Davy, John Cheeseman

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:	Turner

Rail employment notes: Turner, Midland Workshops.
In this era, the "Locomotive" branch of the WAGR, which would later be named the Chief Mechanical Engineer's branch, included the mechanical workshops at Midland (then Midland Junction).
WAGR records of individual employees, available from the SRO, have not been found for Mr Davy, however designation and other information have been listed from the 1919 published Honour Roll, the Railway Institute Magazine, and other sources.
Left to enlist. 28th Battalion AIF (Service No.5840). Died of wounds 21/9/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5840
Date of death:	21 September 1917
Place of death:	Belgium
Age:	32
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium

John Cheeseman Davy enlisted in the AIF on 15 April 1916. He nominated his wife Mrs Jessie Davy as his Next of kin and declared that he had no previous military experience. His basic military training was conducted at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was assigned to 16th Reinforcements to 28 Battalion with the regimental number 5840.

Private Davy departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A23 HMAT *Suffolk* on 13 October 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth on 08 Dec 1916 where he marched into 7 Training Battalion. He departed England through Folkestone on 21 Dec 1916 aboard HMT *Princess Clementine* and was taken onto the roll of 2 ADBD to join the British Expeditionary Force. Private Davy joined 28 Battalion from reinforcements on 18 January 1917. The Battalion entered the Third Battle of Ypres and in the region of Zonnebeke he was Wounded in action on 20 September 1917, suffering a penetrating Gun shot wound to his back. He was carried from the battlefield to 6 Fd Amb and then transferred to 3 Canadian CCS where he Died of Wounds on 21 September 1917. Pte Davy was buried in the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery.

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Additional/personal information:

John Davy's place of birth was Newcastle-on-Tyne, England and appears to have grown up and married in England. It is not known when he migrated to Australia although his youngest daughter was born in WA in 1912.

> DAVY. - Died of wounds in France, September 21, Private John Cheesemond Davy, husband of Jessie Davy, and father of Jessie and Isabel. Deeply mourned. *The West Australian* 10/10/1917p1

The spelling of his middle name 'Cheesemond' quoted in the family notice may be the correct one. It was not unknown for recruiting officers to write down a date or name incorrectly, and the incorrect version would then follow the soldier throughout his life or death. Both 'Cheeseman' and "Cheesemond' are names recorded in UK censuses of that era.

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his widow together with other memorabilia. Mrs Davy received a pension of 40/- per fortnight, their daughters Jessie and Isobel 20/- and 15/- per fortnight all effective from 06 Dec 1917. Pte Davy made a Will while at Blackboy Hill Camp in which he bequeathed his estate to his wife and lodged that will with his wife. On 13 July 1917 he recorded another Will, in his paybook, which did not vary from his earlier Will. Mrs Jessie Davy died on 28 August 1944 at the age of 57 years and was buried in the Fremantle 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----------

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