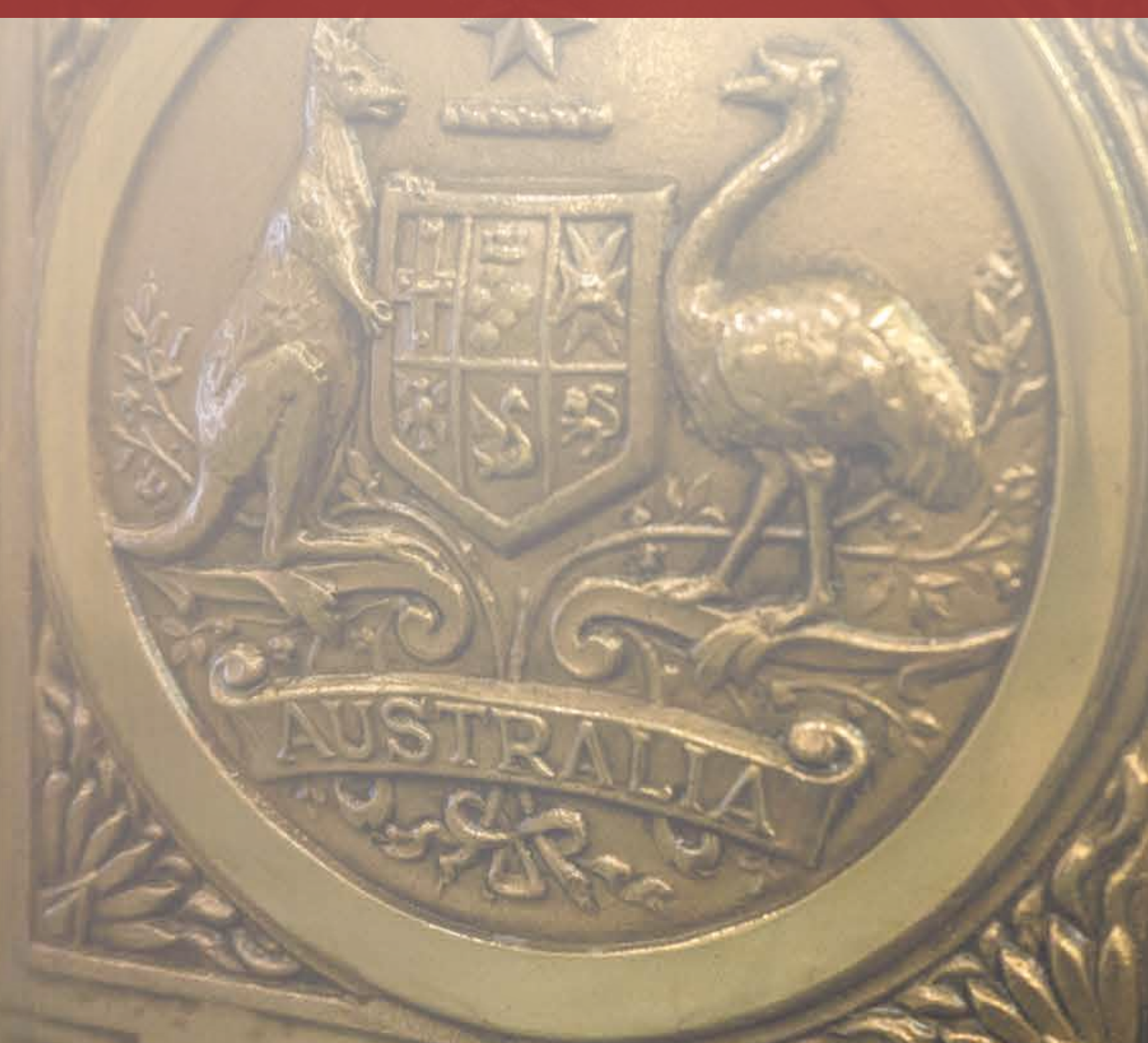


WILLIAM KINSEY BOLTON

1860 - 1941



Senator (VIC) • NAT, 1917–1923

Born in 1860 in the English town of Lostock Gralam (Cheshire), William Bolton immigrated to Australia with his family in 1868. He worked as a builder in Gippsland, later becoming an inspector of works in the Victorian Department of Public Works in the districts of Bendigo and Ballarat.

Bolton's involvement in military service began early when he joined the Southern Rifles in 1878. Commissioned as a lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion, Victoria, in 1891, Bolton rose through the ranks to become lieutenant-colonel and (in 1912) to command the 70th Regiment. Bolton enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in August 1914, initially being placed in command of the Queenscliff Force before mobilising the 8th Battalion and sailing for Egypt in October. He and his troops landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and later at Cape Helles on 6 May 1915.

Bolton fought in the Second Battle of Krithia (6–8 May) before taking command of the 2nd Infantry Brigade for a brief period that was cut short by poor health. He was invalided back to Australia in 1915. Bolton was described by Bean as 'a soft-hearted commander very solicitous for his men'. A hill and ridge were named in his honour at Gallipoli. Bolton went on to command the Ballarat Training Depot and then the Defended Ports of Victoria before retiring from military service in 1920.

In 1918 he was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George.

Bolton was a founder and first National President of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League in 1916. Encouraged by Prime Minister Billy Hughes, Bolton stood for Parliament in 1917 as a Nationalist and was elected to the Senate for Victoria. During his time as a Senator, Bolton retained a strong interest in defence and military issues, including the challenges facing returned servicemen. Losing his seat at the 1922 election, Bolton was unsuccessful in his attempt to win the seat of Henty in the 1929 federal election. On leaving politics, he worked as a partner in a building firm.



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Sources:

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- W.A.S Dunlop, 1914. Australian Imperial Force's 2nd Infantry Brigade marching through Bourke Street, Melbourne, Friday, 25th September 1914, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-vn4982243
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