Walsh, Thomas Henry

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:	Guard

Rail employment notes: Born 18/8/1884. Joined WAGR 26/10/1910 aged 26 as Porter, Perth. ("Porter" was a very general category in the WAGR – some had specific roles such as a receiving goods porter, some were general hands while some learnt safe-working and could assist with signals, etc. Mr Walsh would have had to study and pass safe-working courses for his later appointment to Guard)

Transferred to Bunbury 27/4/1911 and promoted to Shunter 17/5/1911. Transferred to Donnybrook 4/9/1911 and Bunbury 25/5/1912. Promoted to Head Shunter, Kalgoorlie 6/1/1913 and transferred to Guard, Pinjarra 24/9/1913. Regressed to Goods Porter, Fremantle Goods 11/10/1913 and re-appointed to Guard, Merredin 27/6/1914 and to Yalgoo 8/3/1916.

Granted leave to join AIF 18/4/1917. Died of wounds 27/8/1918.

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force
Military unit:	11th Battalion Australian Infantry
Service number:	7809
Date of death:	27 August 1918
Place of death:	Peronne, France
Age:	34
Rank:	Lance Corporal

Burial/memorialisation: Daours Communal Cemetery Extension, Daours, Picardie, France

Thomas Henry Walsh began his enlistment at Cue WA and was enlisted in the AIF on 6 March 1917. On enlistment he stated that he had no previous military experience and nominated his mother Mrs M Walsh as his Next of kin, even though his wife Mrs Hilda Grace Walsh was living. He underwent basic military training at Blackboy Hill camp before being allocated to 26th Reinforcements to 11th Battalion with the regimental number 7809.

He departed Australia through the Port of Fremantle on 29 June 1917 aboard HMAT *Borda* and disembarked at Plymouth on 26 August1917. While in England he had postings to both 3 Training Battalion and 2 Training Battalion before leaving England on 30 January 1918 through Southampton to join the British Expeditionary Force. Private Walsh was taken on strength of 11 Battalion on 5

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February 1918. He was admitted to 18 CCS between 24 June 1918 and 1 July 1918 with the diagnosis of influenza but recovered and on 15 August 1918 he was appointed to be a Lance Corporal.

Near Peronne on 27 August 1918 he was Wounded in action suffering severe wounds to his back and legs from a shell burst. Lance Corporal Walsh was carried to a nearby dressing station and then moved to 61 Casualty Clearing Station where he Died of wounds. He was buried in the Daours Communal Cemetery Extension, Daours.

Additional/personal information:

Thomas Walsh was born in Adelaide, South Australia but moved to WA and married Hilda Grace Gardiner (BDM ref 73/1917). They had at least one child, a daughter. The birth of this little girl is not certain, but is most likely May L. Walsh whose birth was registered in the Northampton district in 1918. Her father probably never met her.

The West Australian 11/9/1918p1:

> WALSH. — Died of wounds, somewhere in France, on August 27, 1918, Private Thomas Henry Walsh, the dearly beloved husband of Hilda, and dear daddy of little Maisie, 389 Oxford-street, Leederville, late W.A.G.R., Yalgoo and Geraldton, W.A.

After the war his family paid for an inscription on his headstone which reads: **In Memory of the Loved Husband of Hilda & Daddy of Maisie of WA.**

The family also dedicated a memorial plaque in Kings Park (M257).

For his service he was entitled to the British War Medal and the Victory Medal which were issued to his wife together with other memorabilia. His personal file does not contain the details of the pension paid to his wife and daughter. Hilda Walsh died in 1981at the age of 92 years and is buried in Karrakatta Cemetery.

Further information and/or photos may be added as available. Information may also be found on the Australian War Memorial website: h*ttps://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

Acknowledgements: Rail employment notes from 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.



Thomas Walsh's memorial plaque in Kings Park. The black and blue patch represents the 11th Battalion. G.Higham

----------Lest we forget----------