to Miss Mercy Dwyer.<sup>21</sup>

George enlisted at Orange, NSW, on 18 August 1915.<sup>22</sup> He was 5 feet, 7.5 inches tall, weighed 150 pounds, and had grey eyes and brown hair. He also had a scar on the index finger of his right hand. He disclosed some prior service in the 9th Light Horse (Orange Troop). He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 15th Reinforcements, of the Australian Infantry Force. He spent almost seven months in training camp before leaving Sydney for Egypt on 8 March 1916 on HMAT A15 *Star of England*.

On 20 April 1916 George was transferred to the 55th Battalion at Ferry Point on the Suez Canal. He was promoted on 2 May 1916 to corporal and appointed lance [acting] sergeant. On 31 May 1916 he was promoted to sergeant. Then on 19 June 1916 he embarked on HT *Caledonian* in Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force in France, disembarking in Marseilles on 29 June.

The battalion traveled by train to Thiennes in Northern France, arriving on 3 July.<sup>23</sup> It spent a week training on bayonet fighting, musketry and gas attacks. On 9 July it marched 22 kilometres to Estaires and moved into the front-line trenches on 11 July, just south of Armentières. They were relieved by the 6th Battalion of the Shropshire Light Infantry during the night of 15 July but called back into action on 19 July for an attack on the German lines. The attack was successful and the German lines were carried, but the battalion was forced to withdraw the next day in the face of a fierce counter-attack. Casualties were heavy, with 37 killed, 5 dying of wounds, 154 wounded and 143 missing.

One of those who died of wounds was Sergeant George Blunt. According to a number of eyewitness accounts,<sup>24</sup> Sergeant Blunt was in his own trenches at Fleurbaix moving forward for the attack when a "whiz-bang" from enemy lines landed close to him and blew off both his legs. He survived for a while and was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station at Bailleul, where he was operated on but died shortly afterward.<sup>25</sup> He was buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, Reference II. F. 5.<sup>26</sup> There is no inscription on his headstone. The cemetery lies in

the east end of the town of Bailleul, in the Nord department of the Hauts-de-France region; it contains the remains of 4344 soldiers from the two world wars.

Sergeant George Blunt received the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) for his service. He also received the 1914–15 Star, for service in any theatre of the war in 1914–15.

George's older brother **Frederick** was a farmer—first in Lucknow,<sup>27</sup> then after his marriage in Millthorpe, Calare, NSW.<sup>28</sup> He married Jessie May Taylor in Orange in 1918.<sup>29</sup> There is no evidence of any military service. Frederick died on 9 August 1963.<sup>30</sup>

George's younger brother **William** was also a grazier, living in Emu Swamp, Calare, NSW.<sup>31</sup> He married Mary Taylor in Sydney in 1926. Again there is no evidence of military service.

George's oldest sister **Alma** married Joseph Bathurst Gordon in 1921.<sup>32</sup> He was a local farmer who had enlisted in 1916 into the 3rd Army Field Artillery Brigade and served in England and France for the 2nd Reinforcements Trench Mortar Batteries Medium Artillery as a driver.<sup>33</sup> He returned to Australia in 1919 and resumed his life as a farmer, in Blayney, NSW.<sup>34</sup> Joseph passed away in 1951,<sup>35</sup> but Alma lived until 1983.<sup>36</sup>

Younger sister **Amy** married Albert Charles Hill in 1926.<sup>37</sup> He was born in 1901,<sup>38</sup> so was too young for military service. He became a newsagent in Newcastle, NSW.<sup>39</sup> Amy died in 1954.<sup>40</sup>

Youngest sister **Nellie** married Alfred James Parfett in Crookwell, NSW in 1930.<sup>41</sup> They settled in Orange, NSW, where Alfred worked as an accountant.<sup>42</sup> There is a World War II Military Service Record for him,<sup>43</sup> and he lived till 1990.<sup>44</sup> Nellie died a year later.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for George A Blunt

<sup>2</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Mary E Blunt

<sup>3</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Charles E Blunt

<sup>4</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Frederick J Blunt

<sup>5</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Alma E Blunt

<sup>6</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for James E Blunt

<sup>7</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Willah (sic) Blunt

<sup>8</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Harry C Blunt

<sup>9</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Amy M Blunt

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- <sup>10</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Nellie I Blunt
- <sup>11</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Mary E Blunt
- <sup>12</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Charles E Blunt
- <sup>13</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for James E Blunt
- <sup>14</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Harry C Blunt
- <sup>15</sup> "Mr. Charles Blunt," in *Raymond Terrace Examiner and Lower Hunter and Port Stephens Advertiser* (NSW: 1912–1955), Thursday 29 June 1944 - Page 3, *Trove* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/133096802?searchTerm=Charles%20Blunt>: accessed 23 January 2023), search for Charles Blunt
- <sup>16</sup> "Obituary: Mr. Charles Blunt" in *The Leader* (Orange, NSW: 1899–1945), Wednesday 31 May 1944 - Page 2, *Trove* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/255248900?searchTerm=obituary%20-%20Charles%20Blunt>: accessed 23 January 2023), search for Obituary - Charles Blunt
- <sup>17</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Chas Blunt
- <sup>18</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Fanny Blunt
- <sup>19</sup> "Australia, Death Index, 1787–1985," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Charles Blunt
- <sup>20</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for George Alfred Blunt, 1913
- <sup>21</sup> "A Lucknow Soldier Killed - Sergeant George Blunt," in *The Leader* (Orange, NSW: 1899–1945), 4 August 1916, page 6, *Trove* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/117811510?searchTerm=George%20Blunt>: accessed 25 January, 2023), search for George Blunt
- <sup>22</sup> "Australia, WW1 Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 26 January 2023), entry for George Alfred Blunt. Unless otherwise specified, all information about his military service comes from this source.
- <sup>23</sup> "Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914–18 war, AWM4 Subclass 23/72 - 55th Infantry Battalion," *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1344289>: accessed 27 January 2023)
- <sup>24</sup> "Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing Files," *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1483843>: accessed 28 January 2023), entry for George Alfred Blunt
- <sup>25</sup> "BIFHSGO Name Index" (<https://www.bifhsgo.ca/search-name-index>: accessed 27 January 2023), search for Blunt, Geo. A.
- <sup>26</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 27 January 2023), entry for George Alfred Blunt, Service No: 4747
- <sup>27</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for Frederick James Blunt, 1913
- <sup>28</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for Frederick James Blunt, 1930
- <sup>29</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Frederick J Blunt
- <sup>30</sup> "Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales," (Sydney, NSW: 1901–2001), Fri 6 Mar 1964, page 769," *Trove*

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(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/220395980?searchTerm=Frederick%20James%20Blunt>: accessed 29 January 2023), search for Frederick James Blunt

<sup>31</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for William Harold Blunt, 1930

<sup>32</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Alma E Blunt

<sup>33</sup> "Australia, WW1 Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 26 January 2023), entry for Joseph Bathurst Gordon

<sup>34</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for Joseph Bathurst Gordon, 1930

<sup>35</sup> "New South Wales, Australia, Index to Deceased Estate Files, 1859–1958," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 January 2023), entry for Joseph Batheirst [sic] Gordon

<sup>36</sup> "Australia, [newspapers.com](http://newspapers.com) Obituary Index, 1800's–recent," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 January 2023), entry for Alma Gordon

<sup>37</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Albert C Hill

<sup>38</sup> "Australia, Birth Index, 1788–1922," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Albert C Hill

<sup>39</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for Albert Charles Hill, 1943

<sup>40</sup> "Global, Find a Grave Index for Burials at Sea and Other Select Burial Locations, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 1 February 2023), entry for Amy Hill

<sup>41</sup> "Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 January 2023), entry for Alfred J Parfett

<sup>42</sup> "Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903–1980," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 25 January 2023), entry for Alfred James Parfett, 1930

<sup>43</sup> "Australia, World War II Military Service Records, 1939–1945," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 1 February 2023), entry for Alfred James Parfett

<sup>44</sup> "Australia, Newspaper Vital Notices, 1831–2001," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 1 February 2023), entry for Alfred James Parfett

<sup>45</sup> "Web: Australia and New Zealand, Rootsweb Death Index, 1813–2003," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 1 February 2023), entry for Nellie Isabel Parfett