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Ruddock, Harold Edwy Colston

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:	Way and Works
Designation:	Clerk

Rail employment notes: Born 29/12/1885. Joined WAGR 2/6/1911 aged 25 as Chainman, Geraldton.

The Way and Works Branch (later the Chief Civil Engineer's branch) was responsible for track and structures so a surveyor with his assistant, the chainman, would have been regularly required for setting out works, measuring quantities, etc.

Transferred to Timekeeper, Yalgoo 17/3/1912 and Geraldton 13/8/1912. Promoted to Clerk, Geraldton 25/4/1913 and transferred to Perth 29/7/1913.

Granted leave to join AIF 23/11/1914. Wounded at Gallipoli and died 22/11/1915.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	Service number to be confirmed
Date of death:	22 November 1915
Place of death:	Egypt
Age:	29
Rank:	Lieutenant

Burial/memorialisation: Chatby Military and War Memorial Cemetery, Alexandria, Egypt

Harold Edwy Ruddock was commissioned in the AIF on 22 November 1914. He had been born in Richmond, England, his date of arrival in Australia is unknown but it must have been earlier than 1912 as he had 2 years of commissioned service in the 88th Regiment (Militia). His NOK was his wife Mrs Constance M Ruddock, resident in England. He was commissioned as a 2Lt in the AIF based on his previous extensive military service which included 2 years in the 1st Bn Kings Royal Rifles.

He was appointed to 28 Battalion and sailed from Fremantle aboard A11 HMAT *Ascanius* on 09 June 1915. After arrival in Egypt he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on 27 August 1915. The Battalion departed for Gallipoli on 04 Sep 1915 aboard HMT *Ivernia*. On the peninsula Lt Ruddock acted as a temporary Adjutant for a short period.

On 13 November 1915 he reported sick and was diagnosed as suffering from Pneumonia. He was initially managed at 13 CCS and later transferred to Alexandria via HMHS *Syria* where he was admitted to 21 General Hospital and classified as "Dangerously ill". Lt Ruddock died (DOI) on 22 Nov 1915 and was buried in the Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery.

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Additional/personal information:

He had been born in Richmond, England, his date of arrival in Australia is unknown but it must have been earlier than 1912, however his wife and two children remained in the UK.

For his service he was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his wife together with other memorabilia. His tombstone carries the following inscription: “True Remembrance Liveth For Ever”. Military pensions were paid to his wife, £91 per annum, his son Henry David Ruddock £13 per annum and daughter Alice Mary Ruddock £13 per annum all with effect from 09 Jan 1916.

His belongings which were returned included an interesting item - a Cholera Belt. This was a belt of red flannel which was worn around the waist to ward off Cholera. The idea originated in India and was a standard piece of kit issued when serving in India. When the Australian Military authorities initially drew up the schedule of kit issues they took the British Army as the model and a lot of AIF soldiers recruited in 1914 were issued the Cholera Belt. A quaint issue to say the least as by that time the bacterial basis of such diseases were well known.

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----------