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Charles Lawrence Hunt



Charles Lawrence Hunt was born on 6 October 1894 in Adelaide, South Australia to Frederick Octavius and Mary (nee Herraman) Hunt. Six siblings completed the family; Lilian Grace born in 1892, Frederick Leighton 1896, Philip Sydney 1900, Arthur Thomas 1904, Constance Blanche Edith 1906 and Kathleen Mary 1908.

Charles volunteered for service while working in Broken Hill as a Clerk living at the Imperial Hotel, enlisting as 498, Private on 24 August 1914. On 1 September 1914 he was promoted to Acting Corporal then to Sergeant the same day, the rapid promotion probably due to his service in the 80th Battalion Cadets in which he held the rank of Lieutenant. His father residing at Gilbert Street, Gilberton, Adelaide was the nominated next of kin. Unmarried, he was described as five feet six inches tall, weight one hundred and twenty nine pounds, dark complexion, green eyes and brown hair.

Charles was killed in action at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, possibly during the heavy fighting on or near 400 Plateau, his death reported in the 41st Casualty List published in *The Barrier Miner* and *The Register* on 19 June and 21 June 1915 respectively. His name is commemorated on the Lone Pine Memorial and the Broken Hill & District War Memorial. A photograph with the following tribute submitted by the Gilberton and Brougham Place Brotherhoods was published in *The Register* dated 26 June 1915:

"As a tribute of affectionate respect to the memory of their late brother Sgt. Charles L Hunt, members of the Gilberton and Brougham Place Brotherhoods held a united memorial service on Sunday afternoon. A detachment of about 50 members of B Company, Walkerville, Senior Cadets, of which Sgt. Hunt was a Lieutenant marched to the service, and took part in the proceedings. Lieut. Reg Cheek, Barrett, Brown and Rodley were also in attendance. The Chairman of the Gilberton Brotherhood (Mr. C. Whiting, jun) referred to the efficiency and strong sense of duty, the unselfish willingness and the fullness of spirit which characterised the departed hero. The patriotism of all those who were left would be quickened by the story of his response to the Empire's call. Mr. J.B. Anderson (Chairman of Brougham Place Brotherhood) expressed the hope that adequate reminders of the valour of the brave Australians, who had given their lives in their country's service would be erected. The Reverend A.E. Gifford referred to great men who had fought for the ideals and fame of England, and spoke powerfully of the justice and righteousness of the cause in which the Allies are engaged. At the conclusion of his address the "Dead March" in "Saul" was played by Mr. Walsh. Subsequently "the last post" was sounded. A collection in aid of the Wounded Soldiers Comforts Fund was taken up."

Frederick Octavius Hunt, having become aware of his son's death, wrote:

Gilbert St
Gilberton
Adelaide
S. Aus
June 15/15

To
The Officer in Charge, Base Records
Victoria Barracks
Melbourne.

Sir,

I have been advised by the Military Headquarters here in Adelaide to apply to you for any further particulars which you might have received as to my Son, 498 Sergt. C. L. Hunt H Company, 10th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Inf. Brigade. I am deeply grieved to have heard this day that my dear boy has been killed in action in the Dardanelles, but beyond the bare information I could obtain no facts to date, place or other particulars.

If you could give me any further details, but especially the date when he met with his death you would greatly oblige me, and if not it might be possible to direct me to the officer at the Dardanelles who might be responsible as to dates etc. I would just like to mention that my Son was Orderly Clerk, I believe to his Corps when he went away as this might assist in getting to the actual facts of his death.

Hoping you will be able to oblige two saddened parents.

I am Sir
Yours Sincerely
Fred. O. Hunt

A reply dated 21 June confirmed that Charles was reported killed at Gallipoli but no further details were available. On 21 August 1915 Frederick sent a second letter:

Gilbert St.
 Gilberton
 Adelaide
 S. Aus
 Aug 21/15

The Officer in Charge
 Base Records Office
 Melbourne.

Sir,

About June 16th I wrote you in reference to the reported death of my late Son 498 Segt. C. L. Hunt, H Company 10th Battalion, 3rd Brigade, who was reported as killed in action at the Dardanelles.

Beyond the mere verbal message of the local Minister, I have received no further details at all, and I was hoping to have heard from you giving me at least the date on which my boy was supposed to have been killed. I write now because a great friend of my Son's who left here about the end of April with the 3rd Contingent, Private A. J. Morley, has written a post card to me dated Heliopolis July 16th and saying that "he hears that Charlie (my Son) is getting on well."

This post card must have been written many weeks after the reported death of my boy, probably 9 or 10 weeks, and it leaves his Mother and myself in a state of doubt coupled with the want of any date or confirmation of the verbal message which was given to us on June 15th last. Can you inform me as to any source of information that I might write or cable to relieve the painful suspense we have been in since receiving the post card mentioned, or have you received that further information from Egypt which you told me you would probably receive.

An early reply would be very gratefully received.

I am Sir
 Yours Truly
 Fred. O. Hunt

The response dated 31 August 1915 advised Frederick that no further report had been received. He received official notification of the death of his son by letter dated 4 April 1916.

In his last will dated 2 March 1915, not witnessed, Charles left the whole of his property and effects to his father. He took possession of his son's medals, other official items and personal effects comprising; disc, waist belt, pocket book, note books, photos, letters, papers, belt, curios and post cards. His mother was granted an annual pension of thirteen pounds effective from 16 June 1915, rescinded on 17 September 1915 on the grounds that she was not dependent on her son and that she was adequately maintained by her husband.

The following extract from 'The Anzac Landing' describes Charles:

"Sergeant Charley Hunt was a man after his heart, but for his fiery nature. I once heard him say on parade at Morphettville, when some voice was raised during rifle exercises, making to him a most improper and unpractical suggestion, "Hop out any of you----. I'll have a piece of you right now." And old "H" Coy, which contained more pugs and toughs to the acre than any division, grinned delightedly, and with pride of possession. Their faces seemed to say, "Look what a game little rooster we've got." And I could imagine Big Bill Montgomery, Reggie Holland, or Daley dealing first with any acceptor of Charley's comprehensive challenge."

After the war Charles's father completed a Roll of Honour form on which he noted:

Charles had attended the Unley Model School and the School of Mines and that he had received training with the Adelaide Municipal Tramways Trust.

In addition to serving as a Lieutenant in the 80th 'Senior Forces' Charles had served as an Orderly to State Commandant Le Mesurier 1911-12.

Charles was very keenly interested in all military affairs and a personal friend of then Colonel Fulton, Light Horse.

Three cousins died in action or as result of wounds, 2 English E.E.F, 1 Australian.

Frederick named Brigadier General Price Weir, O/C 10th Battalion as a person to whom reference could be made for further information.

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