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Lacey, Frederick

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:	Traffic
Designation:	Assistant Station Master

Rail employment notes: Born 31/10/1888. Joined WAGR 14/2/1911 aged 22 as Repairer, Merredin. Transferred to Karalee 14/5/1911. ("Repairer" was a track maintenance worker in a gang responsible for upkeep of an allocated section of railway line. A typical gang might include between 3 and 6 Repairers with one Leading Hand Repairer and a Ganger in charge. The WAGR Annual report for 1914/15 showed they employed 882 Repairers at 8 shillings per day, with many at very small settlements or tent camps.)

Transferred to Porter, Kalgoorlie 20/10/1913 (Transferred from Way & Works Branch) . Promoted to Assistant Station Master Woolgangie 1/12/1913, Yellowdine 21/1/1914, Baandee 24/3/1914 and Cuballing 1/9/1914.

(When stations were busy enough to warrant more than one officer, the Station Master normally worked day shift 8am – 4pm and had overall responsibility, the Assistant Station Master worked 4pm-midnight and the Night Station master worked midnight-8am.)

Granted leave to join AIF 15/7/1915 (Service No.2544). Died of wounds 5/4/1918.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	8th Medium Trench Mortar Battery, 11th Brigade Australian Field Artillery
Service number:	2544
Date of death:	6 April 1918
Place of death:	France
Age:	29
Rank:	Gunner

Burial/memorialisation: Doullens Communal Cemetery Extension No 1, Doullens, Picardie, France

Frederick Lacey enlisted in the AIF in 1915. He stated that he was then 25 years old and nominated his wife Mrs S Lacey of Subiaco as his next of kin and said he was not currently in any militia unit.

He was initially enrolled into the 7th Reinforcements to 16th Infantry Battalion with regimental number 2544 and embarked on HMAT *Chilka* from Fremantle on 18 June 1915.

He was later transferred into the 8th Medium Trench Mortar Battery, a part of the 11th brigade, which by 1918 was fighting in France as part of the British Expeditionary Force..

Gunner Lacey was badly wounded in France. On 5 April 1918 he was admitted to 3 Canadian Stationary Hospital with gunshot wounds to left leg and chest, but he died from his wounds the

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following day, 6 April 1918. It was a bad time for West Australian soldiers – counting only those enlisted from railwaymen, 5 died that day and 15 in the month of April 1918.

He was buried in the Doullens Community Cemetery.

Additional/personal information:

It is not yet known where Frederick Lacey was born or when he came to Western Australia. In 1913 Frederick married Sarah Harriet Fleming in Subiaco and the couple soon had two children, Clarice M Lacey born 1914 and Joy M Lacey born in 1915. (BDM 49/1913 etc)

The little girls would not have much memoray of their father, and eh younger may not have been born before he sailed away.

> LACEY.- In affectionate memory of my husband and our daddy, who died of wounds on April 6, 1918, somewhere in France. His duty nobly done. Inserted by his wife and little daughters, Clarice and Joy Lacey. The West Australian 5/4/1919p1

His widow died in 1962 in WA aged 69.

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----------

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