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Munro, Norman Alexander

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

The war was a tragedy for so many families – three Munro brothers enlisted (two of them WAGR men) and all three died.



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

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Accounts
Designation:	Cadet

Rail employment notes: Born 18/9/1896. Joined WAGR 13/3/1911 aged 14 as Cadet, Perth. "Cadet" was generally a young man hoping to gain a clerical or accounting role, but under age.

Granted leave to join AIF 15/5/1915 (Service No.1111). Killed in action at Gallipoli 16/12/1915.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	1111
Date of death:	16 December 1915
Place of death:	Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey
Age:	19
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula, Canakkale Province, Turkey

Norman Alexander Munro enlisted in the AIF on 15 May 1915 with the approval of his mother (father deceased). His mother Annie Munro became his Next Of Kin. Private Munro had served as a naval cadet and was still a serving member of 86th Regiment (volunteer Militia) on enlistment in Perth. His basic military training was conducted at Blackboy Hill Camp and he was initially allocated to 7th Reinforcements to 16 Battalion but was transferred to 28 Battalion and departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A11 HMAT *Ascanius* on 9 June 1915 and disembarked in Egypt on 3 July 1915.

After brief further training in Egypt the Battalion departed for Lemnos on HMT *Ivernia* on 4 September 1915 where it Transferred to SS *Sarnia* and landed on Gallipoli on 10 September 1915. When the decision was made to evacuate Gallipoli, a call was made for 17 volunteers to man machine guns at Russell's Top to act as a rear covering party. Private Munro was one of the volunteers and was Killed In Action on 16 December 1915 performing that role. His remains were never located, he has no known grave and is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial.

Additional/personal information:

Norman Munro was born in Melbourne in Victoria but the family moved to WA in the 1890s and he attended Claremont State School. He was part of a large family but the war would decimate the sons:

MUNRO. - On December 16, at Anzac, Machine Gunner Norman Alexander Munro, 28th Battalion, beloved third son of the late J. J. Munro, and Mrs. Munro, of Grange street, Claremont, brother of Eric, Roy (on active service), Jack, Ian and Alan Munro, aged 19 years 3 months. The West Australian 22/1/1916p1

The final letter advising his mother that his remains were undiscovered was dated November 1923. For his service he 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. Pension payable to Mrs Munro was noted to be 92/3 per fortnight. Following the War Mrs Munro moved to Melbourne.

Private Munro had two brothers who also served in the AIF and tragically the three boys all died:

- 1876 Sergeant R C Munro 28 Battalion, also a WAGR railwayman, who was Killed in Action at Warlencourt on 28 Feb 1917, and
- 12305 Gunner E J G Munro 2 Bde Australian Field Artillery who was killed in an air raid whilst he was in London on 16 February 1918.

Pte Munro has a memorial tablet in Kings Park (M424), his brothers are M424A and M424B all of which were dedicated by their 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----------