**Taylor, William**

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



Memorial at Railway Workshops Midland (D.Graham/panoramio)

**Rail employment information**

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| Employer: | Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways |
| Branch: | Locomotive |
| Designation: | Cleaner |

Rail employment notes: Born 21/9/1892. Joined WAGR 31/10/1911 aged 19 as Cleaner, Northam. ("Cleaner" in this case was a position in the Locomotive branch, cleaning locomotives and otherwise working around the locomotive depot whilst training to be a Fireman, the next step up the ladder.) Transferred to Southern Cross 11/3/1913, Northam 13/2/1914 and Southern Cross 17/11/1914. Honour Rolls prepared after the War show him as "Fireman" although his records do not include this promotion – employees often passed their tests to step up the ladder but had to wait for a vacancy in that grade. Granted leave to join AIF 16/12/1915 (Service No.4904). Killed in action 28/9/1917.

**Military service information:**

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| Conflict: | First World War 1914-1918 |
| Service: | Australian Imperial Force |
| Military unit: | 16th Battalion. |
| Service number: | 4904 |
| Date of death: | 28 September 1917 |
| Place of death: | Place not yet found |
| Age: | 24 |
| Rank: | Private |

Burial/memorialisation: Menin Gate Memorial, Belgium

William Taylor, a fireman in the WA Railways enlisted in the AIF on 14 December 1915. He was married and gave his wife Mrs J Taylor as his Next of kin. He had no previous military experience. His basic military training was at Blackboy Hill Camp following which he was allocated to 15th Reinforcements to 16th Battalion with the regimental number 4904. He departed Australia aboard A38 HMAT *Ulysses* on 1 April 1916 and disembarked at Alexandria on 25 April 1916 and was taken on strength of eh Battalion on 12 May 1916. Following AIF reorganization in Egypt he departed Alexandria on HMT *Canada* and joined the BEF when he landed at Marseilles on 09 Jun 1916. The Bn moved to the Battles of Pozieres and Moquet Farm where he was Wounded in action on 11 August 1916 suffering gunshot wounds to forearm and knee. Pte Taylor was evacuated to 3 CCS and then by Hospital Train to 1 Canadian General Hospital on 12 Aug 1916. He was transferred (HMHS *Dieppe*) to Herne Bay Military Hospital on 16 August 1916 where he remained until transferred to 1AAH (Harefield) on 6 Sep 1916. He then passed through Convalescent Units until he rejoined his Battalion on 28 July 1917. In the Third Battle of Ypres he was shown as Wounded in action on 26 September 1917 but 2 days later this was amended to Killed in action. He was buried on the battlefield 2½ miles East of Ypres. After the War the Graves Registration Unit were unable to locate his remains and he is remembered on the Menin Gate Memorial.

**Additional/personal information:**

Pte Taylor had been born in Aberdeen, Scotland and migrated to Australia at the age of 19 years. The marriage of William Taylor to Jane Payne was registered with BDM as Yilgarn 3/1916, suggesting they married as he enlisted.

His wife was commenced on a pension of 40/- per fortnight. Mrs Taylor subsequently moved to Bendigo in Victoria where she died on 13 July 1980. She never remarried. On the post War Circular, she wrote

> He was one of six boys, out of one family; all whom were at the front: 4904 Pte W.Taylor was with A.I.F. & the rest, all with the British Army.

There is a good photograph of Pte Taylor, in uniform, in the book *War Service Personnel of the Yilgarn 1900-1972*, Paul de Pierres (1990), published by John Burridge Military Antiques (WA), and also on the AWM website.

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----------