Power, Arthur George

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



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

Such was the enthusiasm for enlisting in 1916 that Arthur Power enrolled and sailed leaving a young wife pregnant, with a daughter he would never see. Tragically he was not the only soldier to do so.

Rail employment information

Employer: Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways

Branch: Locomotive

Designation: Labourer

Rail employment notes: Born 16/9/1890. Joined WAGR 1/7/1913 aged 22 as Labourer, Midland Workshops. Granted leave to join AIF 13/3/1916 (Service No.5067), leaving his apprenticeship unfinished. Died of wounds 25/9/1917.



Titled “Loco shops send off to Soldiers April 19th 1916” this photo shows the fervour of the time for recruiting. Of these 40 men on the raised balcony, ten of them including Arthur Power paid the ultimate price and lost their lives. Whatever their job, from car builders to labourers, they joined a range of WA men volunteering to fight. Workers and management had gone to considerable lengths for the occasion with tree branches, band, flags and the name-bearing banner, while a central shield added a whimsical note with “Loco shops W.A. Easter egg for the Kaiser”. P. Rogers collection.

Military service information:

Conflict: First World War 1914-1918

Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	8th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5067
Date of death:	25 September 1917
Place of death:	England (hospital)
Age:	26
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: South Ealing Cemetery, England

Arthur George Power was born in Brentford, England and migrated to Australia at the age of 19 years. He enlisted in the AIF on 15 March 1916 and underwent basic training at Blackboy Hill Camp. He had no previous military experience and his wife (Annie Power) was his Next of Kin. He was assigned to 13th Reinforcements to 28th Battalion with the regimental number 5067. After training he departed Australia on 19 July 1916 aboard A48 HMAT *Seang Bee*. Pte Power was taken on strength of 28 Bn, in the field, as a member of the British Expeditionary Force on 4 December 1916 after a short period at 2 ADBD. Pte Power was detached to 7 Machine Gun Company for temporary duty on 12 Dec 1916 but any date of return to his parent Unit is unknown and he may still have been with the MG Coy when he died.

He quickly entered action on the Ypres front. He was extremely badly wounded by a shell explosion which damaged his left leg and right arm and surgeons amputated his right hand on 24 September 1917. His wife was initially informed that he had suffered a traumatic amputation of his left leg but this was later amended to right hand. Pte Power was evacuated to the Military Hospital Dover by HMHS *Ville de Leige* where he Died of Wounds on 25 September 1917. His father arrived at the hospital just after he passed away. He was buried in the South Ealing Cemetery quite close to his birthplace of Brentford with all funeral arrangements being made by his family.

Additional/personal information:

Arthur Power married Annie E Batey in Perth in 1915 (BDM 882/1915) and a daughter Ruby E Power was born the next year:

> POWER (nee A. Batey).—On October 17, at Ravensworth, Railway-crescent, Bayswater, the wife of Private A. Power (on active service) — a daughter. *The West Australian* 19/10/1916p1

Tragically, Private Power had already sailed and would never see his daughter.

> POWER - Died of wounds in France, September 25, 1917, Private Arthur G. Power, beloved brother of Corporal Bert Power, 16th Battalion (returned), and sister-in-law, Nellie His duty nobly done.—Inserted by his loving brother and sister-in-law.
>
> Mrs. A. G. Power, Mrs. Power, sen., and Family, and Mr. and Mrs. Batey, of Railway-crescent, Bayswater, wish to sincerely THANK all kind friends for letters, cards, and personal expressions of sympathy in their sad bereavement. *The West Australian* 19/10/1916p1

It appears that Arthur's mother was in Perth when he died although his father either did not migrate with the family, or had returned to England. His wife Annie remained in Perth, dying in Mandurah in 1980.

There is a detailed report on file of his funeral which was conducted by Rev F V Dowling of AIF HQ on 28 September 1917 with full military honours. Amongst the mourners was his brother, a member of 11 Bn AIF. For unknown reasons his burial site is recorded in several places as being in

unconsecrated ground. His widow received a pension of 40/- per fortnight and his daughter Ruby a pension of 20/- per fortnight commencing with effect from 01 December 1917.

For his service he was entitled to receive the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. These medals and other memorabilia were forwarded to his wife in Perth.

The honour form completed by his wife indicated that his calling was a pattern-maker, but it appears his trade qualifications had not obtained him such a role in WA.

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----------