Bossers, John

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
Branch:	Civil Engineers
Designation:	Repairer

Rail employment notes: Born 6/12/1892. Joined WAGR 25/10/1926 aged 33 as Repairer, CCE Branch, Jandakot. Transferred to Claremont 14/2/1927, Goongarrie 21/3/1927, Broad Arrow 16/5/1927, Yellowdine 3/11/1927, Grass Valley 15/4/1929 and Perth 13/7/1931. Enlisted in AIF 7/6/1940. Resumed with WAGR as Porter, Perth 10/5/1944 but during the following year he has time off work and medical tests for possible war-related sickness. He died of war service illness 11/7/1945.

Military service information:

Conflict:	Second World War 1939-1945
Service:	Australian Army
Military unit:	2/7th Field Ambulance Australian Army Medical Corps
Service number:	WX3711
Date of death:	11 July 1945
Place of death:	Perth, Western Australia
Rank at time of loss:	Private
Buried/commemorated:	Karrakatta General Cemetery, Karrakatta, Western Australia. Presbyterian Row HA. Grave 542.

John Bossers enlisted 7/6/1940, and was assigned to the 2/7th Field Ambulance unit, which saw service in Europe during the early years of the war, and was in Crete when Germany invaded there in 1941. A number of members were captured and taken Prisoner of War by Germany, including John Bossers. However, he was repatriated and returned to WA in December 1943. (photo)

This photograph in the *Mirror* newspaper (Perth) of 18/12/1943 is captioned "It's great to be home. Repatriated POW John Bossers is greeted by his daughter Margaret,..."



Delighted Wives, Kiddies Rush To Welcome POW's

Hurrying from the train at Perth today sun-tanned men grabbed up little children, hugged them close.

Women pushed through the crowd, trying to get to their relatives, uttered little shrieks of joy, shed a tear or two, spontaneously threw their arms around their necks and kissed them unrestrainedly.

For the men who came home were repatriated prisoners of war.

Some fathers saw sons and daughters for the first time, lovely curly-headed youngsters who had never known their Daddy. Older children, who had vivid recollections, besieged their fathers, bombarding them with questions and hanging on to their arms as if they would never again let go.

Husbands and wives held each other close, many too overcome to speak, trying to keep back the tears. But often a handkerchief flicked over tear-brimming eyes.

"Look at the beautiful watch Daddy brought me all the way from Cairo," said one young girl, proudly showing her present to a rich, blue-eyed. "Did you get what I wanted?" asked a boy. Of course Daddy had.

It was hard to get a word in edgeways. Nobody wanted to stop talking. After such a long, enforced separation, there was so much to say. Aunties, sisters, brothers, uncles, in-laws, they all were there.

Only a few looked longingly around, finding no one to meet them.

"My relatives have gone straight to Hollywood hospital they tell me," said one young engineer trying hard to choke back his disappointment. "I'll see them there."

"You old son of a gun, how are you?" shouted one brother to another as he slapped him on the back

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John Bossers appears to have been called ‘Jack’ by his army collegues.

Further information may be added as available. Information and/or photographs may also be found on the Australian War Memorial website: *https://www.awm.gov.au/advanced-search/people*

Additional/personal information:

Mr Bossers was born 29/4/1900, although it is not known where. His original name may have been Johannes Bossers (BDM). Records indicate John married Esther Elizabeth Murray in 1920 (BDM ref 136/1920, Fremantle district), but his wife died in Perth on 12/1/1937 at which time the Bossers were living at 33 Hay Street, Subiaco. At Mr Bossers’ death, three children are mentioned – Betty (Mrs R.Killian), Margaret (Mrs R.Synnot) and Brien (AIF) and two grandchildren Peter and Judith (*West Australian* 12/7/1945). He is referred to in the family notice as John Thomas Bossers, although the second name is not elsewhere officially recorded. John Bossers was then living at 1045 Albany Rd Victoria Park.

Abbreviations: WAGR= Western Australian Government Railways (and 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).

Acknowledgements: Rail employment notes from WAGR records held by State Records Office, Perth, transcribed by J.Austin 2019. Newspaper research by G.Higham.

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

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