**Lowe, Richard**

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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: | Way and Works |
| Designation: | Repairer |

Rail employment notes: Born 6/12/1886. Joined WAGR 23/1/1912 aged 25 as Labourer, Brunswick Junction. Transferred to Repairer, Muja 31/7/1912. Granted leave to join AIF 2/2/1916 (Service No.5133). Killed in action 11/4/1917.

**Military service information:**

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| Conflict: | First World War 1914-1918 |
| Service: | Australian Imperial Force |
| Military unit: | 48th Australian Infantry Battalion |
| Service number: | 5133 |
| Date of death: | 11 April 1917 |
| Place of death: | France |
| Age: | 30 |
| Rank: | Private |
| Burial/memorialisation: | No known grave: Remembered on Villers-Bretonneux memorial, Villers-Bretonneux, Picardie France |

Richard Lowe was born in St Helens, UK but his year of migration to Australia is not known but thought to be around 1910. He enlisted in the AIF on 9 February 1916 at Blackboy Hill Camp and that was where he also did his basic military training. He had no previous military experience and nominated his father, a resident of Wigan Lancashire as his Next of kin.

Private Lowe was allocated to 16th Reinforcement to 16 Battalion with the regimental number 5133. After minimal training he departed Australia aboard A9 HMAT *Shropshire* on 31 March 1916 and disembarked at Alexandria on 24 April 1916 where he marched into 4 Australian Divisional Base Depot. In the reorganization of the AIF in Egypt Pte Lowe was transferred to 48 Battalion on 2 May 1916. The Battalion entered a period of intensive training before leaving Egypt aboard SS *Huntspill* on 7 June 1916 from Alexandria and joined the British Expeditionary Force on landing at Marseilles on14 June 1916. In the Battle of Moquet Farm Pte Lowe suffered wounds to his jaw and left shoulder resulting in him being evacuated to 3 Canadian General Hospital on 6 August 1916. As he improved, he was transferred to 7 CCS on 9 August 1916 following which he spent time at 4 ADBD from 16 Aug to 11 Sep 1916 when he rejoined 48 Bn. The Unit was heavily engaged in the region of Bullecourt on 11 April 1917 when he was posted Missing in action. A number of witnesses gave statements that he had been killed, amongst them 2749 Pte Randolph Spargo of 48 Bn. The AAG at Anzac Section, Third Echelon accepted the evidence of the witnesses and changed his classification to

Killed in action without the formality of a Court of Enquiry. No remains were ever recovered, he has no known grave and is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

Further information and/or photographs may be added as available. Information may also be found on the Australian War Memorial website: *https://www.awm.gov.au/advanced-search/people*

**Additional/personal information:**

For his service he was entitled to receive the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. The medals together with other memorabilia were delivered to his father in Wigan.

It appears that he was entitled to a Death Benefit from the WA Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees and it is presumed that this was paid to his mother who was the sole beneficiary under the terms of his will.

After his death there were no family notices in WA papers and it is presumed his family had remained in the UK.

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).

Acknowledgements: Rail employment notes from WAGR records held by State Records Office, Perth, transcribed by J.Austin 2019. Military and personal information researched and prepared by Dr G.M.Galvin.

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