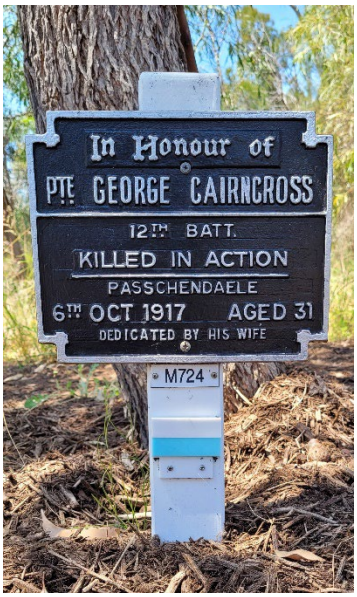
Cairncross, George

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



Plaque M724 in Kings Park

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Traffic
Designation:	Relief Officer

Rail employment notes: Born 30/11/1885. Joined WAGR 9/10/1912 aged 26 as Casual Porter, Perth. Appointed Porter, Geraldton 8/11/1912.

("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR – some had specific roles such as a receiving goods porter, some were general hands while some learnt safe-working and could assist with signals, et. Geraldton, a busy junction station and terminus of some passenger trains, probably had several porters)

Promoted to Assistant Station Master, Narngulu 12/4/1913. Transferred to Station Relief Officer, Geraldton 1/7/1915.
(When stations were busy enough to warrant more than one officer, the Station Master normally worked day shift 8am – 4pm and had overall responsibility, the Assistant Station Master worked 4pm-midnight and the Night Station master worked midninght-8am.)
Relieving Officers were appointed to act in place of station officers on leave.

Granted leave to join AIF 2/6/1916 (Service No.2524B). Killed in action 6/10/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	12th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2524B
Date of death:	6 October 1917
Place of death:	Place not yet found
Age:	31
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Perth Cemetery (China Wall), Ypres, Flanders, Belgium

George Cairncross joined the AIF on 11 April 1916, from Mount Magnet. He nominated his wife Mrs Margaret Helen Cairncross as his next of kin. He was assigned to 5th reinforcements to 43rd Infantry Battalion, with the number 2524 and embarked from Fremantle per HMAT *Argyllshire* on 9 November 1916.

He was later transferred to the 12th Battalion, with the regimental number 2524B.

He was Killed in action near Zonnebeke, Belgium on 6 October 1917.

 © Rail Heritage WA

Additional/personal information:

George Cairncross was born in Edinburgh, Scotland but came to WA when aged 21 years. His marriage to Margaret Helen McNeill was registered in the Fremantle district in 1916 (BDM 127/1916), which must have been just before he enlisted.

> CAIRNCROSS.—Reported killed in action, October 6, 1917, somewhere in France, George, dearly loved husband of Margaret and loved son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Alex. McNeill, Wooroloo. Eastern and Scottish papers please copy. *The West Australian* 3/11/1917p1
>
> CAIRNCROSS --Reported killed in action, Oclober-6, 1917. somewhere in France, George, dearly loved husband of Margaret, and loved son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs.-Alex: McNeill; Wooroloo; 12th Battalion, late 5/43rd. Eastern and Scottish papers please copy. *Sunday Times* 4/11/1917p1
>
> Mrs. G. Cairncross desires to THANK all kind friends for telegrams, letters, cards, and personal expressions of sympathy… during her recent sad bereavement in the loss of her dearly-loved husband, Corporal George Cairncross, reported killed in action October 6, 1917. Will friends kindly accept this intimation. *The West Australian* 17/11/1917p1

It will be seen that his widow referred to him as a Corporal but the AWM gives his rank as a Private. His widow remained in Perth and died in 1979 aged 95.

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. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

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

 © Rail Heritage WA