Dean, Jack

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:	Junior Labourer

Rail employment notes: Born 16 September 1895. Joined WAGR 5 December 1910 aged 15 as Junior Labourer, Midland Workshops. Granted leave to join AIF 23/7/1915 (Service No.925). Killed in action at Fleurbaix 19/7/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	32nd Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	925
Date of death:	19 July 1916
Place of death:	Fleurbaix, France
Age:	20
Rank:	Lance Corporal
Burial/memorialisation:	VC Corner Australian Cemetery and Memorial, Fromelles, Lille, Nord Pas de Calais, France

Jack Dean enlisted in the AIF on 26 July 1915. Jack Dean had 2 years military experience in 38th Battery of Artillery and was still serving when he enlisted. He had been born in Bolton UK and had arrived in WA at the age of 14 years. Both parents gave approval for him to serve overseas and his father became his Next of kin. At the time of his enlistment Australia had decided to create a second division in response to the flood of volunteers coming forward is response to the Gallipoli campaign. Even creating a whole new division did not accommodate the numbers and the decision was made to create an 8th Brigade. Using the model of the 4th Brigade one of the Battalions would be formed with two companies each from South Australia and West Australia. This was to become 32nd Battalion and would concentrate in South Australia before departing for overseas service. A and B companies would be South Australian while C and D companies would be West Australian.

Private Dean with the regimental number 925 was equipped at Blackboy Hill Camp and with the other members of the partial 32 Bn sailed to Adelaide from Fremantle aboard the SS *Indarra* as a member of C Coy. (On the voyage Fremantle to Adelaide 5 stowaways were found!). Training continued in South Australia at Mitcham Military Camp and the Morphettville racecourse. The Bn departed from the Port of Adelaide aboard A2 HMAT *Geelong* on 18 November 1915 and disembarked at Suez on 18 December 1916. The Battalion then undertook both individual and unit training in Egypt. On 17 June 1916 they departed Alexandria aboard HMT *Transylvania* and disembarked Marseilles on 23

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June 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force. In France he undertook training in the Armentieres sector before participating in the debacle at Fromelles. Private Dean had been made up to a Lance Corporal on 25 March 1916 and it was with that rank that he was Killed in action on 19 July 1916. None of the Australian soldiers recovered from the battlefield that day were identified. Their bodies were buried in the VC Corner Cemetery and their names inscribed on an adjacent memorial.

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*

Additional/personal information:

Jack Dean was born in Bolton, England, but it is thought that the family emigrated together to WA from the UK when he was 14, his parents living in Midland (then called Midland Junction). A family death notice mentioned "sister and brothers" and two of those brothers also enlisted: 4097 Sgt C M Dean 28 Battalion Died of wounds on 12/12/1917 and 2893 Pte HS Dean 44 Battalion who returned home.

AWM holds an undated studio photograph of Pte Dean P06338.002 in uniform.

After his death there was correspondence with the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees as a death benefit was payable. For his service he was entitled to receive the !914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his father along with other memorabilia.

When Jack's father completed the military history form after Jack's death, he sadly commented "I have practically no details as his company was nearly all killed at Fleurbaix".

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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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