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Savage, William

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:	Cleaner

Rail employment notes: Born 17/5/1895. Joined WAGR 8/9/1914 aged 19 as Cleaner, Collie. ("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.)

Transferred to Northam 21/9/1914, Buntine 8/12/1915 and Northam 30/5/1916.

Granted leave to join AIF 12/7/1916 (Service No.2991). Killed in action 26/9/1917.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	51st Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2991
Date of death:	26 September 1917
Place of death:	Belgium
Age:	22
Rank:	Private

Burial/memorialisation: Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Flanders, Belgium

William Savage enlisted in the AIF on 14 Jul 1916 at Blackboy Hill Camp. He was originally from Sheffield, England but his date of arrival in Australia is unknown. He had no previous military experience and he nominated his mother Mrs Ellen Savage as his next of kin (NOK). There was some confusion over her first name and she was referred to as Nellie Savage in parts of his record. His basic military training was conducted at Blackboy Hill Camp and on 04 Sep 1916 he was assigned to 7th Reinforcements to 51 Battalion with the regimental number 2991.

Pte savage departed Australia on 09 Nov 1916 aboard A8 HMAT *Argyllshire* from Fremantle and disembarked at Devonport 10 Jan 1917 where he marched into 13 Trg Bn that same day. On 04 Jun 1917 he made his Will in which he nominated his mother as his sole beneficiary. During his time in England he had several minor brushes with military discipline. On 09 May 1917 he departed England through Folkestone to join the British Expeditionary Force in France. Pte Savage spent just 3 days at 4 ADBD before he was taken-on-strength of 51 Bn, in the field.

The Third Battle of Ypres had commenced on 31 July 1917 and the Battalion marched through the Menin Gate on 25 Sep 1917 to join the action around Polygon Wood. Private Savage was Killed in Action on 26 September 1917. His body was never recovered, he has no known grave, and he is remembered on the Menin Gate.

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Additional/personal information:

Army records show William Savage was born in Sheffield in England, and it appears he came to WA with his parents. No other family are mentioend.

> SAVAGE.—Killed in action on September 25, 1917, Private William Savage, only son of Samuel and Ellen Savage. Thy will be done. *The West Australian* 20/11/1917p1

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. His mother reported that his father Samuel Savage was still alive and living in Fremantle. The campaign medals and other memorabilia were then issued to his father as legislated. Mrs Savage received a military pension of 20/- per fortnight with effect from 12 Jan 1918. His father, who had received his medals, died on 11 Mar 1945 aged 69 years and was buried in Fremantle Cemetery. His mother who was his nominated NOK died on 30 Jun 1949 at the age of 75 years and was buried in the same compartment as her husband at Fremantle cemetery. Ends

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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