BURKHILL, Walter 11 December 1897

Designation	Accident Location	Accident Due to
Porter in Charge	Baandee	Struck by train

Walter Burkill was 26 years of age when he died instantly as the result of being struck by a train at Baandee. His failure to reset points to the main line meant the express from Southern Cross was directed onto the loop where he was standing. His wife and five children were living in Paramatta NSW at the time. He lived at Baandee. There is no indication where he is buried.

RAILWAY FATALITY.
PORTER BURKHILL KILLED.

A terrible accident occurred on Sunday morning at Baandee, a ticket, staff and crossing station about six miles on the Northam side of Hines Hill, on the Yilgarn line, whereby Walter Burkhill, the porter in charge, met with a shocking end. Baandee, being a crossing station, has a short loop line in the station yard. A train crossed on this line late on Saturday evening, and Burk ill, as after events disclosed, apparently did not bring the points back into their proper position, so as to allow the next train, the Coolgardie down express, to pass through the station on the main line. The express, which was in charge of Guard Arthur Heaton, Engine-driver Arnold Chapman, and Fireman George Alderton, was due at Baandee at 1.31 a.m., but ran in there 15 minutes late. Following the usual custom, Burkhill stood between the main and loop lines to hand the staff to the driver, perfectly unconscious of the fact that the points had not been altered. He stood about 30ft. from the junction of the loop line and the main line, and so as to have the head light of the engine upon the staff his back was slightly , turned towards the approaching train. The result was that once the engine reached the points it shot off on to the loop line, and before Burkhill could realise his danger he was struck and thrown in front of the engine. Word was immediately telephoned to Mr. Horan, district traffic inspector, stationed at Northam. Mr. Horan, who, together with Mr. Allan, the Northam stationmaster, had been on duty until the small hours of Sunday morning, endeavoring to cope with the water difficulty on the Yilgarn line, gave information to the police, and, in company with Constable Quain, proceeded in the next train to Baandee. There he found the remains of the poor fellow in a horribly mutilated condition, the body being almost totally dismembered. After the fragments of the body had been collected they were loaded upon the train and conveyed to the Northam Government Hospital morgue, which was reached at 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. The deceased was painstaking and efficient, and Inspector Horan regarded him as an almost model officer. He was 25 years of age, and had been in the Government service for about two years. Before he took up his present position in July lasthe was a porter at the Clackline station. He was a married man and the father of five children, all of whom reside at Paramatta, New South Wales. The deceased was most methodical in his habits and kept a diary, which showed that upon his arrival in this colony his sole worldly possessions amounted to £2. He was very industrious, and his diary shows that his remittances to his wife and family were both substantial and regular. His home, too, at Baandee bore evidences of both good taste and industry. One of the saddest features in. connection with the fatality was the fact that the deceased's wife was to sail to join him early in January.

An inquest was held at the Northam Court House on Monday afternoon before A. Madden, Esq., J,P. The evidence given corroborated the main features giver: above, and the jury (Messrs. Lockyer, Cox and Devise) brought in a verdict of accidental death

Source: *Trove/The Northam Advertiser (WA) Wednesday 15 December 1897 Page 3.*

FATALITY AT MECKERING.
NORTHAM, December 12.
A fatal accident happened last night at Meckering. A night porter, named Walter Burkhill, altered the points at the station to allow the down train from Southern Cross to pass. For some unexplained reason, Burkhill omitted to alter the points for the arrival of the up train from Perth, and while waiting with the staff in his hand to give it to the driver of the up train, the train ran on the wrong line, knocking the porter down and cutting him in halves. The body was brought to Northam today.

The deceased hailed from Parramatta, New South Wales, where he leaves a wife and five children. He was about 26 years of age.

Source: *Trove/Western Mail (Perth) Friday 17 December 1897 Page 21.*