

William joined A Company, AN&MEF on 11th August 1914 stating that he was born in Paddington and was 34 years and 11 months old. He also stated that he was a bricklayer and married. In 1902 he had married Mary Ann Nicholls and they had 6 children. On 12th September 1914 he was appointed Lance Corporal and left Rabaul aboard the MATUNGA on 10th November 1914 as an escort for prisoners. He was discharged in Sydney, term expired, on 4th March 1915, having completed 306 days service.

On 3rd Jan 1916 he joined the AIF in Melbourne as part of the 4th Reinforcements, 54th Battalion. He left Melbourne aboard the ORSOVA, arriving in Plymouth on 14th September 1916. He was admitted to hospital at Codford on 26th October and finally arrived in France on 16th July 1917. A Medical Board in France determined he had debility and he was returned to the UK. He left the UK on 29th September 1917 aboard the SUEVIC, disembarking in Melbourne on 18th November 1917. He was discharged from the AIF, medically unfit (otitis media) on 29th December 1917.