Verge, Francis Joseph

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



Memorial to Francis Verge in Kings Park

Rail employment information

Employer: Western Australian Government Railways & Tramways

Branch: Locomotive

Designation: Fireman

Rail employment notes: Born 2/3/1891. Joined WAGR 11/8/1910 aged 19 as Cleaner, Perth ("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 Donnybrook 20/4/1911 and promoted to Fireman 1/7/1912. Transferred to Fremantle 12/2/1913.

Granted leave to join AIF 6/9/1915 (Service No.3017). Killed in action at Bapaume 6/11/1916.

Military service information:

Conflict: First World War 1914-1918

Service: Australian Imperial Force

Military unit: 28th Infantry Battalion

Service number: 3017

Date of death: 6 November 1916

Place of death: France

Age: 25

Rank at time of death: Private

Burial/commemoration: Warlencourt British Cemetery, Warlencourt-Eaucourt, Arras, Nord Pas de Calais, France

Francis Verge enlisted in the AIF on 13 September 1915. He was allocated to the 7th Reinforcements to 28th Infantry Battalion. This group departed Australia from Fremantle on HMAT *Medic* on 18 January 1916. After the sea voyage and a further period of training, they joined the war in France as part of the British Expeditionary Force.

The exact date of his death was uncertain in the heat of battle – between 3rd and 6th November 1916.

He was buried in Warlencourt British cemetery in Francce.

Additional/personal information:

Francis Verge was born in Gympie, Queensland on 2/3/1891, the son of Samuel and Elizabeth Verge, but appears to have been brought to WA early in life as his mother recorded his school as Albany State School. His father, Samuel Verge, had died in Kanowna hospital in 1914. (There was very

© Rail Heritage WA

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.)

H mother poignantly wrote after the war "He was my only son, his father died on 15th May 1914." In the 1930s his mother dedicated a plaque to Francis in Kings Park (no.L86 in Lovekin Drive, see picture above).

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