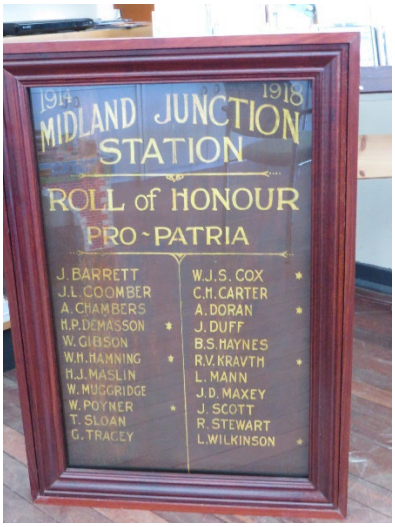
Hamming, William Henry

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



William Hamming is remembered on an Honour Board from Midland station, now at the Railway Museum

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Traffic
Designation:	Guard

Rail employment notes: Born 10 April 1888. Joined WAGR 21 September 1909 aged 21 as Porter, Kalgoorlie. Transferred to Hannan Street 14/1/1910 and to Kalgoorlie 24/8/1910. ("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR and Kalgoorlie, a busy junction station, goods depot and terminus of suburban passenger trains, probably had at least 10 porters. Hamming would have studied and passed a safe-working course to gain promotion to Guard.)

Appointed to Shunter, Golden Gate (between Kalgoorlie and Boulder) 5/9/1910 and promoted to Head Shunter, Perth Goods 30/10/1911. Transferred to Guard, Midland Junction 5/8/1912 and regressed to Porter, Perth 21/10/1912. Re-appointed to Guard, Midland Junction 2/11/1912.

Granted leave to join AIF 8/9/1914 (Service No.6269).

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	6269 (previously 1036)
Date of death:	7 May 1917
Rank:	Private
Age:	29
Place of death:	France

Burial/memorialisation: Grevillers British Cemetery, Grevillers, Picardie, France

William Henry Hamming enlisted in the AIF at Blackboy Hill Camp on 7 September 1914. He stated that he had no previous military experience. Following a brief period of training he was allocated to 11 Battalion with the regimental number 1036. He departed Australia on A11 HMAT *Ascanius* on 31 October 1914 from the Port of Albany as part of the First Convoy and disembarked in Egypt. Private Hamming had an old foot injury and was unable to keep up with the training schedule. He was declared Medically Unfit and returned to Australia aboard *Kyarra*, departing Suez on15 February 1915 and disembarking at Melbourne on 11 March 1915. He was transferred to Perth (means not recorded) and discharged from the AIF on 14 April 1915.

William Hamming re-enlisted on 20 July 1916 and was assigned to 20th Reinforcements to 11Battalion with a different regimental number of 6269. Private Hamming embarked on HMAT *Clan McGillivray* on 19 September 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth on 2 November 1916. He marched into 3 Training Bn on 9 November 1916. He then had a number of short hospital admissions and requested transfer from Infantry on the basis of his old foot injury. His request was refused on the advice of the Regimental Medical Officer. On 25 April 1917 he departed England for France through Folkestone and on 1 May 1917 he was taken on strength of 11 Battalion which was in action during the Third Battle of Ypres (now Ieper). Just 6 days later he was Wounded in action with gunshot wound to the head and arm. Pte Hamming was evacuated to 3 Casualty Clearing Station but died later that day. He was buried in Grevillers British Cemetery close to Bapaume.

Additional/personal information:

William Hamming was born in Talbot, Victoria but had moved to WA by 1912 when he married Valetta Ann Benson (BDM ref 9/1912)

A family notice in *The West Australian* (21/5/1917p1) confirms there were two children

> HAMMING.—On May 7, 1917, killed in action, somewhere in France, Private William H. Hamming, 20th Reinforcements, 11th Battalion (previously returned 11th Battalion), late W.A.G.R. and Bellevue, dearly beloved husband of Valetta, and loving father at Vallie and Edna, brother in law of Mrs. R, Small; and Ivo Benson, aged 28 years. His duty nobly done.

His wife Valetta Ann Hamming was given as his Next of kin when he enlisted. She paid for an inscription on his tombstone which reads: 'Thy Will Be Done May His Soul Rest in Peace'. For his service he was entitled to the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his wife together with other memorabilia. His will was extracted from his paybook and this nominated his wife as his sole beneficiary. A benefit from the WA Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees was paid out. Military pensions were paid to his wife at the rate of 40/- per fortnight, daughter Valetta Cecilia (born 1913) 20/- per fortnight and daughter Edna Amy (born 1916) 15/- per fortnight all to commence on 17 July 1917.

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----------