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Mincham, Walter Wilton

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:	Locomotive
Designation:	Fireman

Rail employment notes: Born 4/10/1892. Joined WAGR 15/2/1911 aged 18 as Car Cleaner, Kalgoorlie. Transferred to Bunbury 25/7/1911 and appointed Cleaner 28/7/1911. ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning locomotives and otherwise working around the locomotive depot whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder)

Promoted to Fireman, Bunbury 10/8/1913 and transferred to Midland Junction 26/1/1914 and to Donnybrook 18/5/1914. Granted leave to join AIF 19/1/1915. Killed in action at Gallipoli 8/8/1915.

Military service information:

Conflict:	The Great War 1914-1919
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	16th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	1841
Date of death:	8 August 1915
Place of death:	Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey
Age:	28
Rank:	Private
Burial/memorialisation:	No known grave; Recorded on Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula, Canakkale Province, Turkey

Walter Wilton Mincham, a railway fireman, enlisted at Blackboy Hill Camp on 26 January 1915 and completed his basic training at the same camp. On enlistment he nominated his mother Mrs Isabell Mincham of Boulder as his Next of kin (even though his father was still living). He had two years of prior military experience in the Militia. After basic training he was allocated to 4th Reinforcement to 16th Battalion with the regimental number 1841. His reinforcement party departed Australia through Fremantle aboard A28 HMAT *Argyllshire* on 19 April 1915 and disembarked at Alexandria. The Unit War Diary records that reinforcements arrived at Gallipoli on 1 June 1915 and were taken on strength. The Battalion moved out of reserve and participated in the assault on Hill 971 on 8 August 1915. In the actions between 6 and 8 August 1915 the Battalion lost 4 officers and 114 either Killed in action or Wounded in action. Private Mincham was Killed in action and this was confirmed in the report of the Brigade Major dated 18 October 1915. In the action someone removed his identity disc and this was later forwarded to his family. His remains were never recovered, he has no known grave and is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial at Gallipoli.

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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*

Additional/personal information:

He had a photograph taken in uniform and this is held at the AWM as P06416.001.

After his death there was correspondence with the AMP Society and the Ancient Order of Foresters as he held death policies with both organizations. He was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Service medals and other memorabilia were forwarded to his father in Boulder (WA) after the War.

> MINCHAM -On August 8, at the Dardanelles, Walter W. Mincham, eldest son of Mr. And Mrs. W. Mincham, Oroya-street, Boulder, brother of Hilda, Gladys, Findlay, and Fred, and grandson of Mrs. S. A. McKnight,. aged 23 years. Deeply mourned. (*The West Australian* 23/9/1915p1)

A lengthy notice in the same paper on the next day from "loving friend Ethel Wood" suggests he had a close companion.

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----------