Garrity, Howard William

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:	Junior Worker

Rail employment notes: Born 29/5/1896. Joined WAGR 3/2/1914 aged 17 as Junior Porter, Fremantle. Transferred to Perth 19/2/1914 and to Osborne 31/8/1914. (Osborne station was renamed to Swanbourne in 1921)

Granted leave to join AIF 15/3/1915 (Service No.859). Killed in action 3/5/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	859
Date of death:	3 May 1917
Place of death:	Bullecourt, France
Age:	20
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Noreuil Australian Cemetery, Picardie, France

Howard William Garrity enlisted in the AIF on 15 May 1915 with the written approval of his father William Garrity who also became his Next of Kin. Howard was assigned to D Company 28 Bn with the regimental number 859 and trained at Blackboy Hill Camp while A and B Companies trained at Rockingham. He had previous military experience as a Naval Cadet at Albany and for 10 months with the 88th Regiment of Infantry. On completion of basic training he departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A11 HMAT *Ascanius* on 09 Jun 1915 and disembarked in Egypt on 2 July 1915 where the Bn entered camp. Following further training in Egypt the Bn departed from Alexandria aboard HMT *Ivernia* on 4 September 1915 and landed on Gallipoli on 10 September 1915.

Before leaving Egypt, he made a paybook Will on 22 August 1915 leaving his estate to his mother, Louisa Garrity. Following service on Gallipoli the Battalion returned to Egypt and then embarked at Alexandria on A32 HMAT *Themistocles* on 16 March 1916 for Marseilles where the Bn disembarked on 22 Mar 1916 to join the BEF. Pte Garrity had two admissions to hospital for treatment of Venereal Disease. The second admission between May and Aug 1916 rendered him non-effective for 66 days (for which his pay would be reduced). He participated in the heavy fighting at Pozieres and then at Lagnicourt and was not injured. However on 3 May 1917 Private Garrity was Killed in Action at Bullecourt in the offense against the Hindenburg Line. His death was reported by serviceman 1720A Allen 28 Bn who removed his paybook from the deceased and handed it to the staff of 9 General Hospital. He was buried in the Noreuil Australian Cemetery.

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Additional/personal information:

Howard William Garrity was born in Albany WA in 1896, a son of William and Louisa Elizabeth (nee Sleigh) Garrity. He had a younger brother and several sisters.

> GARRITY.-On May 3, killed in action in France, Signaller Howard William, aged 20 years and 11 months, of the 28th Battalion, dearly beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. W.Garrity, and brother of Mabel, Min, Gladys, and Fred., 358 Newcastle-street, Perth. His duty nobly done. *The West Australian* 24/5/1917p1

> GARRITY.—A tribute to the memory of my dear friend, Signaller Howard Garrity, killed May 3, somewhere in France. Ever remembered. —Inserted by his friend Dulcie Saint, Fremantle. *The West Australian* 26/5/1917p1

For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his father together with other memorabilia. Mrs Garrity received a pension of 20/- per fortnight effective from 20 Jul 1917. His parents paid for an inscription on his gravestone which reads: "Rest Dearest Brother and Son Rest, Thy Duty's Nobly Done". His father (NOK) died on 31 March 1949 aged 76 years and was buried at Karrakatta Cemetery. His mother, the pension recipient, died at age 91 years, was cremated, and her ashes spread on the grave of her husband.

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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