Prosser, Geoffrey

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 9/7/1892. Joined WAGR 2/3/1911 aged 18 as Cleaner, Perth. ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning locomotives and otherwise employed at a locomotive depot whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder.)

Promoted to Fireman 10/8/1913 and transferred to Pinjarra 6/10/1913.

Granted leave to join AIF 12/11/1915 (Service No.3681). Died of wounds 1/11/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	3681
Date of death:	1 November 1917
Place of death:	France
Age:	24
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Wimereux Communal Cemetery, Wimereux, Nord Pas de Calais, France

Geoffrey Prosser enlisted in the AIF in Perth on 15 Nov 1915. He nominated his father Henry Prosser as his next of kin (NOK) and declared that he had no previous military experience. His basic military training was conducted at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was posted to 8th Reinforcement to 28 Battalion with the regimental number 3681.

He departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A30 HMAT *Borda* on 17 Jan 1916 and disembarked in Egypt where he joined 7 Training Bn. In the re-organization of the AIF Divisions in Egypt following the Gallipoli campaign he was taken-on-strength of the newly formed 51 Battalion on 03 March 1916. Pte Prosser contracted Influenza which required him to be hospitalized from 11 Mar 1916 to 27 Mar 1916. He returned to training with 51 Bn until 01 Jun 1916 when he sailed from Alexandria aboard SS *Minnetonka* and disembarked at Plymouth UK on 12 Jun 1916 where he joined AIF HQ. Pte Prosser was appointed to be an Acting (unpaid) Corporal on 25 Oct 1916. On 05 Apr 1917 he departed England for France via Folkestone and joined the British Expeditionary Force when he joined 2 ADBD and then moved to 28 Battalion where he was taken-on-strength from 51 Bn on 09 Apr 1917 and reverted to his substantive rank.

Pte Prosser presented sick with Trench Fever on 26 May 1917 and was treated at a number of medical units until he re-joined 28 Bn on 14 Aug 1917. During the Third Battle of Ypres he was WIA by a gas shell on 29 Oct 1917 following which he was treated by 3 Fd Amb before being transferred to 2 AGH

where he died from the gas (officially, Died of Wounds) on 01 November 1917 and was buried in the Wimereux Communal Cemetery.

Additional/personal information:

Geoffrey Prosser was born and attended school in Bunbury, WA. He was single when he joined the AIF.

> Mr. and Mrs. H. Prosser and family wish to thank all kind friends for letters, telegrams, and personal expressions of sympathy, in the sad loss of their dear son and brother (Signaller Geoff. Prosser), who died of gas, Somewhere in France, recently. *Bunbury Herald* 17/11/1917p2

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which are recorded as being issued to his father but that is believed to be a clerical error as Henry Prosser died on 07 Sep 1919 which was prior to the campaign medals being issued. There is no copy of a Will in his personal file but a note shows that probate was granted to his mother on 08 Nov 1918.

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----------