Marshall, Harold

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:	Traffic
Designation:	Railway employee

Rail employment notes: Employed by the Midland Railway Co. which owned and operated the railway between Midland and Walkaway (south of Geraldton) until purchased by the WA government in 1964.

Individual employee records for the Midland Railway Company have not survived. Harold Marshall's name is shown on a company Honour Board now preserved by Rail Heritage WA. After his death, his sister described his job as a Guard.



NEED BETTER PICTURE

Military service information:

Conflict:	First World War 1914-1918
Service:	Australian Imperial Force (AIF)
Military unit:	16th Australian Infantry Battalion
Service number:	2019
Date of death:	8 August 1916
Place of death:	France

Age: 23

Rank: Private

Burial/memorialisation: Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France

Harold Marshall enlisted in the AIF at Kalgoorlie on 18 February 1915 where he stated that he was a railway employee (traffic) and on the nominal roll he is shown as being a worker with the Midland Railway Company. He had no previous military experience and his sister in Victoria was his NOK. Informally he was known in the Army as "Jumbo". Following basic training he was assigned to 5th Reinforcement to 16th Battalion with the regimental number 2019 and departed Australia through Fremantle aboard A20 HMAT *Hororata* on 26 Apr 1915. On arrival in Egypt he spent very short time training before crossing to Mudros and on to Gallipoli where he was taken on strength of 16 Bn on 13 July 1915. The Bn spent the remainder of Jul 1915 in Reserve Gully on labouring duties. On 06 Aug 1915 the ANZAC forces began a series of major offensives with 16 Bn directed towards Hill 971 but suffered considerable losses. Pte Marshall reported sick with dysentery on 10 Aug 1915 and was evacuated to the Stationary Hospital on Mudros and then onto 1 AGH (Cairo) via the HS *Neuralia* where he was admitted on18 Aug 1915. He was subsequently transferred to 2 Auxiliary Hospital, then the Convalescent Depot before being discharged to duty on 05 Oct 1915.

He departed Alexandria on 10 Oct 1915 aboard HMT *Kalyan* and rejoined his Unit on 13 Oct 1915 at Mudros before returning to Gallipoli on 31 Oct 1915. The weather turned bitterly cold and snow fell throughout Nov 1915 as the Bn began preparation for the evacuation which included several "silent stunts". Pte Hamilton returned to Egypt through Alexandria on 30 Dec 1915. On 27 Jan 1916 he reported sick and was non-effective until 01 Feb 1916. Following restructure, 16 Bn sailed from Alexandria aboard HMT *Canada* on 01 Jun 1916 and joined the BEF upon landing at Marseilles on 09 Jun 1916. After a short period of service in the quiet sector of Armentieres the Bn moved to the Somme and participated in the Battle for Pozieres. In the chaos and confusion of that Battle Pte Marshall was reported wounded and missing on 13 Aug 1916. This was later amended to Killed in Action based on statements by stretcher bearers and friends. 2690 Pte J Pekin submitted a lengthy and detailed statement concerning his death as did two other soldiers from A Coy. This caused considerable distress to his relatives to be informed that he was wounded on 13 August and then later to be notified that he was Killed in action on 8 August 1916.

Additional/personal information:

Harold Marshall was born in Victoria in 1893, the son of Henry and Elizabeth (neé Hynes) Marshall, the last of five children: Lillian May, Theresa Kate, Florence, Fred and Harold.(Vic BDM 13745/1893). It appears that at least some of the family had moved west by 1905, when Lily's marriage to William Power was registered in Fremantle (WA BDM 706/1905).

After Harold's death, his sister gave his occupation as a guard. It is difficult to understand as Kalgoorlie was a long way from any line operated by the Midland Company, however Harold may have been on leave or may have recently quit the railway company, when he enlisted in Kalgoorlie.

For his service Pte Marshall was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. When his sister was questioned about closer blood relatives she identified his father in Melbourne. No explanation was given but his medals and memorabilia were issued to his sister and not the father. His father, Henry Marshall, was awarded a pension of £1 per fortnight effective from 30 Aug 1917 increased to £2 per fortnight after 25 Oct 1917. Pte Marshall has no known grave and is remembered on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial.

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----------