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Schiff, William Andrew MM

also known as

Schiff, Wilhelm Andreas

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for their country



W.A.Schiff, from book (see footnote)

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways
Branch:	Traffic
Designation:	Stower

Rail employment notes: Born 23/12/1887. Joined WAGR 1/8/1910 aged 22 as Goods Porter, Sandstone. Transferred to Geraldton 21/11/1910, to Mt. Magnet 9/3/1911 and to Geraldton 6/1/1912. Transferred to Checker, Geraldton 1/1/1913, Perth Goods 20/6/1913 and then to Stower, Kalgoorlie Goods 7/5/1914.

Granted leave to join AIF 8/12/1915 (Service No.4904).

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	16th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	4904
Date of death:	28 July 1918
Place of death:	Quernieaux Rest Camp, near Querrieu, France
Rank at time of death:	Sergeant
Age:	30

Burial/memorialisation:

Schiff was awarded the Military Medal, the recommendation is shown on the AWM website:

"for gallantry during the attack on Zonnebeke [Belgium] on the morning of 26th September 1917.....While the consolidation of the Red Line was in progress he personally took his Lewis gun out in front of the position to protect his platoon. His courage and initiative was the means of holding a number of his men together during the barrage put on the Red Line by the enemy."

Schiff was a Lance-Corporal at this time but was later Sergeant when he was killed during a raid on a 'rest camp' near Querrieu in France.

Additional/personal information:

According to the website *https://www.familyhistorysa.org/sahistory/ww1servicemen.html* Schiff was born in Bridgewater, South Australia, in an area with many settlers of German (usually Lutheran) origin. He was named Wilhelm Andreas Schiff, but changed this to William Andrew Schiff by the

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time he took employment with the WA Railways in 1910. The family appear to have moved west while he was young, as he was schooled in Coolgardie.

(There was very significant immigration to WA from the eastern states from about 1892-1906 following gold finds and development of mining in the Eastern Goldfields and the Murchison.)

Schiff's father, also named Wilhelm Schiff, died in 1895 and his mother Alice remarried in 1896 to Carle Jacobsen. William Schiff's brother-in-law Stanley Percival Carr also came from South Australia to Kalgoorlie where he married William's sister Violet Schiff in 1914, before enlisting the following year. Carr was gassed in France in 1918 but survived and returned to WA after hospital treatment in England.

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----------