



Robert James Mercer
World War I
Royal Newfoundland Regiment
Service No. 4360

Born: 23 Feb 1899

Died: 01 Nov 1966

Place of Birth: Bay Roberts, Conception Bay, Newfoundland

Parents: William and Mary (nee French) Mercer

Robert was born to parents William and Mary Mercer of Bay Roberts on February 23rd, 1899.

It was early 1918 when Robert enlisted; in fact it was March 9th, 1918, according to his enlistment documents. We learn from these papers the following about Robert:

- He was 19 years old
- He stood 5' 5" tall
- Weighted 115 lbs
- Single

His Official Service Record shows that following enlistment, Robert "embarked St. John's via train to Halifax and then overseas on (11 – 6—1918) with draft. His time in England is confirmed as he was hospitalized at Hazeley Down for four days with influenza (03 Nov 1918 to 07 Nov 1918). He served in England until March 19, 1919, when he was repatriated to Newfoundland for demobilization. He arrived back in St. John's on March 25th, 1919.

Interestingly, like the majority of WW I volunteers, Robert made allowance for some of his pay to go to his family. According to certificate #4284 of the First Newfoundland Regiment, Mrs. Mary Mercer (Robert's Mom) of Bay Roberts was allocated 60 cents per diem of Robert's pay.

After the war ended, Robert returned home to Bay Roberts, the 1921 census finding him, now at age 22 living with his parents.

The next census in 1935 shows Robert with a wife, Fannie Rebecca Churchill of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. The couple had married in April 1923. Now with five children, Gerald, Reginald, Lilla, Neil, and Marina (Lewis would come later), they were also caring for Robert's widowed mother and cousin in their home at Bay Roberts.

It is interesting to note that two of their boys, Reginald and Neil would also see military service. Reginald in the Royal Artillery and Neil in the RCAF Military police as a dog handler.

A move to St. Johns according to the 1945 census for St. Johns East (ward 3) has Robert and Fannie still with six children and a boarder from Bay Roberts in the same household.

A return to Bay Roberts saw Robert being elected the town's first major and served in that capacity for a ten (10) year period from 1951 – 1961.

In 1955 with the establishment of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 32, Robert was elected the first president of the newly formed branch.

Robert passed away at the General Hospital, St. Johns on November 1, 1966. His death certificate (# 3495) still listing his place of residence as Cable Avenue, Bay Roberts.

He is buried at St. Matthews Anglican (New) Cemetery, Bay Roberts.



Robert and Wife Fannie

Robert J Mercer, 1914

WW I sentry post adjacent to Cable Station. Robert J. Mercer on Right, next to Sentry Herb Walsh, standing.







All Bay Roberts Boys

Hazeley Down Camp, Winchester, England - WW I

Back Row: Jacob French, Harvey Fradsham, Billy Delaney, Harvey Batten, Billy Parsons, Jack Bishop

Middle Row: N. Morgan, ? Howell, Jack Lyons, Robert Mercer, Ed Snow, Ed Mercer

Front Row: John Fred Dawe, Gilbert Martin, Jack Snow



Mayor Bob Mercer
Apr. 1951 - Nov. 1961