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Marrion, James

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:	Porter

Rail employment notes: Goods Porter, Perth Goods.
("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR, some had specific roles, some were general hands around a station, some learnt safe-working and assisted with signals, etc. Perth Goods depot, stretching between William and Milligan Streets on the south of the through tracks, would have employed a considerable number of porters.)

28th Battalion AIF. (Service No.5398). Killed in action 26/3/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5398
Date of death:	26 March 1917
Place of death:	Flers, France
Age:	42
Rank:	Private

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

James Marrion enlisted in the AIF on 6 March 1916. On enlistment he nominated his wife Lillian May Marrion as his Next Of Kin. He had been born in Liverpool, England but his age on arrival in Australia is unknown as no AWM circular was completed. He had no previous military experience. His military training was conducted at Blackboy Hill Camp and on 27 March 1916 he was assigned to 14th Reinforcements to 28 Battalion with the regimental number 5398.

He departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A28 HMAT *Miltiades* on 7 August 1916 and disembarked at Plymouth on 25 September 1916. The following day he marched into 7 Training Battalion where he continued training until he departed England aboard SS *Victoria* on 16 Nov 1916. In France he joined the British Expeditionary Force when he marched into 2 ADBD. From the Depot Pte Marrion was taken-on-strength of 28 Battalion on 27 January 1917.

He was Killed in Action in the Flers area on 26 March 1917. His remains were never recovered, he has no known grave and he is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, which is the main Australian memorial for soldiers killed in Europe and the scene of a commemoration service on Anzac Day.

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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:

James Marrion was born in Liverpool, England. He married Lillian and the couple had at least one child, a son whom they also named James. It appears the son was born before they emigrated to WA.

> MARRION.--In loving memory of my dear husband and father of James Marrion, of Kenny-street, Cottesloe Beach, who departed this life on March 26, 1917, killed in action in France, 14/28th Battalion. His duty nobly done. *The West Australian* 24/4/1917p1

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his widow together with other memorabilia. Pte Marrion was a member of the IOOF and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees. Both these organization paid a death benefit to his widow. Mrs Marrion received a pension of 40/- per fortnight and their son James Marrion received 20/- per fortnight both pensions effective from 12 June 1917. Mrs Marrion died on 2 April 1954 aged 66 years and was buried in Karrakatta cemetery.

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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