Kirkbride, Sidney Harold

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:	Apprentice, Car and Wagon Builder

Rail employment notes: Born 2/3/1895. Joined WAGR 6/11/1911 aged 16 as Apprentice Car & Wagon Builder, Midland Workshops. Granted leave to join AIF 9/7/1915 (Service No.1303). Killed in action 4/10/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	14th Australian Field Artillery Brigade
Service number:	1303
Date of death:	4 October 1917
Place of death:	Belgium
Age:	22
Rank:	Gunner

Burial/memorialisation: The Huts Cemetery, Ypres, Flanders, Belgium

Sidney Kirkbride was initially enlisted in the 8th Infantry Brigade, 32nd Infantry Battalion D Company with regimental number 1303 but later moved to 14th Field Artillery Brigade. On 18 November 1915 he sailed from Adelaide on HMAT *Geelong*.

He enlisted Fremantle, and nominated his father John Kirkbride as next of kin. Departed Australia aboard HMAT *Geelong* and disembarked at Suez on 18 December 1915. On 18 March 1916 he was transferred from 32 Battalion to 53 Battery (as part of 5th Division Artillery) and his rank changed from Pte to Gunner (Gnr).

Military historian Dr Michael Galvin explains:

> A small number of West Australians were drafted into the original 32 Bn with the remainder being drawn from South Australia. Kirkbride was moved from 32 Bn (infantry) to 53 Bty Australian Field Artillery (AFA) in Egypt when the AIF was expanded from 2 Divisions to 4. There was simply not enough Gunners from Gallipoli or arriving in Egypt from the Artillery Training Centre in Victoria to fill the Artillery establishments so Infantry soldiers were drafted to Artillery.

The Battery departed Egypt from Alexandria on 20 June 1916 aboard HMT *Huntsend* and disembarked at Marseilles on 30 June 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force. Gnr Kirkbride suffered a minor wound on 21 November 1916, he was treated at 5 Field Ambulance and returned to duty on 7 December 1916. He continued to serve during the Third Battle of Ypres but was Killed in action on 4 October 1917 at Westhoek Ridge, near Ypres in Belgium.

Additional/personal information:

Sidney Kirkbride was a local man, born in Fremantle and attending school at Perth Public School and then Guildford Grammar School. His father recorded under "other training" that he did architectural and mechanical drawing – useful skills for a future carriage builder.

At Guildford Grammar School he was in their military cadet unit, then later he had 2 years of Militia service with 86th Infantry Regiment (volunteers) but had been discharged due to sickness.

> KIRKBRIDE.—Killed in action somewhere in France on October 4, 1917, Gunner Sidney Harold (Sid.) Kirkbride, second son of J.and E. Kirkbride, East Guildford, aged 22 years and 8 months. Deeply regretted. The West Australian 15/11/1917p1

For his service he qualified for the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Gunner Kirkbride has a memorial tablet in Kings Park (M180) which was dedicated by his parents.

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 research by Dr G M Galvin. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

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