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John Edward French
Canadian Expeditionary Force
Yukon Infantry Company
Regimental No. 2004534

World War I

Born: 28 April 1876

Died: 11 Feb 1956

Place of Birth: Bay Roberts, Newfoundland

Parents: Nathaniel and Mary Anne (Hayes) French

John was living and working in the Yukon when he enlisted in the Yukon Infantry Company of the Canadian Expeditionary Force on October 11th, 1916. He was rather old to be a recruit at the age of forty (40) but nonetheless, he passed the mandatory physical examination and was assigned as a Pte to the Yukon Infantry Company.

His enlistment documents describe him as being 5' 9" tall, 175 lbs, of dark complexion and having brown hair with steel grey eyes. Single at the time, John gave his calling/trade as carpenter and his faith as Church of England.

John would spend two and a half years in service, dating from his enlistment on 11 Oct 1916 to his demobilization/discharge on 26 May 1919.

The following are some excerpts from his service record by date and location/event:

1. 24 – 01 – 17: Embarked Halifax on board the S.S. Canada



S.S. Canada

2. 06 – 02 – 17: Disembarked Liverpool, England
3. 07 – 03 – 17: TOS (taken on strength)
4. 24 – 03 – 17: Transferred to the 17th Machine Gun Company, 5th Canadian Division
5. 24 – 03 – 17: TOS 5th Division
6. 24 – 04 – 18: Embarked for France
7. 20 – 07 – 18: SOS (struck off strength) to 2nd MMGCB (motor machine gun company battalion)
8. 10 – 08 – 18: Wounded/gas shell
9. 14 – 03 – 19: To England
10. 04 – 05 – 19: To Canada

John had suffered a severe injury from his wound and poisoning but he survived and after some convalescent time, he appears well. Sometime during his stay in England, he met and married Muriel Seales Blackburn of Liverpool. Following the war, John and Muriel made their home in Canada, possibly British Columbia.

John died in February 1956 at the age of 79, while Muriel passed away in 1992. They are buried in the Ross Bay Cemetery, Victoria, Capital Regional District, British Columbia, Canada.