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Adkins, Charles

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for their country



Memorial at Railway Workshops, Midland (D.Graham/panoramio)

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Locomotive
Designation:	Fireman

Rail employment notes: Born 7/10/1892. Joined WAGR 7 November 1910 aged 18 as Cleaner, Perth ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning and otherwise working around locomotives whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder). Transferred in same role to Ravensthorpe 7/4/1911, Perth 17/6/1911 and Midland Junction 26/1/1912.
Promoted to Fireman, Midland Junction 22/12/1912. Granted leave to join AIF 6/4/1916 (Service No.5791). Died with AIF 5/6/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5791
Date of death:	5 June 1917
Place of death:	United Kingdom
Age:	24
Rank at time of death:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Harefield (St Mary) Churchyard, England

On 18 April 1916 Charles Adkins enlisted in the AIF at Perth and nominated his mother Mrs Margaret Adkins to be his Next of kin as his father was dead. He had no previous military experience. His basic military training was at Blackboy Hill Camp and on completion he was allocated to 16th reinforcements for the 28th Battalion with the regimental number 5791. Pte Adkins departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A23 HMAT *Suffolk* on 13 October 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth on 2 December 1916. He passed through 7 Training Battalion before departing for France to join the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). He was admitted to hospital (reason unknown) between 22 Feb 1917 and 10 Mar 1917.

Pte Adkins was Wounded in action at Lagnicourt on 4 May 1917 suffering gunshot wounds to the head and arm. He was evacuated through 6 Field Ambulance to 13 Stationary Hospital and then to the Royal Herbert Hospital at Woolwich, England on 18 May 1917. He was transferred to 1 Aaustralian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield where he died of wounds (cerebral abscess) on 5 June 1917. He was buried at Harefield (St Mary) Churchyard with the Rev Gregg-McGreggor officiating.

Additional/personal information:

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his mother together with other memorabilia.

> *The West Australian* 6/6/1918 p1: " --In loving memory of our dear brother,.. Private Charles Adkins, 16/28th Battalion, who died of wounds in England on June 5, 1917. Inserted by his loving sisters, Mrs. James Lynas (New Zealand), Mrs. Percy Whitewood, Lake street, Perth"

In 1920 his burial site was moved from grave 24 to grave 36, with a chaplain in attendance, and his mother was notified of this change.

His mother Mrs Margaret Adkins was awarded a military pension of 40/- per fortnight effective from 10 August 1917. An adopted child, Marjorie Olga Hulse (born 1910) was awarded 20/- per fortnight effective from the same date. Mrs Margaret Adkins died on 27 Aug 1939 aged 82 years and was buried at Karrakatta cemetery.

Further information and/or photos may be added as available. Information may also be found on the Australian War Memorial website: *https://www.awm.gov.au/advanced-search/people*

Abbreviations: WAGR= Western Australian Government Railways (& Tramways at some periods); MRWA= Midland Railway of Western Australia; BDM=Western Australian Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages website; AWM=Australian War Memorial (Canberra and website); CWGC= Commonwealth War Graves Commission (including website). DVA=Department of Veterans' Affairs (including website)

Acknowledgements: Rail employment notes from WAGR Honour Roll and WAGR records held by State Records Office, Perth, transcribed by J.Austin 2019. Military information researched by Dr G.M.Galvin. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

----------Lest we forget----------