255

Pollard, Vivian

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



Peace Memorial at former Midland Workshops

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Way and Works
Designation:	Lineman

Rail employment notes: Lineman, Ways & Works Branch.

Career details have not been located, however the Way and Works Branch (later the Chief Civil Engineer's branch) was responsible for track and structures so linemen would have been engaged on erecting and maintaining both telegraph and electric wiring. The WAGR had an extensive system of lines to maintain, as they built telegraph wires following every railway line for messages and safe-working, plus their own electric distribution in some areas.

Enlisted in 16th Battalion AIF 18/1/1915 (Service No.1852). Killed in action at Pozieres 12/8/1916 aged 30.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	16th Australian Infantry Battalion.
Service number:	1852
Date of death:	12 August 1916
Place of death:	Near Pozieres, France
Age:	30
Rank:	Private

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

Vivian Pollard enlisted in the AIF on 18 January 1915. He had no previous military experience and nominated his mother as his next of kin, as his father had died. He underwent basic military training at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was allocated to 4th Reinforcements to 16 Battalion with the regimental number of 1852.

Private Pollard departed Australia on 19 April 1915 aboard HMAT *Argyllshire* and disembarked Alexandria before transferring to Gallipoli. He was taken on strength of 16 Battalion, in the field, on 2 June 1915 and went into action. On 25 August 1915 he was Wounded in action at Hill 60 which resulted in him being evacuated through 25 Casualty Clearing Station and 1 Australian Stationary Hospital on Lemnos before rejoining the Battalion on 26 September 1915. He participated in the actions as the campaign slowly wound down. After the evacuation from Gallipoli he arrived in Alexandria aboard HMT *Ascanius* on 30 December 1915.

Following the reorganization of the AIF in Egypt he participated in individual and formation training. He sailed from Alexandria on 1 June 1916 aboard HMT *Canada* and disembarked at Marseilles on 9

June 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force. The Battalion moved through France and fought the battles of Pozieres and Moquet Farm in France. Near Moquet Farm on 12 August 1916 he was Killed in action. His remains have not been found, so he has no known grave, but is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

The Australian War memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, France.

Australian soldiers killed in France, whose bodies could be found for relocation, 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:

Vivian George Pollard was born in the Guildford district in 1885, a son of George Pollard and Emma Pollard (nee Baughan) who had married in Middle Swan in 1881. He was the second of at least five children. (BDM 25939/1885 et al). The father George Pollard predeceased Vivian on 19 April 1910.

> POLLARD.—Killed in action in France, August 12, 1916, Vivian George, dearly loved second son of Emma Pollard, 84 First-avenue, Maylands; brother of Jim, Port Augusta; Edgar (on active service), and Mrs. L. A. Pollett, Maylands. Deeply mourned. *The West Australian* 14/9/1916p1

It often took some time for official notice to reach the family, in this case only a month, but many chose the anniversary to express their thoughts:

> POLLARD.—In sad and loving memory of my dear son, Private Vivian Pollard, of the glorious 16th Battalion, killed in action in France on August 12, 1916. … —Inserted by his loving mother.
>
> POLLARD.—In loving memory of my dear brother (Bib) Private Vivian Pollard, killed in action on August 12, 1916. —Inserted by his loving sister, Dot.
>
> POLLARD.—A tribute to the memory of our dear friend, Private Vivian George Pollard, killed in action, August 12, 1916. … —Inserted by his sincere friends, Mr. and Mrs. George Stanley and family, Ballaying.
>
> All *The West Australian* 11/8/1917p1

For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Pte Pollard's service medals and other memorabilia were issued to his mother. Mrs Emma Pollard received a war pension. She died on 22 December 1936 at the age of 79 years and was buried at Karrakatta cemetery.

Vivian's brother Edgar Pollard also enlisted in the War, joining the historic first convoy from Albany as part of the 11th Battalion. He returned safely after the war.

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----------

 © Rail Heritage WA