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Mansfield, Herbert Alfred

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for their country

Herbert Mansfield was already 46 years old when he enlisted but had considerable experience as an officer in the WA (volunteer) militia.



Memorial at Railway Workshops Midland (D.Graham/panoramio)

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Way and Works
Designation:	Chainman

Rail employment notes: Chainman, Ways & Works Branch.

Career details have not been located, however the Way and Works Branch (later the Chief Civil Engineer's branch) was responsible for track and structures. A chainman is a surveyor's assistant and might have been engaged on set-out and checking of track or structures, or making maps for proposed works.

11th Battalion AIF. Killed in action 22/7/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	n/a
Date of death:	22 July 1916
Place of death:	Pozieres, France
Age:	48
Rank:	Captain

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

Herbert Alfred Mansfield had 14 years of Militia service when he enlisted on 23 January 1915. He had qualified for commission in the Militia by competitive examination on 26 March 1910. He was appointed to be a Lieutenant in the AIF list on enlistment. Lt Mansfield had been born in the UK. He declared his Next Of Kin to be his wife Mrs Florentine Amelia Mansfield.

Lt Mansfield was allocated to 3rd Reinforcements to 11 Battalion which departed Australia from the Port of Fremantle on 22 Feb 1915 aboard A50 HMAT *Itonus*. On arrival in Egypt he was assigned to the advance party to establish a base at Mudros on Lemnos Island and detached to HQ 3rd Bde. Lt Mansfield was promoted to the rank of Captain on 1 December 1915. At some date (unknown) he returned to Egypt and from there in late March 1916 he moved to Marseilles and on 18 April 1916 assumed the duties of Adjutant of Anzac Base Details Camp.

As the Divisions from Egypt completed their move from Egypt, he was free to re-join 11 Battalion which he did on 9 June 1916. During the Battle of Pozieres, he was Killed in Action sometime between 22 July and 25 July 1916. His date of death was officially determined to be 22 July 1916. His

body was never found, 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:

Herbert Mansfield had been born in the UK but migrated to Australian when he was 14. He married to Florentine Amelia Powell in Albany in 1895 (BDM 228/1895). The couple had at least four children:

> MANSFIELD.—Killed in action about July 22, Captain Herbert Alfred Mansfield, husband of F. A. Mansfield, 27 Loftus-street, Leederville, and father of Winnie, Len., Nellie, and Gladys. Deeply regretted. *The West Australian* 16/8/1916p1

For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal all of which were issued to his widow together with other memorabilia. Military pensions were paid to his widow at 76/- per fortnight, daughter Hilda 20/- per fortnight and the youngest daughter Gladys 15/- per fortnight all to commence on 26 September 1916. The daughters' pensions were paid to the widow as the trustee. Mrs Mansfield died on 22 July 1965 at the age of 90 years and was buried in the Karrakatta cemetery. The pension file at the NAA was closed following her death.

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----------