274

Sanderson, Reginald Frederick**

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 17/12/1882. Joined WAGR 25/10/1900 aged 17 as Cleaner, Midland Junction. ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning and otherwise working around locomotives whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder.) Transferred to Northam 8/6/1903, Beverley 23/9/1905, Northam 8/1/1906, Beverley 4/8/1906, Northam 18/11/1907 and Bunbury 29/7/1910.

Promoted to Fireman, Bunbury 28/9/1910 and transferred to Bridgetown 15/10/1912 and to Geraldton 2/12/1914. Granted leave to join AIF 19/9/1915. (Service No.5369). Died of illness at Southampton, England 1/3/1919.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	3rd Field Ambulance.
Service number:	5369
Date of death:	1 March 1919
Place of death:	England
Rank:	Private

Burial/commemoration: Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery, England

He enlisted in the AIF on 15 September 1915 and stated that he had 2 ½ years of previous militia service at the Guildford Depot. He was allocated to 8th Battery of 3 Field Artillery Brigade with the regimental number 5369 and departed from Melbourne on A20 HMAT *Hororata* following further artillery training. In France he served progressively through 21 Howitzer Brigade (3 March 1916), 8th Field Artillery Brigade (28 June 1917) then Railway Company details (6 October 1917) followed by periods of service in 59 Railway Coy, 15 Railway Coy and 1 Railway Coy before being transferred to 3 Field Ambulance on 13 July 1918. There is a file in the National Archives from 1917 in which (then) Sapper Sanderson complains of being initially drafted to Artillery.

After war he was on his way to the UK from Belgium in preparation for return to Australia and discharge when he reported sick on 24 February 1919. He was admitted to 40 Stationary Hospital at Le Havre before being transferred to Southampton Hospital where he died of pneumonia at 2100 hrs on 1 March 1919. He was buried with full military honours at Southampton (Hollybrook) Cemetery on 5 March 1919.

© Rail Heritage WA

Additional/personal information:

**Mr Sanderson's forenames are recorded by the WAGR as Reginald Frederick, which also appears in a newspaper roll of war deaths (*Western Argus*, 15/4/1919p7) however the military records him as Reginald Francis. (BDM records his marriage only as "Reginald F")

Sanderson was born in Calcutta, India. The year of arrival In Australia is unknown but he was here by 1909 when he married May Burrows, the wedding being registered in Boulder WA (BDM 100/1909).

A newspaper article records the news of Private Sanderson's death being received by his widow, then living at Bridgetown, but there is no mention of children. (*The Blackwood Times* (Bunbury) 28/3/1919p3)

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