

CORPORAL ROBERT WILLIE NENKE – NURIOOTPA

First World War

Robert Willie Nenke was the son of Mr and Mrs Robert Nenke and was born and raised in Nuriootpa, where he attended the local public school.

Robert enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) on 18 August 1914. His enlistment documents described him as 5 feet 10 inches, 160 pounds, dark complexion, blue eyes, black hair, aged 20 years and 9 months, with an occupation of Ironmonger.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Robert was serving in the local militia, rising to the rank of Lieutenant in the local signals unit and, given his experience in signals, he was posted to the 1st Division Signals Company (1DSC).

Robert embarked from Melbourne with his unit on board troopship HMAT "Karoo" on the 20 October 1914.

Robert was wounded in Gallipoli, and after recovering in hospital in Alexandria he was promoted to Corporal on 1 March and conducted duties as a motorcycle despatch rider.

He embarked from Alexandria for France and arrived at Marseilles on the 23 March 1916.

On 26 September 1916 Robert was injured and admitted to 2nd Field Ambulance and eventually repatriated to England. After he was discharged from hospital, he was transferred to the Signal School at Shefford and eventually re-joined his unit in France on 7 July 1917.

Robert was shot in the right foot on 28 August 1917 and repatriated to England and treated at the Canadian Red Cross Hospital at Taplow. After he recovered from his wounds, Robert arrived back in France and re-joined his unit on 18 May 1918.

On 7 August 1918, almost four years after enlisting, Robert was seriously wounded by an artillery shell, taking most of the blast in his arm and abdomen.

He was transferred to the 5th Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) where he died from his wounds on 8 August 1918, aged 24 years.

Corporal Robert Willie Nenke, was awarded the 1914 / 15 Star, The British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Robert is buried at the Crouy British Cemetery, Picardie, France.

Lest We Forget.

*Image and information provided by Anthony McLean
– Nuriootpa RSL*

