090

Domsalla, Eric Howard Albert

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:	Traffic
Designation:	Porter

Rail employment notes: Porter, York.

("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR – some had specific roles such as a receiving goods porter, some were general hands while some learnt safe-working and could assist with signals, etc. York, a junction station and with a separate goods shed, probably had at least 2 porters). Detailed employee records for Mr Domsalla have not been found.

Enlisted 8th Battery, Field Artillery AIF (Service No.15103). Died of wounds 27/8/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	12th Australian Field Artillery Brigade
Service number:	15103
Date of death:	27 August 1917
Place of death:	Belgium
Age:	24
Rank:	Corporal

Burial/memorialisation: Adinkerke Military Cemetery, Adinkerke, Flanders, Belgium

Eric Domsalla enlisted in the AIF on 27 January 1916, and nominated his father A A Domsalla of London UK as his next of kin. He was posted to the 2nd Reinforcement to 12th Field Artillery Brigade, with service number 15103. After initial training and transfer to Melbourne for artillery training, this group embarked from Melbourne on HMAT *Port Lincoln* on 4 May 1916 for Europe.

A Field Artillery Battery (FAB) used guns (usually 18 Pounders) capable of fairly rapid movement across the battle field, as distinct from those dug in.

He was promoted to Corporal while in Europe.

Corporal Domsalla was wounded in action on 26 August and died from his wounds on 27 August 1917. He was buried in the Adinkerke Military Cemetery in Belgium.

Additional/personal information:

Eric Domsalla was born in London, England, a son of Adolph and Emma Domsall. He came to WA when he was 19, apparently leaving his family in England. His father reported he had originally trained in cabinet making and French polishing but it seems he could not obtain that work in Perth.

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News of a soldier's fate always took time to arrive, especially when the direct recipient, the next of kin, was in another country. Hence it was common for notices to be placed on the anniversary:

> DOMSALLA.—Died of wounds in France, September. 1917, Bombardier Eric Domsalla, beloved nephew of S. and A. Allard, 6 Padbury-street, Perth cousin of Dorice, Iris, Maris, Roy. His duty nobly done. *The West Australian* 4/10/1917p1
>
> DOMSALLA.—In loving memory of our dear nephew and cousin, Bombardier Eric Domsalla, wounded in France 26th, died August 27, 1917. Inserted by his loving aunt and uncle, A. and S. Allard, and cousins.
>
> DOMSALLA.—In sad remembrance of my friend, Bombardier Eric Domsalla, who died of wounds, August 27, 1917; aged 24 years. Inserted by his friend, E. M. White, Mearse-street, York. London (Kensington) papers please copy. Both *The West Australian* 27/08/19187p1

His family arranged for a personal inscription on his gravestone reading "Though dead he lives within our hearts his presence lingers".

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. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

----------Lest we forget----------

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