188

Madin, William Thomas

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:	Relief Officer

Rail employment notes: Born 6/4/1887. Joined WAGR 13/11/1903 aged 16 as Junior Porter, Subiaco. Transferred to Lion Mill 18/1/1906 (later renamed Mount Helena), Parkerville 9/7/1906, Northam 16/3/1908 and Pingelly 13/2/1909.
("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR. Some had specific roles, some did whatever work the Station Master required, some qualified in safe-working and assisted with signals, etc. A Junior Porter was under 21 and paid less.)

Appointed Porter, Pingelly 21/4/1909 and promoted to Night Officer, Grass Valley 5/8/1909. Transferred to Clerk, Southern Cross 10/4/1910, Telegraph Operator, Northam 22/10/1912 and Station Relieving Officer (SRO), Kalgoorlie 25/8/1914.
(A Relieving Officer was to relieve Station Masters and other officers when on leave, etc).

Granted leave to join AIF 5/4/1916 (Service No.6307). Killed in action 6/5/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	6307
Date of death:	6 May 1917
Place of death:	France
Age:	29
Rank:	Private

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

William Thomas Madin enlisted in the AIF at Kalgoorlie on 27 March 1916. He nominated his mother Mrs Margaret Cocks (previously Madin) as his Next of Kin and declared that his father was deceased. He had no previous military experience. His basic military training was at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was allocated to 20th Reinforcements to 11 Battalion with the regimental number 6307. He departed Australia aboard A46 HMAT *Clan McGillivray* on 18 September 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth UK on 2 November 1916. He spent a short time in the UK before proceeding overseas on SS *Golden Eagle* from Folkestone on 17 December 1916 for France where he joined the British Expeditionary Force and was taken on strength of 11 Battalion on 17 January 1917 having spent just 7 days at 1ADBD.

He went into action for the first time on 6 May 1917 at Bullecourt and was Killed in Action the same day. A number of eye witnesses state that he was blown out of the trench by a high explosive shell and

died instantly. 3717 Sgt W Back 11 Bn stated that his body was then buried in a hole near where he fell and a temporary cross erected to mark the grave. After the War the Graves Registration Unit were unable to locate his remains, he has no known grave and is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

The Australian War memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, France.

Soldiers killed in France 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.



Additional/personal information:

William Thomas Madin was born in Victoria (Vic BDM 9907/1888), one of four sons and a daughter born to Francis and Margaret (nee Graham) Madin. It appears his father died in 1893 however his mother Margaret remarried to James Cock (or Cocks) in 1895, still in Victoria. It seems the family (less two babies who died very young) then moved to WA as 2 of his brothers married in the West.

Private Madin had completed a will on 9 April 1917 nominating his mother as his sole beneficiary. For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his mother together with other memorabilia. There is no record of any application for a military pension by his mother.

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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