Edwards, Harold Leonard

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:	Cadet

Rail employment notes: Born 20/9/1897. Joined WAGR 14/10/1912 aged 15 as Cadet, Geraldton. Granted leave to join AIF 17/11/1915 (Service No.4107). Killed in action 1/9/1918.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	2nd Australian Division Signals Company
Service number:	4107
Date of death:	1 September 1918
Place of death:	Place not yet found
Age:	20
Rank:	Sapper
Burial/memorialisation:	Herbecourt British Cemetery, Picardie, France

Harold Leonard Edwards commenced enlistment with the approval of his father (mother died 1910) in the AIF at Geraldton and was attested at Blackboy Hill Camp on 23 Nov 1915. He nominated his father John Richard Edwards as his NOK. Pte Edwards had several years military experience as a Cadet in the Universal Training Scheme. Following basic military training at Blackboy Hill he was allocated to 10th/28 Bn with the regimental number 4107. He departed Australia on 01 Apr 1916 aboard A38 HMAT Ulysses and disembarked in Egypt where he had a short hospital admission and then departed from Alexandria on 02 Jun 1916 aboard HMT Minneton which reached Plymouth on 12 Jun 1916. In England he marched into 7 Trg Bn and remained on the trainee strength until 13 Dec 1916 when he departed England from Folkestone aboard SS *Victoria* for France and the British Expeditionary Force.
Pte Edwards passed through 2 ADBD and was taken-on-strength of 28 Bn on 18 Dec 1916. On 10 March 1916 he was added to the trainee strength of 2 Division School where he remained until he re-joined 28 Bn on 18 April 1917 and had front line experience in the latter phases of the Battle of Bullecourt. Pte Edwards presented sick with fever on 08 Aug 1917 and was managed through a number of medical units commencing at 7 Fd Amb. He was judged to be fit for duty on 28 Sep 1917 and on that day was transferred to 2 Div Sig Coy. Sapper Edwards had UK leave between 01 Jan and 17 Jan 1918. In action near Peronne, he was Killed in action on 1 September 1918 and buried in the Herbecourt British Cemetery.

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Additional/personal information:

Harold Edwards was born in Cunderdin WA in 1897 but the family moved to Geraldton while he was young and he attended Geraldton State School. He served in the compulsory military cadets where he was commissioned as a Lieutenant.

> EDWARDS.—In loving memory of our dear friend Private Harold L. Edwards, killed in action on September 1. He fought life's battle bravely, And patiently stood the test; And always will be remembered As one of the very best. Inserted by his sincere friends, Corporal Donald MacQueen (on active service) and Mrs. MacQueen, of Bellevue (late of Geraldton). *The West Australian* 20/9/1918p1

His father paid for an inscription on his gravestone which reads: In Memory of my Son. J R Edwards. For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his father together with other memorabilia. Sapper Edwards had drawn a Will before leaving Australia and there is a folio dated 11 Nov 1919 showing that his father had been granted letters of administration. John Richard Edwards, the Next of kin, died at Yalgoo on 8 August 1928 aged 60 years and was buried in the Yalgoo 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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