203

McEncroe, Pierce 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:	Tramways
Designation:	Cadet

Rail employment notes: Born 27/3/1894. Joined WAGR&T 1/7/1913 aged 19 as Cadet, Perth. "Cadet" at that time usually indicated training towards a clerical or accounting role.

(The tramways of Perth and adjoining suburbs were compulsorily purchased by the WA Government in 1913 and were placed in the management and responsibility of the WA Government Railways. The records of employees, including the honour roll after the war, reflected this combined operation.)

Granted leave to join AIF 20/8/1915 (Service No.2185). Killed in action 29/5/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2185
Date of death:	29 May 1916
Place of death:	France
Age:	22
Rank:	Private
Burial/memorialisation:	Ration Farm Military Cemetery, La Chapelle-D'armentieres, Lille, Nord Pas de Calais, France

Pierce Thomas McEncroe enlisted in the AIF in Perth on 15 July 1915. He was a serving member of 86th Regiment (Militia part-time) at Fremantle. He nominated his mother Alicia McEncroe as his Next of kin and stated that his father was dead. He commenced training at Blackboy Hill Camp but on 16 August 1915 was assigned to 4th Reinforcements to 28 Battalion with the regimental number 2185 and his training was transferred to Bunbury Military Reserve.

On completion of training he departed Australia from Fremantle aboard HMAT *Hororata* on 15 October 1915 and disembarked in Egypt where he was taken-on-strength of 28 Battalion on 19 January 1916. The Battalion trained in Egypt until 16 March 1916 when it was taken aboard A32 HMAT *Themistocles* at Alexandria and disembarked at Marseilles to join the British Expeditionary Force on 23 March 1916.

Private McEncroe entered front line service in the Armentieres sector with the Battalion but was Killed in action on 29 May 1916. He was buried in the Ration Farm Military Cemetery, La Chapelle-D'Armentieres with Chaplain W C Smith officiating.

© Rail Heritage WA

Additional/personal information:

Pierce McEncroe was born in Fremantle in 1894, a son of John and Alicia/Alice (nee Lee) McEncroe and was the second of five births registered to this couple in Fremantle, however they had several children in the 1880s in NSW before heading west. (BDM 506/1894)

> McENCROE.—On May 29, 1916, killed in action, Pierce Thomas, beloved son of the late John P. McEncroe and Mrs. McEncroe, of Allielee, Subiaco, brother of Mrs. P. J. Duffy, Mrs. J. McDonall, and Michael McEncroe, of New South Wales, and A. V., J. F., and T. McEncroe, Subiaco, and Frank (somewhere in France), aged 22 years. Thy will be done. R.I.P. *The West Australian* 29/6/1916p1

But the family would suffer again before the year ended:

> McENCROE.—Between November 3 and 6, 1916, somewhere in France, Lance-Corporal Frank McEncroe, dearly beloved youngest son of Mrs. A. McEncroe, of South Perth, and the late J. P. McEncroe, brother of late Private P. T. McEncroe and Mrs. P. J. Duffy,Mrs. J. McDouall [McDonall], M. McEncroe, of New South Wales, A. V., J. F. and T. McEncroe, aged 21 years (on November 30) R.I.P. Western Mail 8/12/1916p49

Another son 1027 L/Cpl Francis McEncroe of 28 Battalion had also enlisted and was also killed in action, on 3 November 1917.

For his service Pierce was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his mother together with other memorabilia.

Mrs Alicia McEncroe was awarded a military pension of 40/- per fortnight with effect from 30 July 1916 but when the second son was killed her pension was increased to 92/3 per fortnight with effect from 21 Jan 1917. Mrs McEncroe died in 1936 (BDM Perth 1983/1936).

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----------