

ANDREW BLAKE BLYTHE



2595 Pte. Andrew Blake Blythe

Andrew Blythe was born in July 1893 at Nannup to parents Roland and Elizabeth and grew up on the family farm. Like his nine siblings, Andrew attended school in Nannup and on completion of his education went to work on the farm.

On the 10TH of August 1915, Andrew, like his younger brother Benjamin, Andrew, aged 22, joined the AIF.

In 1916, two more of the Blythe sons were to join the AIF.

At the time of his enlistment, Andrew gave his occupation as that of a farmer. The particulars taken from his initial medical examination showed that Andrew was slight in stature; five feet six inches tall, weighing 126 pounds with a chest measurement of 33½ inches; of fair complexion with grey eyes and sandy hair.

On enlistment, Andrew was assigned to 22 depot Blackboy Hill (near Northam) as a Private and in October 1915 allocated to 6th reinforcements 28th Battalion.

After initial training at Blackboy Hill camp, Andrew embarked on HMAT “Ulysses” at Fremantle on the 2nd of November 1915 bound for Egypt, disembarking at Alexandria, Overseas Training Base.

In February of 1916, Andrew was admitted to the 4th Auxiliary Hospital at Abbassia (Egypt) suffering from Mumps. After being discharged from hospital, Andrew was sent to the overseas training base at Ghezireh where he stayed for a month before being sent to the 3rd training battalion at Tel-El-Kebir. During May of 1916, Andrew was taken on strength 11th Battalion in the field Egypt. Shortly afterward, in late March, the 11th Battalion embarked at Alexandria with the British Expeditionary Force, disembarked to the 1st Australian Division Base depot at Etaples (France) on the 7th of June 1916.

On the 29th of July 1916, Andrew joined “D” company 11th Battalion AIF in the field.

The 11th Battalion had been involved in fierce fighting in the area around Pozières and having lost 19 officers and 512 other ranks, the battalion was moved back to Berteaucourt to be rebuilt. After reorganising, the 11th Battalion were placed in Brigade reserve. Just before dawn on the 21st of August, about 200 men from the 11th Battalion took part in an attack around Mouquet Farm, casualties amounted to 20 killed and 40 wounded and afterwards the Battalion was

moved to Belgium and spent the remainder of 1916 in the Ypres sector in Flanders but was moved back to the Somme at the end of the year as the worst winter in 40 years descended on the front.

In early 1917, the Germans fell back towards the Hindenburg Line to shorten their lines and move into prepared positions. As the Allies pursued the Germans in late February the 11th Battalion captured Le Barque, conducting mopping up operations before advancing to Thillooy, where they fought a minor engagement before being relieved by the 3rd Battalion.

It was during this minor engagement on the 27th of February 1917, Pte. Andrew Blythe was Killed in Action.

The report of his death by Pte H R Kays 6375 "D" Coy 11th Battalion AIF; reads:

"He was hit by a shell at Ligny Thillooy, below Bapaume about 3:00pm. He was hit in the right breast, one arm broken and between the knee and the thigh on the left leg. I helped carry him to the Field Aid Post Dressing Station. He lived about three quarters of an hour. I saw him die but do not know where he was buried. He was in my Platoon, aged about 30. 5foot 10, fair, clean shaven. I had known him four months. He came from Western Australia".

MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS.

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