

## **William Francis Ernest DAVIS    Service No.71**

William Davies was born at Kilmore in 1871, the second son of William Davis, London born bank manager and his wife, Ellen Mary Josephine, nee Hayes, from Ireland. The family moved to Bendigo when William was aged four. It is likely Charles was educated at St. Andrews College and Bendigo Grammar School as did his younger brother Charles.

When William enlisted at Townsville in September 1914 he was engaged as a Station Overseer and was unmarried. He cited previous experience as two years in the Senior Cadets (Victoria). William was allotted to the 6th Light Horse Regiment as a private. He was promoted to Lance Corporal in November 1914. His brother, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Herbert Davis, enlisted in 1916 and went on to have a distinguished military career.

William embarked on the Persic in Sydney in December 1914. In June 1915 he was in training in Egypt. He rejoined his unit at Gallipoli following treatment for synovitis of the knee. In September he was transferred to Lemnos for treatment of dysentery. William was able to rejoin his unit at Gallipoli in early October. He found himself back in Alexandria in January 2016 after the Allied withdrawal from the Gallipoli Peninsula.

In March 1916 William marched out to Serapeum with the 5th Light Horse Regiment which had become part of the Anzac Mounted Division. They were responsible for the defence of the Suez Canal against raiding Senussi Arabs.

July - September 1917 William was extra-regimentally employed with 2nd Light Horse Brigade. It is likely this was a non-combat posting. In January 1918 William was attached for duty to Records and in March he was transferred to Australian Records, Cairo.

William was promoted to Sergeant April 1918. His military record notes he is to “remain extra-regimentally employed as Orderly Room Sergeant”. It seems likely at this time that William’s health prohibited him from returning to active duty and he may have expressed a wish to continue serving in some capacity. A Medical Board hearing in August 1918 determined that debility and age necessitated a transfer back to Australia. William embarked from Suez for Australia aboard the “Shropshire” on 30 August 1918. He was discharged from the AIF on medical grounds.

William was awarded the British War Medal, the 1914/15 Star and the Victory Medal. His service is commemorated on the Kilmore Honour Roll. Post war William married Katie Gladys Yelland in 1919. He died in New Guinea in 1923.

*Compiled by the Kilmore Historical Society.*



*William Ernest Francis Davis*