

PERCIVAL ROBERTS ~ ANOTHER APSLEY WW1 HERO

By Jill Roberts Fehring©

Whilst doing my family tree I saw where Percival William Harpur was buried in the Apsley cemetery in 1952: the year before we moved to Apsley.

I scanned the list of burials at the Apsley cemetery but could not find him. Finally, there was a reference to him in our Roberts family book. He was born on 8th January 1887, tried to join the AIF in South Australia during WW1, but was rejected on medical grounds. He must have been determined to volunteer for King and Country as he went to Victoria to enlist, assumed his cousins surname of Roberts and was accepted. He was a member of the 23rd Battalion, 1st Air Service and was wounded at the Somme in France and listed as missing, later this advice was changed to wounded in action. He was repatriated to England and while convalescing he met and married Elsie Gradwell.

After returning home, Percy retained the name of Roberts and all his descendants are so called. He and Elsie took up a soldier settlement block known as Ervation Hill Farm, Broomehill, Western Australia, sometime later they returned to Victoria where he worked as a postmaster in various Wimmera towns as well as Glenorchy and Apsley.

Percival and his wife Marie Elsie Marion Roberts are buried in the Apsley cemetery.

When I lived in Apsley, 1953 to 1958, Percy's daughter, Brenda Roberts, was the postmistress.