

# Voices of War Life Story

**George Herbert Baguley**  
1895 - 1915



WWI, Army, George Herbert Baguley, 1895, Main

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**Name:** George Herbert Baguley

**Other names:** Bert

**Date of Birth:** 1895

**Place of birth:** Hose, Melton Mowbray

**Nationality:** British

**Date of Death:** 13.10.1915

**Place of death:** France

**Service No:** 1172

**Unit(s):** 1st/5th Leicestershire Regiment

**Rank:** Private

**Medals and Awards:**

**Education:**

**Clubs and Affiliations:**

## Life Story

George was born in the village of Hose, near Melton Mowbray., to parents William Frederick Baguley (born 1870 in Balderton, Nottinghamshire) and his wife Annie Sabina Baguley born 1870 in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. They were married (nee Wall, married in 1892 in Leicester district and started their family a few years later. George Herbert was born in 1895,



followed by siblings Ada Mary born 1893, William Albert born 1894, Annie Elizabeth born 1897, Reginald Harry born 1898, Ronald Grant born 1899, Hector Frank born 1900, Lena May born 1902, Ruth Hannah born 1903, Sarah Kathleen born 1905, Stanley Frederick born 1906, Kenneth Sidney born 1908, Alfred Percival born 1909 and Edith Muriel born 1910. According to the 1901 Census the family home was at 26 Stanley Street, Melton Mowbray. In April 1911 George was living at home and had started work as a telegraph boy at Melton Post Office, before going on to work as a temporary postman. Eighteen months before the outbreak of the war he was transferred to Billesdon as permanent postman, and still living in the family home at Stanley Street together with his father, a domestic gardener, his mother and siblings.

George attested into the Territorial Force on the 25th September 1911 in Melton Mowbray. His medical examination recorded that he was 5ft 2, weighed 132 pounds and he had a chest measurement of between 32½ and 34 inches. His vision and physical fitness were described as “good”. Pronounced fit for service George was posted to the 5th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and started his basic training on the 25/9/11.

### **Record of Service:**

Home Service, 25/9/11 – 27/2/15, 3 years 156 days.

British Expeditionary Force, France, 28/2/15 – 13/10/15, 228 days. Total service 4 years 19 days.

- Attended annual training at Aberystwyth Camp on the 4/8/12 – 18/8/12.
- Embodied service commenced on the 5/8/14.
- Embarked to join the British Expeditionary Force in France on the 26/2/15.



- Disembarked at Le Havre on the 27/2/15.
  - Admitted to hospital in the field suffering from conjunctivitis on the 19/7/15.
  - Transferred to Base Details: Boulogne on the 24/7/15.
  - Arrived for duty at 46th Division Base Details: Rouen on the 14/8/15.
  - Proceeded to rejoin unit at the front on the 27/9/15.
  - To hospital wounded in the field on the 13/10/15.
  - Believed killed, (last report wounded and missing), on the 9/12/15.
- Regarded for official purposes as dead on the 13/10/15.

The unit war diary for the date of his death shows that Bert took place in the failed British attack on the German stronghold, the [Hohenzollern Redoubt](#), which resulted in 3,643 British casualties, mostly in the first few minutes of the attack. The gas and smoke released had little protective effect due to high winds and bright sunlight, and artillery bombardment mentioned in the war diary had also had little impact due to a lack of ammunition, This accounts for the confusion over the date of his death and was not unusual.

## Unit War Diary:

### 13 Oct -15:

At 6.00am Battn in place in RESERVE trench.

At 12.00 noon bombardment of enemy trench FOSSE 8 commenced. At 1.00pm smoke and gas turned on until 1.50pm.

At 2.00pm assault. 5th Battn LINCOLNSHIRE REGT and 4th Battn LEICESTERSHIRE REGT advanced in lines of platoon at 50 paces distance against HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT. 4th Battn LINCOLNSHIRE REGT attacked from 2nd line followed by the MONMOUTHSHIRE REGT. REDOUBT captured but lines checked and stopped by machine gun fire



from MAD POINT, MADAGASCAR, and SOUTH FACE, also heavy rifle fire FOSSE and DUMP TRENCH. First two lines as almost all Coy officers became casualties. REDOUBT and half of NORTH FACE was held – LITTLE WILLIE and BIG WILLIE still in enemy hands.

At 3.00pm B Coy sent up to reinforce centre and left of REDOUBT followed by A and part of D Coy's. Machine guns in position along original front line now held by C Coy and parts of other regiments. Considerable progress made along LITTLE WILLIE by grenade party under Lt C. H. F. WOLLASTON. Ground lost again owing to lack of grenades.

At 5.30pm ground now held consisted of front face of REDOUBT and up to LITTLE WILLIE and point 60. Remainder of REDOUBT untenable by either side. 138th Brigade relieved gradually by 139th Brigade. 138th Brigade hold original front line trench. Many of A and B Coy's still remained in the REDOUBT during the whole of next day.

The local paper reported on the death of George (Bert) a few days later,:

**“MELTON AND THE WAR.” – DRUMMER B. BAGULEY KILLED.**

*Yet another Meltonian has to be added to the list of those who have given up their lives in the defence of their country. A few weeks ago Mrs. Baguley, of Charlotte-street, received a letter from her eldest son, Lance Corpl. W. A. Baguley, stating that his brother, Drummer Bert Baguley had been wounded during the notorious charge on October 13th, but it now transpires that he was killed. The news was conveyed in the following letter which Miss Baguley received from her eldest brother, a few days ago:*

*“Dearest Ada, - I am writing you a few lines, hardly knowing what to say, or how to say what I have to disclose; and you must not try to imagine*



*what a brother feels like in my position, for, to have to write home and say, that instead of my story of Bert coming home I am afraid he will never return, so I am writing to you, and am leaving it to you to break the news to our dearest mother for you will be able to do it better than the writing in a boy's clumsy way, which would be disastrous and would put her about more than ever, so you will understand why I am writing to you at the shop, and will also realise why I write about it to you, and how I feel in the matter. I know now that you have read that our dearest brother has given his life for a just cause, and that I have lost my only chum, that you will be terribly upset, and I feel sorry aye, grieved that I have had to tell you so bluntly about this terrible sorrow that has been so cruelly thrust upon us, yet you must forgive me for doing so, only let me say that I hardly know what I am doing, and much less do I know how to get the news to mother without causing her unnecessary trouble and pain. Now I have told you the one thing. I must tell you how I know, and also of the way in which the clumsy kindness of the British soldier has about sent me crazy, and put me in such an awful position; a position in which, I dare not write home. It is this. When I wrote to mother saying that Bert was wounded, I had made every possible enquiry, so as to be sure about it before writing, and I really believed it to be a fact, but two men whom I had asked if they knew whether Bert got clear away, and who never gave me an intelligible reply, really knew all the time, and in their clumsy way, thinking of doing me a kindness, never told me, and for three weeks I have waited patiently, with almost a breaking heart for a line from Bert that has never arrived, and on Saturday morning I was walking down a trench we were digging, and I heard one of them mention it, and of course, wanted to know all particulars which he had to tell. I need not mention that I was excused by all for breaking down,*



*and can say that all the boys sympathised with me, and have tried to cheer me up into not worrying about it, and to a certain extent I am not, only about mother, and I ask you to do the same for mother's sake, and I want you to write and tell dad as well. The tale they told me was one that could not be belied, and one has to accept the inevitable, so do not make yourself ill, and worry more than necessary. Thank mother for the parcel and photo, with which I was very pleased, and tell her why I have not written before if you think it advisable. Well I cannot write more, so I will say au revoir, trusting God will bless you, and help you in the awful task I have set you. I still remain your loving brother, Albert."*

*Private Rogers, who has been home this week on three days leave, states that he was with Drummer Baguley a few minutes before the shell burst. Deceased rushed forward to help some comrades, and was not seen again. Drummer Baguley, is a son of Staff-Sergt. W. F. Baguley of the 10th Leicesters, at present stationed at Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, who has two other sons serving their country, viz., Lance Corpl. W. A. Baguley, who is at the front with the 5th Leicesters, and Private R. Baguley, who is stationed at Harpenden with the 3/5th Leicesters. In his younger days deceased was a telegraph boy at Melton Post Office, and later on became temporary postman. Eighteen months before the outbreak of the war he was transferred to Billesdon as permanent postman. He went out with the 5th Leicesters.*

On Friday November 26th 1915 The Melton Mowbray Times & Vale of Belvoir Gazette published the following article:

**“MELTON AND THE WAR.” – HOW DRUMMER BAGULEY DIED.**

*Mrs. Baguley, of Charlotte Street, has received a letter from her son, Private*



*Albert Baguley, which clears up the mystery concerning the death of her eldest son, Drummer Bert Baguley. The story was told to Albert by Lance Corporal G. Underwood, of Asfordby, who stated that he saw Bert carry seven or eight wounded men into shell holes and bind them up. He went out again and was bringing in a man who was wounded in the head, and could just walk. Underwood shouted, "Bert: Keep down, you'll get hit," and no sooner had he spoken than down went young Baguley. Underwood crawled to him to give him a drink and bind him up, but found that he was dead. He was buried the next day and a cross was erected to mark the place and to commemorate a heroic death.*

George was only 19 when he was killed. He is commemorated on the Loos Memorial as well as the town memorials in Melton Mowbray.





In Memory Of

Private

# GEORGE HERBERT BAGULEY

Service Number: 1172

1st/5th Bn., Leicestershire Regiment who died on 13 October 1915 Age 19

Son of William Frederick and Annie Baguley, of 3, Charlotte St., Melton Mowbray.

Remembered with Honour

LOOS MEMORIAL

Panel 42 to 44.



|||||  
COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES  
|||||

COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

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