Kay, James

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for their country



Memorial to Boer War soldiers, in Kings Park

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways
Branch:	tba
Designation:	tba

Rail employment notes: From Victoria. WAGR employee at Fremantle. Joined 4th WA Mounted Infantry by 6/4/1900 (Service No.119). Killed in action 19/7/1900.

Military service information:

Conflict:	South Africa, 1899-1902 (Boer War)
Service:	Colonial Military Forces
Military unit:	4th Western Australian Mounted Infantry (Imperial Bushmen)
Service number:	119
Date of death:	19 July 1900
Age:	33
Place of death:	Palmeitfontein, South Africa
Rank:	Private

Burial/commemoration: South African war memorial, Kings Park, Perth

> DEATH OF PRIVATE KAY.
> His Excellency the Administrator has received a cable message from Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa, notifying that Private J.Kay, previously reported as mortally wounded on July 24, had been killed in action at Palmietfontein on July 19, on the same day, and in the same engagement m which Major Moor met his death.
> Private Kay belonged to the Fourth (Imperial Bushmen's) Contingent, and was well known in the Greenbushes district. *The Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth) 3/8/1900p5

Additional/personal information:

The scale of the 'Boer War' is not often realised, but is reflected in the below paragraph in *The West Australian* newspaper in 1901:

> THE BRITISH CASUALTIES.
> 16,717 DEATHS TO JUNE 30.
> London, July 6
> The following is a return. of the British casualties in connection with the war to the end of last month:
> Killed or died from disease.. ..., 16,717
> Missing... 618
> Discharged as unfit for duty... 2083

Total... .. ;..... . ..... :.: 19,413
The West Australian 8/7/1901p5

The 1890s were a time of rapid expansion in WA after the finding of gold in the eastern goldfields, and the WAGR hired many staff from interstate.

James Kay's name is recorded on the tablet (right) on the South African monument in Kings Park	

Further information and/or photographs 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*

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----------