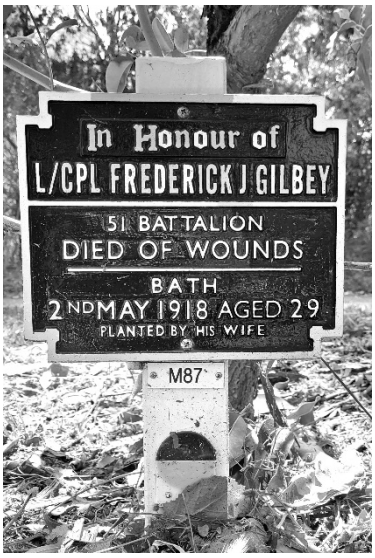
Gilbey, Frederick James

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for their country

Fred Gilbey emigrated from the UK to Australia, then enlisted and sailed back to the UK as an Australian soldier and was killed in France, leaving his wife and two very young children in Australia.



Plaque M87 in Kings Park

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Tramways
Designation:	Acting Clerk

Rail employment notes: Born 1/9/1888. Joined Tramways 1/7/1913 aged 24 as Conductor, Perth.

(The tramways of Perth and adjoining suburbs were compulsorily purchased by the WA Government in 1913 and were placed in the management and responsibility of the WA Government Railways. The records of employees, including the honour roll after the war, reflected this combined operation. The date he joined the government tramways is the takeover date and indicates he was already working for one of the private companies.)

Transferred to Motorman, Perth 2/8/1914 and Conductor, Perth 28/11/1914. Promoted to Acting Clerk, Perth 8/12/1915.

Granted leave to join AIF 15/11/1916 (Service No.3766). Died of wounds 2/5/1918.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	51st Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	3766
Date of death:	2 May 1918
Place of death:	Place not yet found
Age:	29
Rank:	Lance Corporal

Burial/memorialisation: Locksbrook Cemetery, Bath, Somerset, England, United Kingdom

Frederick James Gilbey enlisted in the AIF on 9 October 1916. On enlistment he nominated his wife Katherine Mary Gilbey as his Next Of Kin and stated that he had no previous military experience. Frederick Gilbey had been born in London but his age on migration cannot be determined as the relevant page in his file is illegible. His basic military training was at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was assigned to 10th Reinforcements to 51 Battalion and departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A30 HMAT *Borda* on 29 June 1917.

He disembarked at Plymouth on 25 August 1917 and marched into 13 Training Battalion the following day. Private Gilbey was detached from the Trg Bn to the School of Musketry on 31 October 1917 where he remained on the trainee strength until 1 December 1917 when he returned to 13 Trg Bn. He qualified 1st Class and was graded as having a fair knowledge of the Lewis Gun. On 18

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February 1918 he left England from Southampton for France to join the British Expeditionary Force via the AIBD before being taken-on-strength of 51 Bn on 25 Feb 1918. Pte Gilbey was appointed to be a Lance Corporal on 20 April 1918.

During the Battle of Amiens, he was Wounded In Action (Gunshot wound to right thigh). He entered the medical evacuation chain and passed through 25 Fd Amb, 5 CCS and 9th US Army Hospital before being admitted to the Bath War Hospital in England on 29 April 1918. He suffered a massive haemorrhage from the femoral artery and died on 2 May 1918, being classed by the army as Died Of Wounds (DOW). L/Cpl Gilbey was buried with full military honours in Locksbrook Cemetery on 6 May 1918 with Chaplain Pring officiating.

Additional/personal information:

Frederick Gilbey was born and schooled in England. His wife was Katherine Mary Gilbey, and it appears they were married in England before emigrating to Australia. However two sons were born after settling in Perth, Leslie in 1912 and Arthur in 1914. (BDM)

> GILBEY.-In loving memory of Private Frederick Gilbey, 51st Battalion, who died of wounds at Bath War Hospital, May 2, 1919. … Inserted by his loving wife, Catherine, and little sons, Leslie and Arthur.
>
> GILBEY. -In loving memory of our dear nephew Private F. J. Gilbey, who died of wounds at Bath War Hospital, England, May 2 1918; aged 29 years. … Inserted by Mr. and Mrs. A E. Gilbey and David, Hovia-terrace, South Perth.
>
> GILBEY.-In fond remembrance of our friend, Fred. J. Gilbey, died of wounds at Bath Hospital, England, May 2, 1918. R.I.P. Inserted by Mr., Mrs. and Dorothy Gilham.
> All *The West Australian* 2/5/1918p1

Ironically, he was active in a rifle club, apparently the weapon he was killed by:

> GILBEY.- In sincere memory of Fred Gilbey, who died of wounds, on May 2, 1918, late of Traffic Office, W.A. Government Tramways and late secretary of Perth Tramway Rifle Club. A loving comrade. -Inserted by members of the Perth Tramways Rifle Club. *The West Australian* 15/5/1918p1

His mother, father, brother and sister were in attendance at the funeral and AIF HQ London were also represented.

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his widow in Austrlia together with other memorabilia. In 1919 Mrs Gilbey dedicated a plaque (M87) to his memory in Kings Park – the introductory planting year of these plaques.

His widow received a military pension (details not available). Katherine Gilbey remarried, to William B Thomson (BDM Perth 1346/1925). She died on 19 March 1963 at the age of 76 years and was cremated at Karrakatta 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----------