

Athol was born at Deniliquin in 1895, the son of Philip Eld Eldershaw and his wife Mary Ann, nee Brown. His parents were married in 1885 and divorced in 1906. On 11th August 1914 he joined A Company, AN&MEF stating that he was a clerk and single, giving his mother at "Burley", Royalist Rd Mosman as his next of kin. He returned from Rabaul on the MERINDA as a guard for prisoners and was discharged, term expired on 30th December 1914 having completed 142 days service.

On 1st Feb 1915 he joined D Company, 17th Battalion, regimental number 541 and on 29th March was promoted sergeant. On 12 May he left Sydney aboard the THEMISTOCLES for Suez. He contracted VD whilst in Egypt and was returned to Australia aboard the PORT LINCOLN, leaving Suez on 4th August and arriving back in Sydney on 2nd September 1915.

He returned to duty on 7th March 1916 and was transferred as part of the 15th Reinforcements, 6th Battalion and given a new regimental number, 4963. He sailed from Melbourne aboard the WILTSHIRE on 7th March 1916 and on arrival in Egypt was transferred to the 57th Battalion which was then located at Tel-el-Kebir. In June, the battalion moved to France and on 20th July 1916 Athol was killed in action.

In a statement made in 1919, Cpl Stanley Eric Read, # 3579 stated. "Fleurbaix. Opposite Fromelles in V.C. sap – he was killed by shell. He did not live till we got him out of the sap. I was with him at time he was killed. I saw his grave at Rifle Villa Cemetery. Only temporary mark up. Then – no cross. I knew him terribly well."

Athol's younger brother also enlisted at age 19 on 9th May 1918. He did not leave Australia.

Athol is buried at the Rue-Du-Bois Military Cemetery, Fleubaix, France and is remembered on Panel 163 at the Australian War Memorial.