

Benjamin John Blythe.



Benjamin Blythe was born in Nannup in June of 1895, to parents Roland and Elizabeth Blythe (née Dickson.)

Along with 9 siblings, Ben grew up on the family farm and attended the State School in Nannup.

At aged 19 years and 10 months and with his father's consent, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Forces.

At the time of his enlistment, Ben gave his occupation as butcher and his place of residence as that of c/o Roland Blythe "Meinatup" Nannup WA.

After signing the attestation form and passing the medical examination on the 5th of May 1915, Benjamin was allocated to the 7th Reinforcement unit, 11th Battalion AIF.

At the time of his enlistment, Benjamin's medical record shows him to be 5' 7" tall, weighing 9 stone 8lbs and having a chest measurement of 33¹/₂ inches, fair complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair. His father Roland Blythe was named as his Next of Kin.

On the 5th of May 1915, Benjamin was allocated to the 7th Reinforcements 11th Battalion AIF at Blackboy Hill (near Northam.) On the 10th of May 1915 Benjamin posted to the 6th reinforcement unit, 12th Battalion AIF.

Embarked at Fremantle on HMAT A62 "Wandilla" bound for Egypt. Disembarked Alexandria for overseas training base. Discharged

After training in Egypt, on the 6th of August 1915, Benjamin was taken on strength 12th battalion AIF at Gallipoli. Benjamin then suffered a long period of diarrhoea / enteritis and was admitted to the No. 1 Australian Clearing Station, ANZAC Gallipoli ex No. 2 Field Ambulance. In September 1915 Benjamin was evacuated and admitted to Military Hospital

Imtarfa (Malta) ex Mudros ex Gallipoli ex Hospital Ship. On the 8th of October 1915, evacuated/admitted to No. 1 Southern general Hospital Birmingham England ex Malta. Discharged from hospital in February 1916 to 22nd Draft Weymouth England. Rejoined 12th battalion in the field Serapeum Egypt. Embarked Alexandria on the 29th of March 1916 with the British Expeditionary Force bound for Marseilles France. Disembarked a week later at Marseilles.

From April 1916, the 12th Battalion AIF was engaged with the enemy at Pozières. During these engagements, Pte Benjamin Blythe, on the 22nd of August 1916 near Mouquet Farm, noticed Lance Corporal Rex lying out in the open wounded, about 200 yards from the enemy trench trying to get back when the Germans opened fire on him. Benjamin made the remark "I like young Rex" and promptly jumped out of the Australian trench and ran over to Rex and pulled him into a crater, bandaged him up and under very heavy fire, succeeded in carrying him back to the Australian lines. This gallant action undoubtedly saved Rex's life.

For this action, Benjamin was recommended for Distinguished Conduct Medal, however, this was never awarded.

On the 1st of November 1916, Benjamin Blythe was promoted in the field to Lance Corporal. Just 10 days later, on the 10th of November 1916, L/Corporal Blythe was Killed in Action.

Benjamin Blythe has no known grave and is remembered on the memorial wall at Villers Bretonneux, France.