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Ryder, Arthur Henry

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: Traffic

Designation: Relief Officer

Rail employment notes: Born 14/10/1885. Joined WAGR 4/3/1903 aged 17 as Junior Porter, Fremantle.
("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR – some had specific roles such as a receiving goods porter, some were general hands while some learnt safe-working and could assist with signals, et. Fremantle, a busy terminus station for suburban passenger trains and with extensive sidings, probably had at least 10 porters. A Junior Porter was under 21, paid a lower rate)

Transferred to Perth Goods 17/2/1904 and appointed Porter 1/9/1906. Transferred to Perth station 12/11/1907, Mundaring 28/11/1907, Perth 16/1/1908 and East Perth 1/7/1908. Promoted to Night Station Master, Walkaway 9/9/1910 and to Assistant Station Master 1/7/1911.
(When stations were busy enough to warrant more than one officer, the Station Master normally worked day shift 8am – 4pm and had overall responsibility, the Assistant Station Master worked 4pm-midnight and the Night Station master worked midnight-8am.)

Transferred to Night SM Southern Cross 27/7/1912, Katanning 8/9/1912 and Southern Cross 3/2/1913. Regressed to Porter, Kalgoorlie 5/8/1914 and transferred to Station Relieving Officer Southern Cross 5/8/1915, Kalgoorlie 23/9/1915 and Northam 30/11/1915.

Granted leave to join AIF 3/3/1916 (Service No.5072). Killed in action 1/6/1918.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	28th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5072
Date of death:	1 June 1918
Place of death:	Place not yet found
Age:	32
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension, Franvillers, Picardie, France

Arthur Henry Ryder enlisted in the AIF in Perth on 03 Mar 1916 and nominated his mother Charlotte Ryder, resident in NSW as his next of kin (NOK). He declared that he had no previous military experience and that his father was deceased. He had a studio photograph taken which is full length, in uniform complete with slouch hat. The photograph shows no lapel badges or colour patches. The photograph is held in the AWM collection as P06978.001 which may be seen on Arthur's AWM page.

Following basic military training he was allocated to 13th Reinforcements to 28 Battalion with the regimental number 5072 and departed Australia from Fremantle aboard A48 HMAT *Seang Bee* on 13 July 1916. Private Ryder disembarked at Plymouth on 9 September 1916 and marched into 7 Trg Bn

the following day. After continuation training, he left England through Folkestone for France aboard SS *Victoria* on 16 November 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force at 2 ADBD. Due to an outbreak of Mumps he was segregated between 5 Dec 1916 and 29 Dec 1916.

Pte Ryder left 2 ADBD and was taken-on-strength of 28 Bn on 27 Jan 1917. He went sick between 13 Apr and 06 May 1917 and was treated at 13 Fd Amb. Pte Ryder was on duty in trenches until 11 Jun 1917 when he presented to 5 Fd Amb suffering from "trench feet'. He passed through the Fd Amb to a CCS and was admitted to 10 GH for onward movement to England where he was admitted to 2 London General Hospital following which he was granted furlough. While on furlough he contracted Gonorrhoea and was non-efficient for 50 days while being treated at 1 ADH. He moved through both 5 Trg Bn and 6 Trg Bn before returning to France and re-joining 28 Battalion, in the field, on 15 May 1918.

On the night of 31 May-01 Jun 1918 B Company of 28 Battalion was on open ground when a German Aircraft dropped two bombs. The explosions killed 25 soldiers and 39 were wounded. Pte Ryder was Killed in action (KIA) in that bombing incident. An eye witness to the death of Pte Ryder was 6289 Pte H L Allen, 28 Bn who also helped bury his body in Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension.

First war historian Dr Michael Galvin comments:

"Unlucky in the extreme to be killed by a bomb from an aircraft while the soldiers were moving back to billets. Pte Ryder's company was in the open while the billeting officer looked for some shelter. The German plane dropped a couple of bombs hoping to catch men in the open, which he did."

Additional/personal information:

Arthur Ryder was born in Balmoral (near Picton) in New South Wales, a son of Benjamin and Charlotte Ryder. A sister Ethel May Ryder was born in 1887 but no other siblings are known. His father Benjamin died in 1899 (NSW BDM). Arthur and his sister then moved to WA by 1909 when Ethel married Bernard Winter (WA BDM 71/1909). Their mother may have remained in Balmoral.

> RYDER--Killed in action, June 1, 1918, somewhere in France, Private Arthur Henry Ryder, loving brother of M. Winter. *The West Australian* 18/6/1918p1
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> BYDE1C— Killed in action, June 1st, 1918, Arthur Henry, eldest son of Mrs. O. Ryder, Balmoral, Southern Line, aged 32 years. He gave his life, at duty's call. Beloved by comrades, one and all. *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 27/7/1918p8
>
> RYDER.— In loving memory of our dear nephew and cousin, Arthur Ryder, killed in action in France, June 1st, 1918. … Inserted by his loving uncle and aunt, W. and S. Starr, and cousin Ruby. *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 2/6/1919p4

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his mother together with other memorabilia. Pte Ryder had made a Will with probate being granted on 18 Oct 1918 to his sister Mrs Ethel May Winter. There is also correspondence from a Freemason Lodge in 1919 presumably about a death benefit. General correspondence shows that there was a substantial dispute in the family over the Will, the nature of which was not stated. Although not shown as the NOK Mrs Winter became central to the administration relating to the late Pte Ryder.

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).

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----------