**Goodfield, William**

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



Memorial at Railway Workshops Midland (D.Graham/panoramio)

**Rail employment information**

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| Employer: | Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways |
| Branch: | Tramways |
| Designation: | Motorman |

Rail employment notes: Born 16/12/1882. Joined Tramways 1/7/1913 aged 30 as Motorman, Perth. Given the date, and the lack of trainee role before being a motorman (tram driver), it is likely that he was previously a driver with a privately owned tramway around Perth.
(The tramways of Perth and adjoining suburbs were compulsorily purchased by the WA Government in 1913 and were placed under the management and responsibility of the WA Government Railways. The records of employees, including the honour roll after the war, reflected this combined operation.)

Granted leave to join AIF 5/3/1915 (Service No.285). Died of wounds 22/5/1917.

**Military service information:**

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|---|---|
| Conflict: | First World War 1914-1918 |
| Service: | Australian Imperial Force (AIF) |
| Military unit: | 28th Australian Infantry Battalion. |
| Service number: | 285 |
| Date of death: | 22 May 1917 |
| Place of death: | France |
| Age: | 34 |
| Rank: | Private |

Burial/memorialisation: St Sever Cemetery Extension, Haute-Normandie, France

William Goodlfield enlisted 6 March 1915 and was allotted to B Company, 28th Infantry Battalion with regimental number 285. He and nominated his wife Mrs Violet Goodfield of East Perth as his next of kin. William gave his age at enlistment as 29 – it was almost certainly 32 at that time but it was not unusual for men to reduce their age to meet army criteria.

After training, he embarked on HMAT *Ascanius* from Fremantle on 9 June 1915, ship number from Fremantle A11. Crossed to Gallipoli on *Ivernia* 4 September 1915. Suffered a compound wound to a finger. Evacuated to hospital in UK.

When recovered he re-joined 28 Battalion in France through 2 Aust Divisional Base Depot on 10 June 1916 but was non-effective with VD from 15 June 1916 to 17 August 1916, a period of 64 days. (These periods were recorded, as soldiers' pay was reduced accordingly) Private Goodfield involved in the ill-fated fighting around Bullecourt in April 1917. He was seriously wounded (Second occasion) by Gunshot wound to his left leg on 3 May 1917 in the general area of Bullecourt. He was admitted to 6 Field Ambulance and later transferred to 11 Stationary Hospital at Rouen where an amputation of his left foot was performed on 11 May 1917. Pte Goodfield was then classified as

Dangerously Ill and Died of Wounds received in action on 22 May 1917. He was buried that same day in the St Sever Cemetery Extension.

The fighting around Bullecourt on 11 April 1917 was a Black day for the AIF.

The 16th Battalion was the worst affected - they went into the Battle with 20 Officers and 797 Other Ranks. At the post-battle roll call they were missing 17 Officers and 623 Other Ranks (Reported by Capt C Longmore in the book "The Old Sixteenth"). Many were dead, while the German forces also had taken many prisoners.

The failure of the attack has been subject to endless analysis but it seems there was no preliminary artillery barrage and they relied on the then-new tanks to crush a pathway through the enormous belts of wire – which didn't work.

The town of Bullecourt erected a memorial to those killed or lost. The memorial depicts an AIF soldier of that time in full field dress and equipment, as shown right. Photo Dr G.M.Galvin.



**Additional/personal information:**

William Goodfield was born in Keynsham, England, a son of William and Julia, and it appears he married Violet before coming to WA. They had at least three children: their births are not recorded in WA so they may all have been born before the family immigrated.

> GOODFIELD. -On May 22. died of wounds in France. Private Wm. Goodfield. B. Company, 28th Battalion, dearly loved husband of Violet and fond father of Hilda. Horace, and Leslie, aged 34 years, late of Perth Tramways. *The West Australian* 30/5/1917p1

His gravestone bears the inscription "Peace Perfect Peace". For his service he was entitled to receive the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. These were issued to his wife under her re-married name. Mrs Violet Goodfield received a military pension of 40/- per fortnight, his daughter Hilda May Goodfield 20/- per fortnight and his son Leslie Augustus Goodfield 10/- per fortnight, all to date from 27 July 1917. Mrs Goodfield (then Moran) also applied for financial assistance to support the education of Leslie Goodfield in his secondary education.

His widow later remarried, to Philip L Moran (BDM 629/1918). In a file note dated 15 March 1920 Western Command noted that Mrs Goodfield had remarried and that she was now to be known as Mrs Moran of Lake Grace, via Wagin. Violet Florence Moran (previously Goodfield) died at the age of 70 years in 1960 with a Swan registration.

The three children all married in WA – Hilda to William Wright, Horace to Edith Morley and Leslie to Ada McPherson (BDM records).

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----------