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Kelly, Cyril Harvey

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:	Locomotive
Designation:	Cadet

Rail employment notes: Born 28/1/1897. Joined WAGR 27/11/1911 aged 14 as Cadet, Bunbury. A "cadet" was usually a young man training for a clerical or accounting role.

Granted leave to join AIF 28/7/1915 (Service No.3501). Killed in action 5/2/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	16th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	3501
Date of death:	5 February 1917
Place of death:	Place not yet found
Age:	20
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, Villers-Bretonneux, Picardie, France

Cyril Kelly enlisted in the AIF on 29 July 1915, then aged 18. He named his mother Mrs R H Kelly of Bunbury as his next of kin (his father had died previously) and said he was not then serving in any militia. He was allocated to 17th Reinforcements to 16th Infantry Battalion with the service number 3501.

After initial training he embarked on HMAT *Benalla* at Fremantle on 1 November 1915 to join the British Expeditionary Force.

The 16th battalion were involved in very heavy fighting in France in early 1917 and Private Kelly was killed in action there on 5 February 1917.

His body has not been located and he has no known grave but he is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Australian Memorial.

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The Australian War memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, France.

Australian soldiers killed in France, whose bodies could be found for relocation, are buried and marked by the rows of gravestones seen to left and right.

The wing walls to both sides of the central watch tower record, carved in stone, the names of Australian soldiers killed in France but with no known grave – tragically, more than 11 000 men. The largest number recorded from one unit is from 28th Battalion – some 365 West Australians.



Personal information:

Cyril Kelly was born in Bunbury in 1897, a son of Maxwell Kelly and Rosetta Hannah Kelly (nee Bowden). Another son was born in 1899 but his father died also in 1899. No other siblings have been found. (BDM 3742/1897 et al.)

> IN MEMORIAM.
> KELLY. — In loving memory of Private Cyril Kelly, killed in action, in France, on February 6th, 1917.— R.I.P. *Bunbury Herald* 3/3/1917p2

His father died in 1899 but his mother Rosetta Kelly lived to the age of 98, dying in Perth in 1963.

A younger brother, Murray Bowden Kelly, also enlisted and was allocated to the 10th Light Horse Regiment with service number 4165. He embarked from Fremantle on 9/11/1917 but returned safely to Australia in 1919.

For further information

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. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

----------Lest we forget----------