

## **William Ernest Robinson**

William Ernest Robinson, Service No. 2214, was born in Bendigo in 1878 and was the son of John Downing Robinson and Jane McMillen. The family were well known in Bendigo though relocated to Kilmore in the 1860's to set up a grocery business known as Robinson Brothers. William's brother, Millen, later took over the business.

William enlisted at Liverpool, NSW, in May 1915. At this time he was a 37 year old single man employed as a mine manager. His attestation form states he had matriculated from high school though did not have formal qualifications in mine management. He gave previous experience as five years with the Senior Cadets. His next of kin was Captain Mont Robinson, his half brother, a pilot residing in Williamstown.

William departed Australia in June 1915 attached to the 55th Battalion. He was rapidly promoted, becoming Warrant Officer Class 2 in April 1916, 2nd Lieutenant in August and finally, Lieutenant before becoming too unwell to continue serving.

In September 2016 William was admitted to hospital for myalgia & varicous veins. He was transferred to England for treatment where he was diagnosed with influenza & rheumatism. Subsequently, he was declared medically unfit and returned to Australia, arriving March 1917. A public reception awaited his return to Kilmore where he was given an escort to the town hall for celebrations. Sadly, his brother, James Noble Robinson had been killed in action in August 1916 while on active duty in France.

William was awarded the British War Medal, the 1914/15 Star and the Victory Medal. His name appears on the Kilmore Honour Roll and the Presbyterian Roll of Honour. Following return to Australia he married Blanche Olive Whitehead and returned to mine management, later holding clerking positions in Melbourne. He died in 1969.

*Compiled by Kilmore Historical Society.*

*Pic. Robinson Bro's. grocery store, Kilmore, c1861. Van Heems & Co. photographer. Courtesy SLV.*