Ball, George William

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:	Chief Civil Engineer
Designation:	Length runner

Rail employment notes: Born 4/5/1902. Joined WAGR 16 October 1924 aged 22 as Repairer, CCE Branch, at Yarramony. Transferred to Cunderdin 30/1/1928.
("Repairer" was a track maintenance worker in a gang responsible for upkeep of an allocated section of railway line. A typical gang might include between 3 and 6 Repairers with one Leading Hand Repairer, and a Ganger in charge.) Yarramony was between Northam and Goomalling – there was no school or real town there. The WAGR tended to place gangs by dividing the length of a line into specified numbers of miles, resulting in many gangs being posted at sidings where there were few or no other facilities.

Promoted to Ganger, Marks 26/6/1929 and transferred to Karridale 5/9/1930, to Lake Biddy 28/7/1931, Narrikup 23/11/1931, Kurrawang 11/7/1935.

Transferred to Length Runner, York 30/9/1938. Enlisted in AIF 23/6/1941. Died of illness 3/8/1943.

Military service information:

Conflict:	Second World War 1939-1945
Service:	Australian Army
Military unit:	124 General Transport Company
Service number:	WX14559
Date of death:	3 August 1943
Place of death:	Perth, Australia
Age:	36
Rank:	Driver

Burial/commemoration: Perth War Cemetery and Annex, WA

George Ball enlisted on 25 June 1941, at York WA. He was allocated to 124 General Transport Company with the serial number WX14559 (the letter "W" indicated a WA enlistment). He nominated his mother Elizabeth Ball as his next of kin.

Detailed war record for Mr Ball has not been accessed, however from records of other members of this group, it appears 124 General Transport Company was used in Western Australia on Army logistics needs.

George was taken ill and admitted to Hollywood Hospital where he died on 3 August 1943.

Additional/personal information:

George ball was the eldest child of James and Elizabeth (nee Goddard) Ball who married in Kirup (then spelt Kirupp) in 1905.

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According to information supplied after the war by Mr Ball's mother, George was born at Kirup, and that was still the family's usual place of residence. The railways recorded his birth as in 1902, however his birth is recorded as 1906 by BDM (Wellington district 213/1906) whilst DVA data says 1907. and that agrees with his age recorded by his mother.

He appears to have been one of a large family, as per a notice in *The West Australian* (5/8/1943p1)

> BALL.-On August 3, 1943. suddenly at Hollywood Hospital, George William, dearly loved eldest son of Mrs Elizabeth and the late James Ball of Kirup; loved brother of Emily, May, Alice, Bessie, Jack (AIF), Les (AIF). Ernie, Sylvia and Thelma; aged 37 years.

As with many families, George was not the only member to risk his life in war, two brothers also enlisted. It seems he was not married, and did not have children.

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. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

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

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