

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

Parry, Harold (Harry) Leslie

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

Rail employment information

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

Rail employment notes: Born 18/10/1889. Joined WAGR 7/7/1913 aged 23 as Clerk, Midland Junction. ("Clerk" was a very general term – as Midland was an important junction and terminal of suburban services there would have been several clerks appointed there in various roles – his mother referred to him as doing accounting duties.) Granted leave to join AIF 14/8/1914. Killed in action at Gallipoli 28/6/1915.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	11th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	215
Date of death:	28 June 1915
Place of death:	Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey
Age:	25
Rank at time of death:	2nd Lieutenant

Burial/memorialisation: Shell Green Cemetery, Gallipoli Peninsula, Canakkale Province, Turkey

Harold Leslie Parry ("Harry" on most military records) enlisted in the AIF at Blackboy Hill Camp. There is some confusion in his documents about the date his service actually commenced but it was most likely 17 August 1914. He nominated his mother, then resident in Canada, as his Next of kin. He had previous service in the 11th Australian Infantry Regiment but the duration of that service is not stated. He commenced training at Blackboy Hill Camp and on 7 September 1914 the Commanding Officer had him promoted to the rank of substantive Sergeant. Parry was assigned to 11th Battalion with regimental number 215.His records are confused about which ship he departed Australia but it was almost certainly A11. The Battalion boarded A11 HMAT *Ascanius* at Fremantle on 31 Oct 1914 but did not depart until 02 Nov 1914. *Ascanius* then joined the first convoy which had earlier departed from Albany with a substantial Naval escort to provide cover against the German Light Cruiser *Embden* which was thought to roaming the Indian Ocean. *Ascanius* later suffered minor damage in a collision with *Shropshire* and was required to enter Aden for repairs before proceeding up the Red Sea. Suez was reached on 5 December 1914 and the troops disembarked the following day and established camp at Mena with other elements of the 3rd Brigade. Training continued in Egypt until 2 March 1915 when the Battalion moved by rail to Alexandria, boarded HMT *Suffolk* and sailed for Mudros on Lemnos Island. There was a delay of 7 weeks while the troops practiced the use of scrambling nets and maintained fitness with route marches on the Island. On 25 April 1915 11th Bn as part of the 3rd Brigade landed at Anzac Cove and suffered considerable casualties. Sgt Parry was

appointed to be a Second Lieutenant on 28 April 1915 in order to replace officers lost over the first three days of the Landing. He was Killed in Action on 28 June 1915 in an action near Boulder Dump. C Company suffered 4 officers KIA that day with Second Lieutenant Parry being one. His remains are located at Shell Green Cemetery. His name was communicated to the War Graves Commission as Harry.

Additional/personal information:

Harold Parry was the son of Henry Ernest Parry and Minnie Catherine (nee Fraser) and was born in the Albany District in 1889 (BDM 1282/1889). The births of his elder brothers were registered in Geraldton in 1882 and 1883 and York in 1886. The family moved frequently as his father was an engineer with the WA Government railways supervising new line construction until 1897 when he went into private practice. He later left WA. Harold attended Guildford Grammar School.

His mother, Mrs M C Parry in Canada, was notified of his death. She later moved to England in 1919. For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. His campaign medals and other memorabilia were issued to his mother in England direct from Australia House, London.

Lieutenant Parry was descended from prominent people in WA's early history:

> PARRY, Killed in action at the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Harold Leslie, 11th Battalion 1st Expeditionary Force, aged 25 years, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Parry, late of Guildford, brother of William, Edward, and Thomas, and grandson of the late Bishop Parry and Sir Malcolm Fraser. Deeply mourned. Sydney papers please copy. *The West Australian* 14/7/1915p1

The Bishop Parry mentioned was Henry Hutton Parry, Church of England Bishop of Perth 1876-1893. Sir Malcolm Fraser (1834-1890) was the second Surveyor General of WA and later the Colonial Secretary.

Further information 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----------