

Wilfred Holloway BOOTH

Wilfred Booth was born in Brunswick in 1882 to John and Marian (nee Parker) Booth. When he enlisted he was aged 35 years and seven months, occupied as a store keeper in Sydney Street, Kilmore and married to Ellen Victoria Sugden who came from an early Kilmore family of tanners and saddlers.

Wilfred enlisted at Brunswick in February 1917 (or possibly September – there are cross outs on the attestation form). He was allocated as a private, service number 3269, in the 38th Battalion, and embarked for active overseas duty aboard the “Ulysses” in late December 1917, disembarking at Suez in January 1918. He attended training camp at Suez for further training. Wilfred was appointed Corporal in February but was then transferred to Southampton in February 1918 where he reverted to Private.

In June 1918 Wilfred marched in to France with the 38th Battalion which saw action in the Hundred Days Offensive starting in early August. In October the Australian Divisions were withdrawn from the line for rest and reorganisation and as a consequence the 38th's final involvement in the war was around the St. Quentin Canal where the heavily depleted Australian Divisions were bolstered by fresh American Divisions. In December 1918 Wilfred was transferred back to England for duty at the AIF Base Store in London, known as the “Kit Store”. He did not return to Australia until February 1920.

Wilfred was awarded the British War Medal, the 1914/15 Star and the Victory Medal. He is remembered on the Kilmore Honour Roll.

Electoral rolls show Wilfred and Ellen living at “Redlands”, Pira, where Wilfred was engaged in growing wheat and raising sheep. The couple's son, John McDowell Booth, was a Leading Aircraftsman with the Australian Army. He tragically died in 1944 as a result of an accident on an airfield. In the late 1940's Wilfred and Ellen returned to Kilmore where Wilfred was occupied as a Clerk. He died in 1963.

Soldiers from the 38th Battalion at Guillemont, 29 September 1918.AWM



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