



DUCKHAM FAMILY



Family History

Henry Duckham, born in 1826, was a convict who arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1855 on board the *Adelaide*. A brick and tile maker by trade, in 1852, he was sentenced to twenty years for the crime of rape.

Henry left a wife and child behind in England but, after receiving his Ticket of Leave in 1857, he married Catherine Doolan at Guildford in 1860. She had arrived on the *City of Bristol* in 1857 and was the daughter of Lawrance Doolan.

The couple had four children: Sarah Jane (born 1860), John (born 1862) and Harry (born 1865). An unnamed daughter died thirteen hours after her birth in 1867, and Catherine died in 1868.

By 1860, Henry was self-employed and, by 1883, he had employed up to forty-eight Ticket of Leave men on different occasions at various enterprises in York, Guildford, Toodyay, Northam, Victoria Plains and "Yangedine," near Beverley. They were mostly brick makers.

It appears that Henry's second son, Harry, died in 1882 while working up North for a member of the Monger family. The records indicate that Henry had another son, named Alfred, born in 1871 to a woman recorded only as Maria/Marie/Mary Ann Duckham. A record of a marriage between Henry and Maria has not yet been found.

Henry died on the 1st April 1891.

John Duckham, son of Henry and Catherine, was born on the 11th July 1862 at Newcastle (Toodyay). He was a farmer and brick maker in the Northam district. John married Mary Ann Forward, the daughter of James Forward and Louisa Hayden, at Northam in 1887. They had eight children.

Alfred Duckham grew up in York. As a young man, he worked for his father before being employed as a porter at the railway station. After the death of his father in 1891, a notice was placed in the Eastern Districts' Chronicle warning the public against buying property belonging to the Estate of Henry Duckham from his son (as he was a minor with no power to sell).

Alfred proved to be accident-prone at work. He smashed the forefinger of his right hand while loading a wagon with machinery in 1894 then, in 1896, he narrowly escaped death at York when he fell under a train.

In 1895, Alfred married Annie Ewings in Northam. A son, John Henry, was born in 1896, followed by Holly Linda, known as Olive (1898), Alfred James Ormuz (1900), Hilda May (1902), William Hilton Carlisle (1904), Jessie Jane (1907), Mollie Winifred (1911) and Edna Madge (1913).

There is also a birth record for an Ernest Duckham, born to Alfred Duckham and Caroline Bird in 1892. Caroline was the widow of Henry Hubble and already had two children by her first husband. There is no record of a marriage to Alfred Duckham, and she went on to marry Alfred Ernest Martin in 1894. Ernest was raised by Caroline and her second husband with the surname of Hubble (despite his birth registration as Duckham) probably to correspond with the surnames of his half-siblings.

By 1901, Alfred was working as a labourer in Northam and, in 1915, he was arrested for stealing two parcels from Bullaring Siding on the Wickepin-Merredin line. Alfred was ordered to make restitution and pay court costs.

In 1928, working in the metropolitan area, Alfred was hospitalised with a fractured arm and severe injuries to his hand after catching his arm in a coal elevator in a locomotive shed. Four fingers were severed.

Alfred died in East Perth in 1936.



DUCKHAM

William John

Service No: 3455

BASIC INFORMATION

Name: William John Duckham

Service Number: 3455

Date of Enlistment: 26/7/1915

Age at Enlistment: 25 years 8 months

Civil Occupation: Labourer

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal, 14/15 Star

Height: 5 ft. 8 ¼ inches

Weight: 156 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 35 inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Brown

Father: John/Jack Duckham

Mother: Mary Ann Forward

Married: Jean May Forbes

Siblings: Amy Catherine (1893), Cora Louise (1896), James Horace (1899), Alfred Frederick (1901-1902), Edward Albert Henry (1905), Eva Muriel (1908), Mary Auriel Grace (1915).

Life Story

William John was born in 1887 in the Northam district and attended York State School during his youth.

By 1911, he was employed casually by the Western Australian Government Railways as a striker at the Midland Junction Workshops. This position was made permanent in 1912 but, two years later, his appointment was altered to labourer at his own request (due to ill health).

On 26th July 1915, William was granted leave to join the A.I.F. He reduced his age by more than two years and, at his medical review, gave his occupation as bootmaker.

William left Australia for Alexandria on the 1st November 1915 with the 16th Battalion, before being Taken on Strength with the 4th Division Artillery, 24th Howitzer Brigade, as a Gunner on the 16th March 1916. On the 25th January 1917, he was Taken On Strength with the 12th Field Artillery Brigade.

William's service was plagued by illness. On the 31st August 1917, he was admitted to hospital with renal colic and abdominal pain. After returning to base eight days later, William was admitted to the 26th General Hospital at Etaples with bronchitis/influenza on the 27th October. After re-joining his unit on the 27th November 1917, William was admitted to hospital in early December, suffering myalgia, and transferred to Queen Mary's Military Hospital in Lancashire, England, at the end of the month. He was diagnosed with chronic rheumatism and urinary incontinence and given permission to return to Australia.

William embarked the *Osterley* at Plymouth on the 1st February 1918 and arrived in Fremantle on the 6th April 1918. While on the ship, he was admitted to the ship's hospital on the 21st March suffering from a severe attack of renal colic lasting twenty-four hours.

On the 26th April 1918, it was reported that William was at the Base Hospital in Fremantle suffering from shellshock and the effects of being gassed, though there is no record of this on his service record or medical reports in his file.

William resumed his employment with W.A.G.R. on the 4th May 1918 and worked as a fitter's assistant before resigning in September 1918.

He travelled to Victoria where he worked as a labourer for a short period of time before marrying Jean May Forbes in 1919. They had 2 children: Alice Jean, born in Victoria, and Patricia Lorraine, who was born in York a month after her father's death.

By 1920, the couple were back in Perth and William was again employed by W.A.G.R. as a striker.

William died on 16th August 1921 at York.



DUCKHAM

James Horace

Service No: 3278

BASIC INFORMATION

Name: James Horace Duckham

Service Number: 3278

Date of Enlistment: 26/2/1917

Age at Enlistment: 18 years 5 months

Civil Occupation: Baker

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 5 ft. 8 inches

Weight: 130 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 35 inches

Complexion: Fair

Eye Colour: Grey

Hair Colour: Yellow

Father: John/Jack Duckham

Mother: Mary Ann Forward

Married: No

Siblings: William John (1887), Amy Catherine (1893), Cora Louise (1896), Alfred Frederick (1901-1902), Edward Albert Henry (1905), Eva Muriel (1908), Mary Auriel Grace (1915).

Life story

James Horace Duckham (known as Horace) was the second son of Jack and Mary Ann Duckham. Born in York in 1899, there is little mention of him in the public records before his enlistment in February 1917, at the age of eighteen.

Horace embarked from Fremantle on the 29th June 1917 on board A30 HMAT *Borda* and arrived at Plymouth, England, nearly two months later. He was marched in to Larkhill Camp on Salisbury Plain as part of the 11th Training Battalion and was transferred to the 10th Training Battalion at Sutton Mandeville in November before finally proceeding to France on the 18th December 1917.

On the 24th December, Horace was Taken on Strength with the 44th Battalion in the Field, where he remained until being Wounded in Action on the 4th July 1918. Horace was wounded during the Battle of Le Hamel, a major co-ordinated attack planned and controlled by Lieutenant General John Monash. The Australia Corps Memorial Park memorial is now situated on the site of the battle. James Horace Duckham did not survive his wounds. A letter, published in the Avon Gazette and York Times, courtesy of Horace's mother, detailed his last moments:

France, July 7, 1918-

Dear Mrs. Duckham, — I now take the painful duty of letting you know how Horace died. We have been mates since we have been in France, and left Australia together, so I deem it my duty to write to you. We had just made an advance the Hun was expected to counter attack, Horace and I was lying on the parapet together when a bullet hit him through the shoulder. We bandaged him up. He died two minutes before we got him to the dressing station. He died a real brave lad: and a son to be proud of. He was quite conscious to the last and was talking to me to the end. He died almost without pain, I am real sorry and miss him very much, I have got a few of his treasures and sending them on to you, I hope to visit you on my return. I join with you in sincere sympathy, I remain

*Yours sincerely,
JOHN PAGE.*

James Horace Duckham was buried in the Villers Bretonneux Cemetery in France.

DUCKHAM

John Henry

Service No: 2074



PTE. J. H. DUCKHAM,

Somewhere in France. Parents reside
in Narrogin.

Courtesy National Archives of Australia

BASIC INFORMATION

Name: John Henry Duckham

Service Number: 2074

Date of Enlistment: 1/5/1916

Age at Enlistment: 19 years 10 months

Civil Occupation: Postal Assistant

Medals, Honours, Awards: British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 5 ft. 8 ½ inches

Weight: 126 Lbs.

Chest Measurement: 33 inches

Complexion: Sallow

Eye Colour: Hazel

Hair Colour: Dark

Father: Alfred Duckham

Mother: Annie Ewings

Married: No

Life Story

John Henry Duckham, the son of Alfred Duckham, was born in York on the 27th May 1896. He was a cousin to William John and James Horace Duckham.

John Henry grew up in the Narrogin district and attended Narrogin State School where, in Standard Six, in 1910, he earned a certificate and prize for manual work.

John Henry enlisted on the 1st May 1916 at the age of nineteen, naming his father as Next of Kin. He embarked from Fremantle on the 10th October 1916 aboard the *A28 Suffolk* and disembarked at Plymouth on the 2nd December.

On the 20th December, John Henry proceeded overseas to Etaples, France, with the 11th Training Battalion, where he was admitted to hospital on the 1st January 1917 with suspected mumps. Discharged back to the 3rd Reinforcements at Base Depot on the 29th January, John Henry was Taken on Strength with the 44th Battalion on the 8th February.

After just seven weeks with the Battalion, John Henry was Killed in Action while in the Field, on the 28th March 1917. The 44th Battalion War Diary recorded only one death and one wounded that day, with the Battalion only returning to the front line at Ploegsteert the day before, having been at billets in Pont de Nieppe for a week after being relieved from the front line trenches on the 19th March.

John Henry Duckham was buried in the Berks Cemetery Extension, Ploegsteert Wood, two miles South South West of Messines.

Acknowledgements

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