060

Cleverly, Henry

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

The Cleverly family suffered badly in the First War – two brothers died in action, and Henry, the elder of the two, left his young wife pregnant with a son who would never see his father.



Nine Elms British War Cemetery in Belgium. Collection G.M Galvin

Rail employment information

Employer: Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways

Branch: Locomotive

Designation: Car Builder

Rail employment notes: Born 3/4/1889. Joined WAGR 18/10/1904 aged 15 as Apprentice Car Builder, Midland Workshops. Appointed to Wagon Builder, Midland Workshops 1/12/1911. Transferred to Car Builder, Midland Workshops 4/3/1915.
Granted leave to join AIF 24/3/1916. Died of wounds 11/10/1917.



Titled “Loco shops send off to Soldiers April 19th 1916” this photo shows the fervour of the time for recruiting. Of these 40 men on the raised balcony, eleven of them including Henry Cleverly paid the ultimate price and lost their lives. Whatever their job, from car builders to boilermaker’s assistants, they joined a range of WA men volunteering to fight. Workers and management had gone to considerable lengths for the occasion with tree

branches, band, flags and the name-bearing banner, while a central shield added a whimsical note with “Loco shops W.A. Easter egg for the Kaiser”. P.M. Rogers collection.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion.
Service number:	n/a
Date of death:	11 October 1917
Place of death:	Belgium
Age:	28
Rank:	Lieutenant
Burial/memorialisation:	Nine Elms British Cemetery, Poperinghe, Flanders, Belgium

Henry Cleverly was born at Birkenhead (UK). Because he was then a serving Lieutenant in the 88th Infantry Regiment (part time Militia), he was commissioned directly as a Second Lieutenant in the AIF on 12 May 1916 and allocated to 15th Reinforcements to 28th Battalion. His wife Amy Marion Cleverly became his Next of kin and he also used his paybook to nominate her as the sole beneficiary in his Will. He spent some time training his reinforcement group before departing Australia on 22 September 1916 aboard A52 HMAT *Surada* before disembarking at Plymouth on 21 November 1916. Three days later he had passed through the UK Depot and was present at 2nd Australian Divisional Base Depot. He was taken-on-strength of 28 Battalion, in the field. On 17 January 1917 he was promoted to the rank of substantive Lieutenant. Lt Cleverly developed influenza which required hospital treatment between 27 March 1917 and 5 April 1917. On 3 May 1917 he was Wounded in action and evacuated to the 3rd London General Hospital at Wandsworth. When he recovered, he re-joined 28 Bn on 5 September 1917 which was at that time engaged in the Third Battle of Ypres. He was Wounded in action (Second Occasion) on 10 October 1917 when he suffered a fracture to the base of his skull. He entered the evacuation chain and was admitted to 3 Casualty Clearing Station where he Died-of-Wounds on 11 October 1917. He was buried that same day with full military honours in the Nine Elms British Cemetery south west of Poperinghe.

Additional/personal information:

Henry Cleverly was born in Birkenhead (across the Mersey River from Liverpool) England, but was brought to Australia when he was 14. He married Amy Marion Traylen in 1916, registered in the Swan district. A son, William Harold Cleverly was born in 1917 – the child would never see his father (BDM 248/1917 Perth).

The War brought double tragedy to the family: Henry’s younger brother Tom was killed on service 3 weeks before Henry died.

> CLEVERLY.—Killed in action, on September 17, Corporal Tom Cleverly; also Lieutenant Harry Cleverly, husband of Amy, who died of wounds on October 11, dearly beloved brothers of Lance-Corporal George Cleverly (on active service) and Fanny, Steve, Jack, Charlie. *The West Australian* 25/10/1917p1

His widow received a military pension of 70/- per fortnight and his son William Harold a pension of 20/- per fortnight, both to date from 23 Dec 1917. Mrs Cleverly also received a benefit from The Independent Order of Oddfellows (her husband’s lodge). For his service Lt Cleverly was entitled to receive the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his widow. His family paid for an inscription on his headstone which reads: ‘His Duty Nobly Done’.

Amy Cleverly married again in 1930, to Leonard J Kendall. Mrs A M Kendall died in 1965, aged 73 years, and was buried at the Guildford Cemetery.

Lt Cleverley's son, William Harold Cleverley served as WX21690 Lt W H Cleverly, HQ 1 Australian Corps in the Second World War. He survived and died in 1997 in Kalgoorlie aged 80.

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----------