Kennedy, Francis

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:	Midland Railway Company of Western Australia Ltd
Branch:	Locomotive
Designation:	Fireman

Rail employment notes: Employed as a locomotive fireman by the Midland Railway Co. which owned and operated the railway between Midland and Walkaway (south of Geraldton) until 1964.

Individual employee records for the Midland Railway Company have not survived. Francis Kennedy's name is shown on a company Honour Board now preserved by Rail Heritage WA at the Railway Museum, Bassendean.



NEED BETTER PICTURE

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	51st Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2694
Date of death:	13 October 1917
Place of death:	Belgium

Age: 28

Rank: Private

Burial/memorialisation: Menin Gate Memorial Ypres (now Ieper), Belgium

Francis Kennedy enlisted in the AIF on 16 August 1915 at the age of 26 years. He nominated his mother as his Next of Kin stating that his father was deceased. He was assigned to 6th reinforcement to 28th Battalion and underwent basic training at Blackboy Hill Camp before departing Australia through the port of Fremantle aboard A38 HMAT *Ulysses* on 02 Nov 1915. The date of arrival in Egypt is not recorded but it must have been prior to 31 Dec 1915 as he was later awarded the 1914-1915 Star. His employment in Egypt between arrival and 03 Mar 1916 is not recorded but on 03 Mar 1916 he marched into 7 Training Bn at Tel-el-Kebir and on that same day was transferred to the newly raised 51st battalion. He then trained with 51Bn before departing Alexandria on 5 June 1916 and disembarking at Marseilles to join the BEF.

The Bn went into action at the Pozieres-Moquet Farm sector. Pte Kennedy was Wounded in Action at Moquet Farm on 16 Aug 1916 and admitted to 1 Canadian General Hospital the following day before being transferred to the UK on 26 Aug 1916 by HS *Newhaven*. In England he was treated at the Passmore Edwards Hospital (Willenden). He was judged to be fit for discharge on 16 Oct 1916 and allowed furlough until 31 Oct 1916. Following rehabilitation, he joined 3 Training Bn and then on 28 Nov 1916 departed England through Folkstone aboard SS *Prince Hennerietta* to join 4 ABBD where he remained until 13 December 1916 when he rejoined 51 Bn, in the field. Pte Kennedy was Killed in Action on 13 October 1917 in the Zonnebeke sector during the Third Battle of Ypres. His body was never recovered, he has no known grave, and is remembered on the Menin Gate Memorial Ypres (now Ieper).

Additional/personal information:

Francis Kennedy was born in Brunswick, Victoria but the family must have moved west soon after as his mother recorded that he attended the state school at Mullewa WA.

His mother received a pension of 40/- per fortnight dated from 8 January 1918. Service medals awarded were 1914-1915 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

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----------