



Private (Sapper) John Stewart Blackburn



Played with Adelaide University



Cricket Club: 1910/11 - 1912/13

Other Sports: Lacrosse, Rifle Club

Degree: BA 1914

MBE 1960 (in recognition of services to the blind)

Background

Coinciding with the Centenary of Anzacs our incentive behind the series of biographical publications is the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Club's desire to honour our players who served in the Great War (1914 - 1918). These brave men put on hold their academic, professional and sporting careers for King and Country in the name of peace and freedom. The AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee is endeavouring to identify every one of our players who served and prepare life stories on all. This is to ensure their sacrifices and further contributions to society will be recognised by future generations.

On Anzac Day 2015, the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the Adelaide University Oval Pavilion and this was followed by the erection of a picket fence between the pavilion and the scoreboard with each picket bearing a plaque with the name of an AUFC/AUCC player who served.

The following documentation relates to the life of John Stewart Blackburn. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.

AUFC/AUCC WW1 MEMORIAL COMMITTEE



John Stewart BLACKBURN

Regimental number	559
Place of birth	Adelaide, South Australia
Religion	Church of England
Occupation	School teacher
Address	Blackburn, Wagin, Western Australia
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	27
Next of kin	Sister, Margaret Brown, Blackburn, Wagin, Western Australia
Enlistment date	5 September 1914
Rank on enlistment	Private
Unit name	<u>12th Battalion, E Company</u>
AWM Embarkation Roll number	23/29/1
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Hobart, Tasmania, on board Transport <i>A2 Geelong</i> on 20 October 1914
Regimental number from Nominal Roll	434
Rank from Nominal Roll	Sapper
Unit from Nominal Roll	3rd Field Company Engineers
Fate	Returned to Australia 23 October 1918
Other details	Medals: 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal

Early Life

John (Jack) Stewart Blackburn was born to Thomas and Margaret Blackburn (nee Browne) on the 2nd October 1887 at Woodville.



Thomas Blackburn (1844 - 1912)



Margaret Harriette Stewart Browne (1864-1904)

230.

Nº 496

1887 District of Port Adelaide 545.

When Born.	Name (if any).	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Name, if added after Registration of Birth.
October 2nd 1887 at Woodville	John Stewart	Male	Thomas Blackburn	Margaret Harriette Stewart	Clerk in Holy Orders formerly of Woodville	Thos. Blackburn (father) November 1st 1886 Woodville	15th day of November 1887	H. G. Field	

Entered at the District Registry Office, this 15th day of November 1887

I, Ernest Alfred Thom Thomas, Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, for the State of South Australia, do hereby certify the above to be a true and correct copy of the entry of Birth, recorded in the Birth Register of the said State, and numbered Page 545, Book 403

Given under my hand and seal of office, this 15th day of August 1959

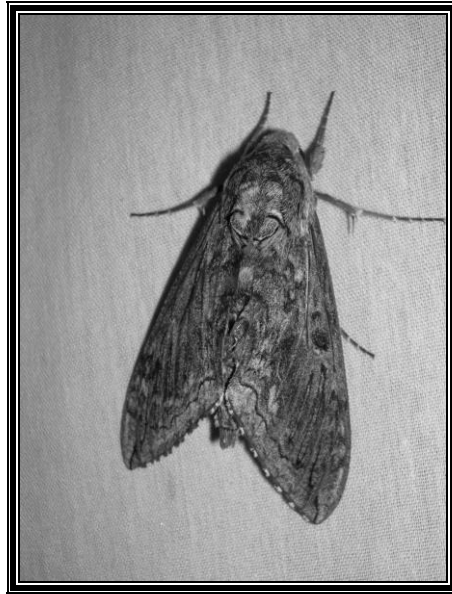
Ernest A.S. Thomas Deputy Registrar.

5/-.

John Stewart Blackburn Birth Certificate

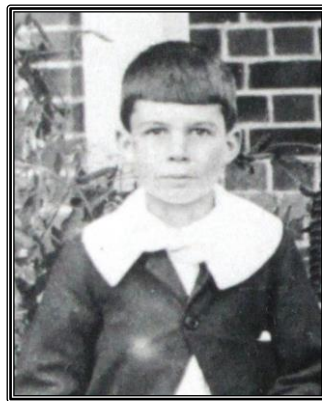
At the time of his birth his father was the Rector of St Margaret's, Woodville (1886-1912) and later Honorary Canon at St Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide (ca 1906-12). He also was a noted entomologist, becoming Honorary Curator in Entomology at the South Australian Museum. During his residence in Australia he described 3,069 species of Australian Coleoptera. There is at least one species named after

him- the Blackburn's Sphinx Moth, (*Manduca Blackburni*) – a moth he had documented while working on Hawaii – prior to arriving in Australia.



Blackburn's Sphinx Moth Manduca Blackburni named after Thomas Blackburn

John was one of three brothers and one sister as well as three half-brothers (from Thomas's earlier marriage in the UK). Young John attended Canterbury House Preparatory School run by Canon S. Slaney Poole on Dequetteville Terrace, Kent Town (located between the brewery and Prince Alfred College). Also attending Canterbury School at the time was William (Lawrence) Bragg who later won the 1915 Nobel Prize in Physics (jointly with his father William Henry Bragg).

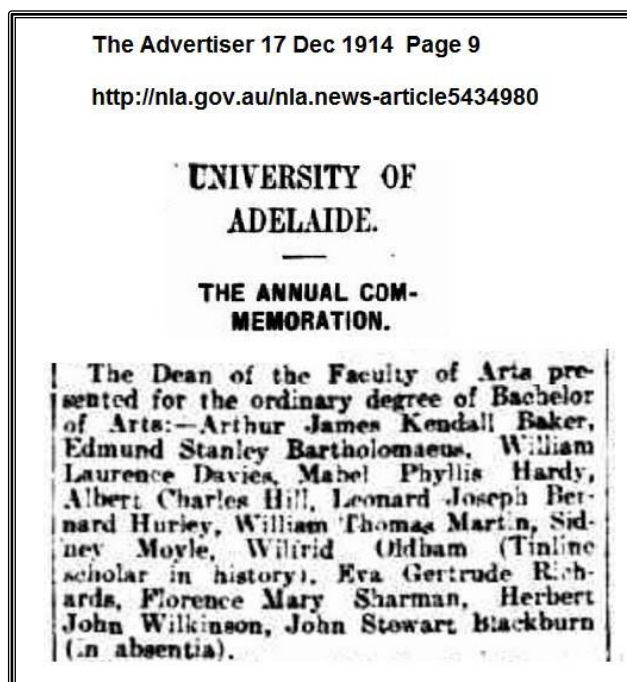


William (Lawrence) Bragg in 1902

Teaching and University

After leaving Canterbury School John was a pupil teacher at Queen's School North Adelaide where he probably completed his senior university entrance examinations over several years. Although not an outstanding student, he was fortunate enough to be awarded an Education Department Scholarship in 1908 to enroll in the Arts course at the University of Adelaide. In 1909 he also was awarded another scholarship to attend evening lectures only. Studying for his degree part time allowed him to work for a time in the South Australian Land and Survey Department. This required him to travel to many parts of the State. He had done well at Geography at school so this vocation was also probably to his liking. He finally completed his course work and examinations at the end of 1913 and his Bachelor of Arts degree was

conferred at the commemoration ceremony (in absentia) in December 1914. He had already enlisted in the Army in September of the same year.



Awarded BA Degree in 1914

Sport at University

Already a keen sportsman while living at Woodville, playing cricket with the local team in the Adelaide and Suburban competition and Lacrosse for Port Adelaide, when he attended Adelaide University he naturally played these sports with "The Blacks". He was a regular member of the newly formed AUCC B Grade team from 1910/11 - 1912/13 seasons. In 1910/11 they played off for the premiership against East Torrens. Although losing the grand-final narrowly, John had a fine season with the bat scoring 301 runs with a top score of 75. He also was an occasional bowler.

UNIVERSITY.				
Played 11 matches: won 7, lost 4.				
—Batting.—				
	Ins.	R.	H.S.	Avg.
H. C. Nett	4	216	116	54.0
K. Goode	7	248	109	35.8
L. G. W. Caust .. 12		335	64	27.9
H. W. D. Moddart .. 8		191	71*	23.8
J. S. Blackburn .. 14		301	76	21.5
H. Powell	7	146	92	20.8
R. B. Pavia	14	319	43	17.0
J. W. Blacket 14		232	55*	16.6
G. Fisher	9	116	44	12.8
A. C. V. Melbourne .. 5		102	37	12.7
J. Londrigan	7	88	44	12.5
G. J. Murphy	6	70	27*	11.6
G. M. Potts	11	102	20*	9.2
A. L. Pinch	9	64	30	7.1

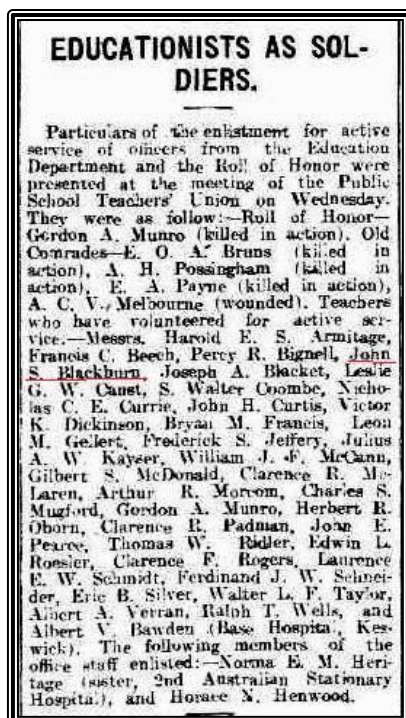
B Grade Batting Statistics - AUCC Season 1910/11

John also played Lacrosse, a sport introduced to Adelaide University by William Henry Bragg (Elder Professor of Mathematics and Experimental Physics) and was a member of the Rifle Club.



Inter Varsity Lacrosse 1909 (John Stewart Blackburn - Standing 6th from Left)

The year after graduating from Adelaide University, the Education Department posted him to Petersburg in the mid-north of South Australia. A country posting was common-place for new teaching staff who had received a scholarship. The appointment was as an Assistant at the Petersburg District High School, a Continuation School founded in 1908. The town of course became Peterborough when town names of German origin were anglicised. This appointment was short-lived and after the outbreak of WW1 he enlisted along-side many of his former university colleagues, cricketing team mates and fellow teachers.




Teachers who had enlisted Express & Telegraph (Adelaide) 1 July 1915

War Service

John Stewart Blackburn enlisted in September 1914 and assigned the rank of Private and was posted to the 12th Battalion, E Company. With his mother and Father both deceased, his only sister Margaret was listed as next of kin. She was living at the time in Wagin Western Australia where her much older half brother Edward (Ted) Forth Williams Blackburn was a bank manager (11 years working for the Bank of New South Wales).

Transferred to 3rd Field Engineers 24/6/14

A 79187 **AUSTRALIAN**  **MILITARY FORCES.**

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 434 529 Name BLACKBURN John Stewart

Unit 12th Bn 3rd Light Bn 3rd Light Coy

Joined on 9/9/14

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

- What is your Name? ... BLACKBURN John Stewart
- In or near what Parish or Town were you born? ... Woodville in or near the Town of Adelaide in the County of Stk Aust
- Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... Natural Born
- What is your age? ... 27
- What is your trade or calling? ... School Teacher.
- Are you, or have you been an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No.
- Are you married? ... No.
- Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... Sister: Margaret Brown Blackburn Wagin Western Aust. The Railway Club, Railway Rd, Perth, W.A.
- Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... No.
- Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? ... No.
- Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ... No. — Rifle Club Unionist
- Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... Yes.
- Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... No.
- (For married men and widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service? ... No.

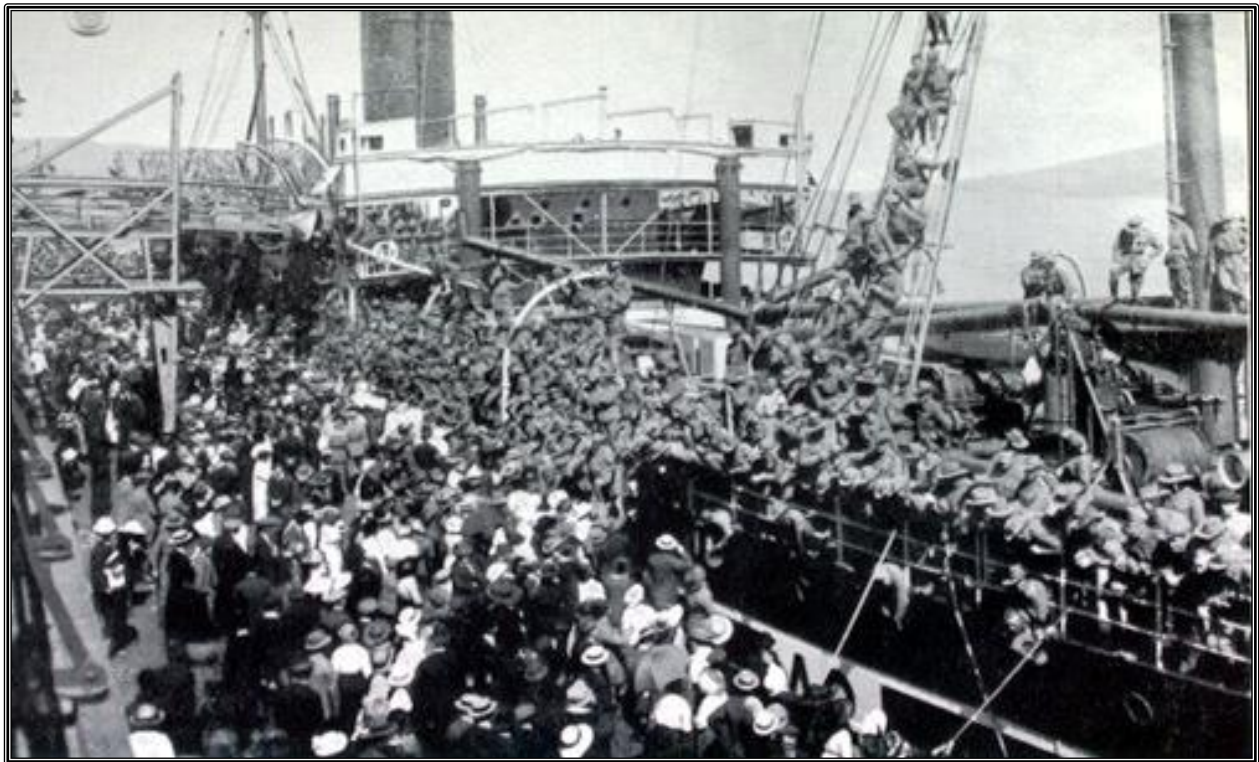
John Stewart Blackburn do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.*

Date 9/9/14 J. Blackburn
Signature of person enlisted.

cp8847 *This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.

In October 1914 John embarked for overseas service on the HMAT A2 Geelong troop transport ship in Hobart (*pictured below with troops boarding*). Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lancelot Clarke, the battalion proceeded to Egypt arriving in Alexandria on 2 December 1914. A period of training in the



desert followed to prepare the Australian forces for their eventual transfer to Europe, but in late April 1915 they were committed to the Gallipoli Campaign. In August 1915 the 12th Battalion E Company contributed two Companies to the "diversionary attack" at Lone Pine. During this offensive John was wounded and evacuated and at one stage was set to return home on leave to recover but it is unclear if he did. After recovering, he was then transferred to the 3rd Field Engineers (obviously because of his surveying experience) and boarded the troop ship HMAT "Clan McGilvery" back to the Dardanelles. After the allied December 1915 retreat he then served in France at Le Havre on the coast of Normandy.



HMAT A46 "The Clan McGilvery"

During his war service, casualty records show that he suffered numerous infections and bouts of debilitating rheumatism requiring hospitalisation. Despite returning to home with his sight intact, it was a complication of the chronic rheumatism that in the mid 1920's caused John to lose his sight.

19. 1. 16. N.O.K. advised in Hosp. Cairo. Rheumatism.
26. 1. 16. N.O.K. ackdg. information sent.
6. 2. 16. M. Blackburn asking name of hospital, date of arrival in W.A. if he will be allowed to land there?
8. 2. 16. Reply sent letter 6.2.16.
11. 1. 16. Adm. 1st Div. Hosp. Rheumatism. M. 6/776/54. 47. Dd Cairo 24. 2. 16.
2. 2. 16. Discharged to O.P. Base. 1st Lt. 1st Bn. 1st Div. M. 6/506/45. Dd Cairo 10-16. 2. 16.
2. 2. 16. Discharged to Helwan Gov. Hosp. to Duty. Part II Orders 111. Dd Alexandria 19/2/16.
24. 3. 16. Rejoined Unit from Hosp. Part II Orders 26/1. Dd Alexandria 14/2/16.
Returning to Unit per H. J. Durham. List 0. embarked 23/10/18. 1914-18 LE A1
C.S. 2965/2533. Dd London 6/1/18. Rec. BR. 5/1/18.
25. 11. 18. N.O.K. advised returning to Unit. Born.
Returned to Australia per H. J. Durham.
Dumb. 3rd M.D. 23/1/18 for 4th M.D. Special Leave 1918. List 165.
23. 5. 19. Will do D. A. S. 4th M.D. 10/3/31.
3/3/30 WAR HISTORY INDEX 1088
1914/15 Star issued B.R.M. 44/229/2320
1914/15 STAR ISSUED NO. 1602
BRITISH WAR MEDAL ISSUED NO. 70
VICTORY MEDAL ISSUED NO. 70
21. 2. 19 Discharged 1st M.D.
27. 3. 24 B.R.P.F. 44 DESPATCHED Wagon, W.A.
9. 4. 24 " " Radio Patched - Remman, S.A.

He was also docked 8 days pay for being absent without leave overnight at Le Havre, France, while on active service.

No. 434 Name Blackburn J. Sqn., Batt., or Company } Corps 3rd Field Coy Engineers of Enlistment } 5-9-14 G. C. } Service or Proficiency Pay }
Date of last Entry in Company Conduct Sheet } No. and date } of last drunk } Sheet No. } Signature O.C. } Character }
Company, etc. }
Place Date of offence Rank Cause of offence Offence Names of Witnesses Punishment Awarded Date of Award or of Order Disputing with Trial By Whom Awarded Remarks
Checked with Records, Aust Section 3rd Echelon. G.H.Q., B.E.F. 24/1/18
Havre 13/2/15 1st Lt. 14.00d. absent from 9pm on 13/2/15 until 722 am on 14/2/15 Doctry 7 days F.P. No. 2 13/2/15 F.M. O'Donnell 2nd CO 4580
Checked with Records, Aust Section 3rd Echelon. G.H.Q., B.E.F. 24/1/18
79187

Bothers and Sister's War Service

John was the first of four brothers to enlist and his sister Margaret, after her fiancé Lieutenant Allenborough Davis was killed in Mesopotamia (around July 1916), also initially assisted the War effort growing fruit and vegetables at Griffiths, NSW. She did not subsequently marry. Other family members also contributed with important roles on the home front.

The Mail (Adelaide, SA) : 11 Sep 1943 p. 11. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article55868674>

W O M A N ' S W O R L D

REPORTERS NOTEBOOK

Round-About: Conducted by Elisabeth George

PRIDE in the achievement of Australian land girls is expressed by Miss Margaret Blackburn, visiting official of the Women's Land Army of New South Wales, who has been spending a holiday in South Australia her native State. Miss Blackburn is in charge of 187 land girls at the largest land hostel in New South Wales, situated in the heart of the irrigation area at Griffith. She says that her girls have pitched hay, pruned orchards, harvested carrots, and picked fruit, together with any other tasks on the land to which they could set their willing hands. One party of them had gone for the harvest into the wheat area and taken their full share of stooking and stacking. "There are few girls who find they cannot stand up to the work at all," said Miss Blackburn, "and all the others seem to be extra ordinarily healthy and strong. If you consider that they work in all weathers — at Griffith the girls have almost to break the frost off the peas before picking them — it shows "a very fine standard of physical fitness." This year the Land Army girls have taken an important part in rice culture. Girls on tractors have cut the tracks for the reapers. Others have helped in the baling of the tall straw, which is being used to make rice paper. Miss Blackburn, who is the sister of Brigadier A. S. Blackburn, V.C., and the sister-in-law of Mrs. J. S. Blackburn, secretary of the Red Cross Emergency Services, has been staying with Mrs A. S. Blackburn, president of the State branch of the Prisoners of War Relatives' Association. HOSTEL SYSTEM. Miss Blackburn followed the family tradition of service by joining up with the Land Army to take charge, first of a seasonal hostel for a small party of university students engaged for pruning, and then of larger hostels in the irrigation areas. Matrons are given a preliminary training in dietetics, large scale housekeeping, and secretarial duties. The sub-matrons are often selected from among the older field workers whose actual experience of a strenuous day in the open gives them a special understanding of the home atmosphere needed in times off duty. While she prefers the small hostels, which give the matron a chance to know the girls, Miss Blackburn finds endless interest in her 187 and the household in which she and her staff of eight — all members of the Land Army — provide a homely background for the campaigns among carrots and border raids on wheat. At first the Land Army provided a hostel and matron for every six workers, but now the limit is 12. The smaller hostels are more like camps for seasonal workers, and only bare furnishing essentials are supplied to the cottages by employers. Large hostels are for districts in which the Land Army is employed all the year round. The one which Miss Blackburn is in charge of was formerly an old boarding house and is comfortably furnished. It has its own small orchard, which is pruned by three voluntary teams, each of which, says Miss Blackburn, loudly denounces the methods of its rivals. "Growers agree," says Miss Blackburn, "that girls excel at pruning. If they have any aptitude for it at all, they learn very quickly and work with an artist's feeling for the tree."

Newspaper article about John's sister Margaret Blackburn and mentions roles of other family members

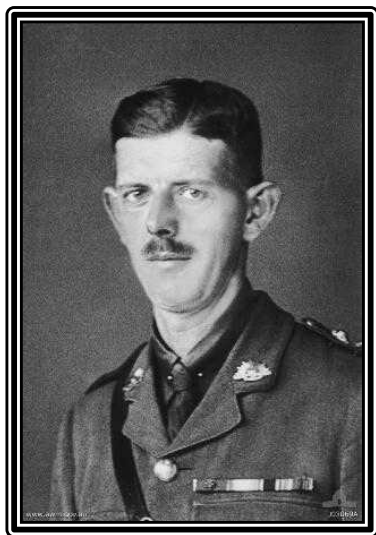
In 1916 Margaret Blackburn moved to London where she continued her War work until she returned to Adelaide April 1919. Older half brother Charles, who was already an eminent physician and superintendant at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sydney, joined the Australian Army Medical Corps and served overseas. John Stewart Blackburn's older brother Harry and younger brother Arthur also both enlisted. Arthur

Seaforth Blackburn, was an Adelaide University law graduate and was the first born and bred South Australian to be awarded the Victoria Cross - on 4 October 1916 for bravery at Pozieres in France. He later was a much respected South Australian politician (Member for South Australia Lower House Electorate of Sturt) and lawyer who worked extensively for returned service men. He was well regarded by those who served with him and many other people as evidenced by the fact that there are seven streets in suburban Adelaide and one building in Grenfell St that are thought to have been named after Arthur Blackburn.

Fancy that retiring suburb, Woodville, being able to claim a V.C. Captain Arthur S. Blackburn, the youngest son of the late Canon Blackburn, first saw the light of day at the Woodville Rectory twenty-three years ago, and lived there until a year before his departure for the front. He was a keen lacrosse player, a game that must be excellent training for the present style of warfare. Their agility in slinging the ball comes in very handy now for hurling the bomb and hand grenades, so an old St. Peter's boy writes. Capt. Blackburn's only sister, Miss Margaret Blackburn, who has been staying for some time with an elder brother, Mr. Edward Blackburn, manager of the Bank of New South Wales, Wagin, W.A., is leaving for England from the West by the "Osterley." This was a prior engagement. One

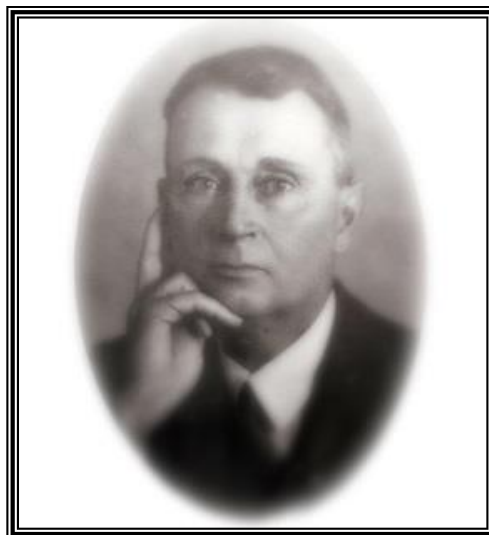
can picture her pride if she is in London when Captain Blackburn is decorated with the V.C. The war has brought her much sorrow; she lost her future husband, Lieut. Allenborough Davis, a few months ago—he was killed at Mesopotamia. This seems a sort of compensation. Two brothers of Captain Blackburn, Jack and Harry, are privates fighting in France, and another brother, Dr. Charles Blackburn, of Sydney, departed as a lieutenant-colonel with the picked hospital staff from Australia recently—so the family are well represented.

From the Critic (Adelaide) Sept 13, 1916



Left: Brigadier Arthur Seaforth Blackburn,

VC, CMG, CBE, ED



Sir Charles Bickerton Blackburn

KCMG OBE MD BA FRCP FRACP

After the Great War

After 4 years and 98 days abroad, John returned home on the troop carrier HMV "Durham" In Jul 1917 the newspapers carried news of his engagement. The article read: The engagement is announced of John Stewart Blackburn, B.A. (Field Engineers, France), son of the late Rev. Canon Blackburn, of Woodville, and Mildred Alice, third daughter of Mrs. J. H. George, of 'Erlburton,' Davenport Terrace, Wayville.

The Mail, Family Notices. 14 Jul 1917. page. 12

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article64042740>

ENGAGEMENTS.

BLACKBURN—GEORGE.

The engagement is announced of John Stewart Blackburn, B.A. (Field Engineers, France), son of the late Rev. Canon Blackburn, of Woodville, and Mildred Alice, third daughter of Mrs. J. H. George, of "Erlburton," Davenport terrace, Wayville.

Newspaper article Notice about his Engagement

It is interesting to note that the engagement to Mildred was announced in July 1917, while John was still serving in the army and the war was still happening. It is surmised that the announcement was made during a period of leave but the dates on his army record do not suggest he was on leave in July 1917.

Very soon after his return to Australia, on 10 Jan 1919, John and Mildred Alice George were married at St. Oswald's Church in Parkside.

The Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954),

Saturday 18 January 1919, page 7

WEDDINGS.

BLACKBURN—GEORGE.

A very pretty and quiet wedding was celebrated in St. Oswald's Church, Parkside, on January 10, the bride being Miss Mildred George, third daughter of Mrs. M. K. George, of "Erlburton," Davenport Terrace, Wayville, and the bridegroom Sapper J. S. Blackburn, a returned Anzac on furlough, and son of the late Canon Blackburn, formerly rector of St. Margaret's, Woodville. The bride, daintily gowned in a soft white frock, looked charming as she came down the aisle escorted by her uncle, Mr. H. Hodge, and attended by her bridesmaid, Miss Evelyn George. Instead of the usual bouquet the bride carried an ivory-coloured Prayer Book with long purple streamers, the battalion colours of the bridegroom, who was supported by his brother, Capt. A. S. Blackburn, V.C. The officiating clergyman was the Rev. J. W. Stringer, rector of Peterborough. After the ceremony at the church the guests assembled at the home of the bride's mother to participate in the wedding breakfast. The usual toasts were proposed. The hall and reception room were festooned with white flowers interspersed with knots of purple ribbon.

Newspaper article about his Marriage

Shortly after he was discharged in February 1919 the new couple took up a fruit block in the Riverland at Renmark (he chose not to return to teaching). Several articles in the newspapers of the early 1920's reported the fact that he was on a fruit block, including the one shown below.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page10473771>

Murray Pioneer and Australian River Record

Friday 28 October 1921 Page 18

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

RENMARK.

Miss S. George, of The Grange,
is staying with her sister Mrs. Blackburn at Block E.

Newspaper article about sister in laws visit to Renmark

While living in Renmark on the fruit block, John and Mildred had two children: Both his son Harold Stewart Blackburn (1919 - 1998) and his daughter Suzanne Burton Blackburn (1922-2005) went on to complete their medical degrees at Adelaide University Medical School. Harold worked for his entire life as a general practitioner in Tasmania while Suzanne worked in England as school medical officer.

After six years of trying to make a go of it, the hard life and his poor health (with failing eye sight) saw their return to Adelaide and taking up residence at Henley Beach.

John then started an office supplies, typing and copying business and was associated with a typing school at his Ware Chambers office in King William St, City. Ware Chambers was also the home of Muirden College and several legal firms so it was a well chosen location.



Close-up of Letterhead from 1929 letter

Even with failing eyesight his typing was found to be both fast and accurate and his business was soon very successful.

His typing capabilities were highlighted in a 1928 newspaper article about Adelaide typists.



MR. J. S. BLACKBURN, who, although blind, is a quick typist, and wonderfully accurate.

In about 1930, John and his wife Mildred purchased a house at number 26 (but since renumbered to 32) Tusmore Avenue, Leabrook. This was to remain their home until after John's death in 1976, when Mildred moved into a unit.

John had become a highly respected Adelaide business man and gained great acclaim for his services to the community. He was a member of the Board of the Burnside hospital for several terms and on the committee of the Church of England Guild for Services to the Blind and Blind Welfare. His outstanding community work earned him a CBE in 1960.

Although christened John, his friends called him Jack. His first grandchild however, could not say "Grandfather John" but could say "Parndon" and within the family the name stuck so from about 1950 onwards, he was known in the family as "Parndon".

His Death Certificate showed that on 15th June 1969 at Leabrook, John Stewart Blackburn passed away from "Secondary carcinoma in liver with the Primary carcinoma probably in the pancreas". His final resting place is at Centennial Park, Panorama.

The Blackburn Family's Continuing Legacy

Thomas and Margaret Blackburn did not live to see their own immediate family achieve all their great distinctions, however the underlying makeup of the Blackburn family has carried through generations - their family's great contributions to society covering the fields of military service, community service, the law, medicine and much more, are enduring.

One of John Stewart Blackburn's nephews and one of his granddaughters provide two examples of distinguished contributions by his descendants.

Arthur Seaforth Blackburn's first son was Sir Richard Arthur Blackburn O.B.E. He was John's nephew. Richard's distinguished career started at the University of Adelaide where he won the Stow and John Howard Clark prizes. He graduated with first-class honours in English literature and was named South Australian Rhodes Scholar for 1940. The scholarship was deferred, because of his own military service, until after the Second World War. At Magdalen College, Oxford he studied Law and in 1950 returned to Adelaide to be appointed the Bonython Professor of Law. After seven years of academic life at the University of Adelaide, he made a second career in the practice of the law: 14 years as barrister and solicitor, 14 years as judge, the last seven as Chief Justice of the ACT Supreme Court.



Richard Arthur Blackburn (1918-1987)

Given that his own death was caused by carcinoma (cancer), John Stewart Blackburn would have been thrilled that his granddaughter, Elizabeth H. Blackburn (Dr Harold Stewart Blackburn's second daughter) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine in Sweden in 2009 for discovering the molecular nature of telomeres, the ends of chromosomes that serve as protective caps essential for preserving genetic information, and for co-discovering telomerase, an enzyme that maintains telomere ends. Both telomeres and telomerase are thought to play central roles in aging and diseases such as cancer, and her work helped launch entire new fields of research in these areas.



From left to right: Prince Carl Philip, Crown Princess Victoria, Nobel Laureates Jack W. Szostak, Carol W. Greider and Elizabeth H. Blackburn, His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, Her Majesty Queen Silvia, and Princess Madeleine at the Nobel Banquet. Copyright © The Nobel Foundation 2009 Photo: Orasisfoto

Since the discovery of Telomerase, her work with the enzyme and the telomeres present in our DNA, continues to be undertaken by many other scientists.

She is currently working in California as the President of Salk Institute - one of the world's preeminent basic research institutions where renowned scientists make groundbreaking discoveries by studying neuroscience, genetics, cell and plant biology and related disciplines.

Recognition of Contribution

Many of the brave men who served in the Great War were left shattered both physically and mentally on their return to Australia. If they survived their torment, it often left them with an inherent strength of character and determination to make the world a better place. John Stewart Blackburn had to overcome much more adversity than most which makes his personal achievements and wider contributions the more remarkable.

Those men of the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Clubs who put their academic, professional and sporting ambitions on hold to serve during the Great War had a strength of soul and purpose that deserves our ongoing respect and gratitude. The proposed WW1 Memorial Picket Fence at Adelaide University Oval is a small way of showing this.

The sons of Thomas Blackburn have their WW1 service recognised at other places including St Margaret's Anglican Church in Woodville with plaques at the entrance gate.

John Stewart Blackburn (and his wife Mildred) also have a memorial in the form of an aumbry at the rear of St David's Church, Burnside where they were long term parishioners in their later life.



St Margaret's Anglican Church Lych Gate Port Rd Woodville and memorial aumbry at the rear of St David's Church Burnside

~~~~~O~~~~~

Profile ~~Prepared~~Authored by: Rob O'Shannassy (AUFC/AUCC - WW1 Memorial Group)  
&  
John L Blackburn (Grandson of John Stewart Blackburn)

#### Sources and Acknowledgements

- *Blackburn Family - Additional family history and digital media*
- *Trove: National Library of Australia - Research and extracts from digitised newspapers*
- *Adelaide University Archives - Historical digital Images*
- *National Archives of Australia - copies of WW1 digital Service Records*
- The AIF Project (University of NSW Canberra) - Summary of Service