095

Dunn, Ernest Septimus

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:	Fireman

Rail employment notes: Born 8/6/1892. Joined WAGR 7/10/1910 aged 18 as Cleaner, Perth. ("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.)

Promoted to Fireman, Perth 17/12/1912.

Granted leave to join AIF 14/8/1915 (Service No.2570). Killed in action 3/9/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	51st Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2570
Date of death:	3 September 1916
Place of death:	Mouquet Farm, France
Age:	23
Rank:	Lance Corporal

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

Ernest Septimus Dunn enlisted in the AIF on 16 August 1915. On enlistment he stated that his father was deceased and that his mother Mrs Sophia Dunn was his Next Of Kin. His previous military experience was 6 months in the Infantry Militia. His basic military training was at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was posted to 6th Reinforcements to 28 Battalion and departed Australia from the Port of Fremantle aboard A38 HMAT *Ulysses* for Egypt. Prior to sailing he made his Will on 01 Nov 1915 in which he made his mother the sole beneficiary.

On arrival in Egypt he joined 7 Trg Bn and when 51 Battalion was formed as part of the new 4th Division he was transferred to that Unit on 2 March 1916. He continued to train in Egypt until 5 June 1916 when he boarded HMT *Ivernia* at Alexandria and disembarked at Marseilles on 12 June 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force. After a short period in quiet trenches 51 Bn moved to Pozieres. Pte Dunn was appointed a Lance Corporal on 17 August 1916. At the Battle for Moquet Farm he was Wounded in Action and was noted to be Missing in Action as from 3 September 1916. A Court of Enquiry was held on 23 Apr 1917 which found that he had been Killed in Action on 3 September 1916. His body was never recovered, he has no known grave and is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

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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. The largest number recorded from one unit is from 28th Battalion – some 365 West Australians.



Additional/personal information:

Ernest Septimus Dunn was born and schooled in Western Australia, a son of Edward and Sophia (nee Martin) Dunn. (BDM 1094/1892)

For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his mother along with other memorabilia. His mother received a military pension but the details are not on his personal file but are held on file PP2/8 R11525 which is not available on line. The widowed Mrs Sophia Dunn remarried to Thomas Maitland in 1927 (BDM Perth 618/1927). She died on 2 June 1933 aged 67 years and was buried in the same compartment at Karrakatta cemetery as Thomas Maitland who had pre-deceased her in 1932.

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).

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

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