



John Charles Mercer
10th Canadian Mounted Rifles
Canadian Expeditionary Force
Regimental No. 115077
World War I

Born: 22 Oct 1889 (according to vital statistics) or 1891 (according to enlistment papers.)

Died: 10 Nov 1959

Place of Birth: Shearstown, Newfoundland

Parents: Ananias and Joanna Mercer

John was living and working in the town of Grenfell, Saskatchewan when he enlisted on May 4th, 1915.

According to his enlistment papers, John stood 5' 9" tall, weighed 160 lbs, had brown hair and blue eyes. He was single, gave his calling as sailor and had five (5) years previous military experience with the Royal Naval Reserve.

John was assigned to the 10th Canadian Mounted Rifles of the CRCR (Canadian Reserve Cavalry Regiment) of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. From experience as a sailor to the Mounted Rifles was quite a change for sure but John seemed to have made the transition with ease. He would spend the next four (4) years in service and saw action in England, France, and Belgium.

The following are some excerpts from John's official record, which are listed by date, activity/event for ease of use:

1. 04 – 05 – 1915: Enlisted
2. Date not given: Embarked Canada & disembarked Liverpool
3. 04 – 07 – 15: TOS (taken on strength) CCD (Cavalry Command Depot)
4. 06 – 07 – 16: To FGHR (Fort Gary Horse Reserve Regiment)
5. 07 – 03 – 17: SOS (struck of strength) to the Canadian Reserve Cavalry Regiment.
6. 25 – 04 – 17: Proceeded overseas to Canadian Light Horse Unit in France
7. 24 – 05 – 17: Transferred to Canadian base depot
8. 26 – 09 – 17: Admitted to #12 Ambulance Hospital with gsw (gunshot wound) to face and right side
9. 14 – 10- 17: Rejoined unit
10. 18 – 12 – 18: Wounded
11. 24 – 12 – 18: To England
12. 01 – 01 – 19: Invalided and posted to CCRD (Canadian Cavalry Reserve Depot) Borden
13. 22 – 06 – 19 Sailed from England on the SS Royal George



SS Heliopolis was a Clyde-built British passenger ship. She was subsequently renamed in 1910 SS Royal George and served as a troop ship for the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War.

14. 26 – 06 – 19: Discharged

Following his discharge from the CEF in June 1919, John becomes difficult to locate, although his last known address was General Delivery, Grenfell, Saskatchewan.

What is known is that John married Mary Amelia Shaw on August 17, 1920, at Carlton, Ontario. Together the couple had eight (8) children: Donald, John, Isabel, Mary, Johanna, Matthew, Leo, and Ruby.

A Guardian Newspaper article (attached) dated October 7th, 1932, sheds more light on the whereabouts of this local veteran. John joined the Northwest Mounted Police and made a career in the force.

Retired in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, John, and family make a trip “home” to spend time with family.

SHEARSTOWN BOY RETURNS

After an Absence of 25 Years.

Mr. John Mercer, youngest son of the late Ananias and Johanna Mercer, of Shearstown, accompanied by his wife and five children, arrived home from Kirkland Lake, Ontario, on Friday, Sept. 23rd, after an absence of 25 years. Leaving Newfoundland in 1908 he went to Boston, and from there to the Western States and thence to Canada. At the outbreak of the war he enlisted in the Fort Garry Horse with the Canadians, and saw service at Gallipoli and in France. After the Armistice was declared he spent eight months in Germany. Returning to Canada, and after demobilization, Mr. Mercer enlisted with the Northwest Mounted Police, and served with them until about three months ago. He purposes spending a few months here, the guest of his sister, Mrs. James Dwyer at Shearstown. The Guardian trusts that Mr. and Mrs. Mercer will enjoy their visit.

John passed away in November 1959 and is buried in Ottawa at the Notre Dame of Ottawa Cemetery there.