077

Dalziel, James Marshall

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



Central tower of the Australian memorial at Villers-Brettoneaux

Rail employment information

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

Rail employment notes: Born 28/7/1892. Joined WAGR 27/10/1911 aged 19 as Cleaner, Northam. Transferred to Merredin 1/7/1914. ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning locomotives and otherwise employed at a locomotive depot whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder. Both Northam and Merredin had busy locomotive depots in the days of steam engines, as both were junction stations.)

Granted leave to join AIF 12/1/1916 (Service No.5039). Killed in action 15/4/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5039
Date of death:	15 April 1917
Place of death:	Lagnicourt, France
Age:	24
Rank:	Lance Corporal

Burial/memorialisation: Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, Villers-Bretonneux, Picardie, France

James Marshall Dalziel enlisted in the AIF on 15 January 1916 at Blackboy Hill Camp where he also undertook his basic training. He nominated his father Thomas Dalziel as his Next of Kin. Private Dalziel was born in Wishaw, Scotland and migrated to Australia at the age of 19. He had 3 years' service in the Highland Light Infantry and was granted discharge for the purpose of migration. On completion of basic training he was allocated to 16th Reinforcements to 11 Battalion with the regimental number 5039. Both 15th and 16th Reinforcements to 11 Battalion departed Australia aboard A9 HMAT *Shropshire* from Fremantle on 31 March 1916 and disembarked at Suez. In Egypt the reinforcements travelled to Alexandria where they boarded HMT *Tunisian* on 29 May 1916 and sailed to Marseilles where they disembarked on 3 June 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force.

In France he passed through 1 ADBD before being taken on strength 11 Battalion on 29 July 1916. On 11 December 1916 he was appointed a Lance Corporal after the Bn had withdrawn from Moquet Farm. L/Cpl Dalziel was hospitalized with Influenza between 11 February and 11 March 1917. On 15 April 1917 he was Killed in Action at Lagnicourt and buried on the battlefield. After the War the

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Graves Registration Unit were unable to locate his remains and he is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

The Australian War memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, France.

Soldiers killed in France are buried and marked by the rows of gravestones seen to left and right.

The wing walls to both sides of the central watch tower record, carved in stone, the names of Australian soldiers killed in France but with no known grave – tragically, more than 11 000 men. Many former WA railway men are buried or commemorated here.



Additional/personal information:

Private Dalziel was born in Wishaw, Scotland and attended school on Scotland before he migrated to Australia at the age of 19. It appears he migrated with his parents.

> DALZIEL.—On April 15, killed in action in France James M. Dalziel, 11th Battalion, beloved eldest son of Thomas and Jeanie Dalziel. the Crescent, Midland Junction, aged 24 years and 10 months. His duty done. *The West Australian* 14/5/1917p1
>
> DALZIEL. —On or about April 13, 1917, killed in action in France, Lance-Corporal James M. Dalziel (Jim). Sadly missed. —Inserted by his sorrowing friend, C. F. Burnett, Merredin. *The West Australian* 16/5/1917p1

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. L/Cpl Dalziel's domestic circumstances caused Army Records some problems in relation to the distribution of his campaign medals.

Following his death an ex-nuptial daughter was identified. This daughter is now known to have been named Mary Marshall Burnett who was in the care of Cecilia Francis Burnett as her legal guardian. WA BDM records indicate the daughter was likely only born in 1916 (1642/1916) and so James Dalziel may not have known that he left a woman expecting his daughter, and he never saw the child

The campaign medals were offered to the guardian of the daughter (grandmother) to be held in trust until she became of age but the reply was that it was not intended for her to know that she was illegitimate and the medals were therefore issued to his father together with other memorabilia. Later the guardian attempted to reverse that decision and sought the campaign medals on behalf of the ex-nuptial daughter. As they had already been issued, Army Records only suggestion was for the guardian to negotiate with Mr Thomas Dalziel. The mother of the young girl did not wish to be named as she had since married.

A pension was paid to Jeanne Thomson Dalziel (his mother) at the rate of 14/- per fortnight commencing 6 July 1917 and a pension to the daughter of 20/- per fortnight, through her guardian, also to commence on 06 Jul 1917. The payment file (PP2/8 M27746) to the daughter remained active until 1970 but is not available on line. Thomas Dalziel (father and NOK) passed away in 1936 (BDM Swan 37/1936). Pte Dalziel had made a will on 30 March 1916, the day before he departed Australia for active service in which he nominated his sole beneficiary to be his mother.

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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----------

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