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Danes, Harold Edward

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:	Painter

Rail employment notes Born 29/3/1892. Joined WAGR 8/2/1909 aged 16 as Apprentice Painter, Midland Workshops. Appointed to Painter, Midland Workshops 13/3/1914.

In this era, the "Locomotive" branch of the WAGR, which would later be named the Chief Mechanical Engineer's branch, included the major workshops at Midland (then Midland Junction) employing a wide range of tradesmen to work on locomotives, carriages and freight wagons as they were built or passed through for repairs, and also trained apprentices in many trades.

Granted leave to join AIF 14/8/1914 (Service No.299). Killed in action at Gallipoli 2/5/1915.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	299
Date of death:	2 May 1915
Place of death:	Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey
Age:	23
Rank:	Corporal

Burial/memorialisation: Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula, Canakkale Province, Turkey

Harold Edward Danes was one of the first to enlist in the AIF when he signed up on 2 September 1914 at Blackboy Hill Camp. He nominated his father Mr Abel Danes as his Next of Kin. Harold Danes had previous military service as a Sergeant in the 88th Infantry Regiment of Militia. Because of his earlier service he was promoted to the rank of substantive Corporal on 7 September 1914 just 5 days after enlistment. He participated in the training at Blackboy Hill and was assigned to 11 Battalion with the regimental number 299. The Battalion boarded A11 HMAT *Ascanius* at Fremantle on 31 October 1914 but did not depart until 2 November 1914. *Ascanius* then joined the first convoy which had earlier departed from Albany with a substantial Naval escort to provide cover against the German Light Cruiser *Embden* which was thought to roaming the Indian Ocean. Ascanius later suffered minor damage in a collision with Shropshire and was required to enter Aden for repairs before proceeding up the Red Sea. Suez was reached on 5 December 1914 and the troops disembarked the following day and established camp at Mena with other elements of the 3rd Brigade. Training continued in Egypt until 2 March 1915 when the Bn moved by rail to Alexandria, boarded HMT *Suffolk* and sailed for Mudros on Lemnos Island. There was a delay of 7 weeks while the troops practiced the use of scrambling nets and maintained fitness with route marches on the Island.

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On 25 April 1915 11th Battalion as part of the 3rd Brigade landed at Anzac Cove and suffered considerable casualties. Corporal Danes survived the landing but was Killed in Action on 2 May 1915 in the area of Gaba Tepe. Nothing is known of his burial and the Graves Registration Unit were unable to locate his remains after the War, up to 1922. He thus has no known grave and is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial.

Additional/personal information:

Harold Danes was born in Junee in New South Wales before moving to WA with his family.

> DANES.-In fond and loving memory of our dear son and brother, Harold, who was killed at the landing at the Dardanelles, April 25, 1915 -Inserted by his loving mother, sister, and brothers, Ida, Stanley and Percy.
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> DANES.-In loving memory of Harold E. Danes; Corporal;. 11th Battalion; killed April 25, 1915, in the landing at the Dardanelles; aged 23 years. -Inserted by his sister and brother-in-law, Amy and Alex. Roger.
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> DANES. -In loving memory of our dear friend, Corporal Harold, Edward Danes, who was killed at the Dardanelles landing, April 25, 1915. Though death divides fond memory clings. -Inserted by his friends, Wilmot and Alice.
>
> DANES. -In loving memory of my dear friend. Harold, who fell at Anzac on April 25, 1915, His duty nobly done. -Inserted by his loving friend, Elsie McSwain. All *The West Australian* 26/4/1915p1

Harold Danes was a member of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees and there is correspondence from that Society on file. Abel Danes died at the age of 68 years on 15 Sep 1923 and Rebecca Danes (his mother) died on 30 Oct 1932 aged 73 years. Both of his parents were buried at Karrakatta Cemetery. A file at NAA suggests that his aged parents were in receipt of a military pension but details not available. For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his father together with other memorabilia.

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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