

Gilbert Henry STEVENSON (No.7/1785)

Gilbert enlisted at Trentham on 25 August 1915 at the age of 31. Prior to this he was a farmhand working in the Kakahu district. His mother Mary was put down as his next of kin; his father dying over 20 years previously. He had three older brothers and five sisters.

Gilbert had his medical examination in Geraldine in June, and after a couple of months training, he shipped out to Egypt arriving in Suez in the middle of November 1915. For the next couple of years he spent much of it in hospital in Egypt when he had a dozen episodes of "renal colic". Originally he was in the Canterbury Mounted Rifles Brigade, but was changed to the Machine Gun Squadron. Because an operation in Egypt wasn't recommended, Gilbert was shipped back to Wellington where his medical record was thoroughly reviewed. He was formally discharged from service on 20th January 1918 as being "no longer physically fit for war service on account of illness contracted on active service". Of the two years and 148 days spent in the army, he served two years and 76 days abroad.

He had a "welcome home" gathering in the Te Moana School in January 1918 and thereafter returned to his occupation as a farm hand in South Canterbury. He died on 9th December 1951 and is buried in the soldiers' area of Timaru cemetery. He received the 1914-15 Star medal, the British War medal, and the Victory medal.