272

Sansum, Arthur Harold

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:	Clerk

Rail employment notes: Born 18/2/1889. Joined WAGR 24/5/1904 aged 15 as Junior Porter, Midland Junction. Appointed Cadet, Midland Junction 1/9/1904 and transferred to Bunbury 13/3/1906 and Kalgoorlie Goods 28/5/1908. Resigned 24/3/1909.

Re-employed as Porter, Doodlakine 21/1/1914 and transferred to Temporary Clerk, Perth Tramways 27/1/1914.

Transferred to Temporary Clerk, WAGR North Fremantle 2/3/1914 and Kalgoorlie 26/5/1914. Appointed Clerk 1/7/1914 and transferred to Bunbury 9/8/1915.

Granted leave to join AIF 6/11/1915 (Service No.5037). Killed in action 14/8/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	48th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	5037
Date of death:	14 August 1916
Place of death:	Pozieres, France
Age:	26
Rank:	Private (see text)

Burial/memorialisation: Sunken Road Cemetery, Contalmaison, Picardie, France

Arthur Harold Sansum enlisted in the AIF on 05 Nov 1915 at Blackboy Hill Camp. On enlistment he nominated his sister Mrs E Simmons, resident in Victoria as his NOK although subsequently it was discovered that both his father and mother were alive. Before enlisting he made a Will of a somewhat complex nature on 20 Oct 1915 with his mother being the main beneficiary. Arthur Sansum had previously served in a Militia unit in Victoria for 2 years. One month after enlistment he was selected to attend the NCO Training School. He was promoted to Cpl (presumably a temporary rank) and joined 16th Reinforcements to 16 Battalion on 13 Feb 1916 with the regimental number 5037.

Temporary Corporal Sansum departed Australia from Fremantle on 31 Mar 1916 aboard A9 HMAT *Shropshire* and disembarked in Egypt on 24 Apr 1916 where he marched into 4 Trg Bn. He then sailed on HMT *Huntspill* on 07 Jun 1916 from Alexandria and disembarked at Marseilles on 14 Jun 1916 to join the British Expeditionary Force. With the expansion of the AIF Divisions from two to four he was transferred to 48 Battalion and taken-on-strength, in the field, on 21 July 1916 and reverted to his substantive rank of Private that same day.

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The Battalion moved into the Battle of Pozieres and Private Sansum was killed (Killed in Action, KIA) on 14 August 1916. He was buried in the Sunken Rd Cemetery, Contalmaison 6 Km ENE of Albert.

Additional/personal information:

Arthur Sansum was born Ballarat in Victoria, the youngest of 6 children of John and Emily Jane (nee Golden) Sansum, and attended school there before moving to WA. His parents remained in Victoria however at least one brother, Walter Martin Sansum, also moved west and married in Guildford in 1904. It appears his sisters remained in Victoria.

The use of temporary ranks, and reversion to 'substantive' caused confusion among the family:

> SANSUM. — Killed in action in France, on 14th August, Private Arthur Harold Sansum, beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Sansum, Richmond. Victoria, and brother of Mr. and Mrs. W. Sansum, Kalgoorlie. 'He gave his life, his all'. *Kalgoorlie Miner* 20/9/1916p4
>
> SANSUM.—Killed in action, in France, on August 14, Sergeant Arthur Harold Sansum, dearly beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. John Sansum, of Melbourne, Victoria, and brother of Mr. Walter Sansum, of Bunbury, and Mr. William Sansum, of Kalgoorlie. Lest we forget. Western Mail 29/9/1916p51
>
> SANSUM.--In loving memory of Corporal Arthur.Harold Sansum, 48th Battalion, who was killed in France, August 14th, 1916; brother of W. and M. Sansum and uncle of Willie, Harold, Hazel and Lila. Duty nobly done. *Western Argus* (Kalgoorlie) 21/8/1917p15

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his father together with other memorabilia. There is a single folio in his personal file referring to a possible pension payment to his mother but has not been possible to locate any evidence that a pension was ever paid.

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----------

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