

## WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

### Lieutenant William Forbes Ferrier

**William Alexander Forbes FERRIER**, son of Alexander **FERRIER** and Margaret **FORBES**, was born on 26 Jun 1895 in Lieth, Edinburgh, Scotland. He had at least one sister Elizabeth Margaret whom he later listed as next of kin. In the 1901 census of Newmills, Ross & Cromarty, Scotland, he is living with his grandfather. His mother had died in 1897.<sup>1</sup>

Due to the fact that William Anderson Ferrier was a British Home Child who lived with the Howison family in Pembroke Twp., and attended Greenwood Methodist Church; and the fact that both William Forbes Ferrier and William Anderson Ferrier's name was recorded on the Greenwood Methodist Church WWI Honour Roll, I initially thought that William Forbes Ferrier was possibly a brother and also a British Home Child. However, on further investigation it was discovered that the two Williams were 1<sup>st</sup> cousins and William Forbes Ferrier was not a British Home Child. A ship called the Scotian arrived in Halifax from Glasgow, Scotland on Mar 24, 1914. The passenger list includes the two Williams travelling together with a destination of Pembroke. It indicates that William Anderson Ferrier had been in Canada before but William Alexander Forbes Ferrier had not. They are both listed as farmhands. It appears that William Anderson Ferrier returned to Scotland about 6 months earlier and returned with his cousin.<sup>1</sup>

William Forbes Ferrier enlisted on Nov 6, 1914 at Kingston, Ontario. He listed his occupation as farmer and was 19 ½ years old. He was 5'7" with fair complexion, blue eyes, and fair hair. He indicated that he had previous military experience with the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Scottish Regiment. His regiment arrived in Devonport, England aboard the Metagama on May 15, 1915. Four months later he arrived in Boulogne, France and served with the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force.<sup>2</sup>

On Dec 9, 1916, the now Lance Cpl. Wm F. Ferrier was awarded the Military Medal. The citation states:

*For exceptional bravery and initiative in action. When his seniors had become casualties he took charge of the platoon which he handled with great skill. Upon gaining the objective he reorganized his Platoon and rendered valuable service in consolidating and holding the position.*<sup>3</sup>

He suffered a setback while in service due to 'trench feet'. He required hospitalization in England but returned to the front line. He later returned to England for Officer Training and was commissioned as Lieutenant on April 27, 1918. On Oct 11, 1918, Lt. W. F. Ferrier was killed in action near Denain, France.<sup>2,3</sup> He was 23 years old. The circumstances of casualty stated:

*"KILLED IN ACTION"*

*He was killed by the enemy during an advance on Avesnes-Le-Sec on the morning of October 11, 1918.*<sup>5</sup>

The Battalion's War Diary recorded the following:

*Lieut WF Ferrier, also an excellent type of man, enlisted in the Battalion at Kingston, Ontario, in 1914. Soon after his arrival in France he was made an NCO, and later his Officers selected him as a prospective candidate for a commission. On Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 1918 he was sent to England to qualify at Bexhill. He rejoined the Battalion on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> 1918, and since that time his work gave promise of advancement.*<sup>3</sup>

Lt. William Alexander Forbes Ferrier was buried in Niagara Cemetery at Iwuy, Departement du Nord, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France<sup>4,6,8</sup>. He is also commemorated on the Pembroke War Memorial<sup>11</sup>, the Greenwood Methodist Church WWI Honour Roll<sup>13</sup>, and a plaque Honouring

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members of the Greenwood Community who enlisted for Overseas Service, Greenwood Methodist Church<sup>12</sup>.

A website dedicated to the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion<sup>3</sup> is well-worth the look.



Image 1: Pembroke War Memorial<sup>11</sup>

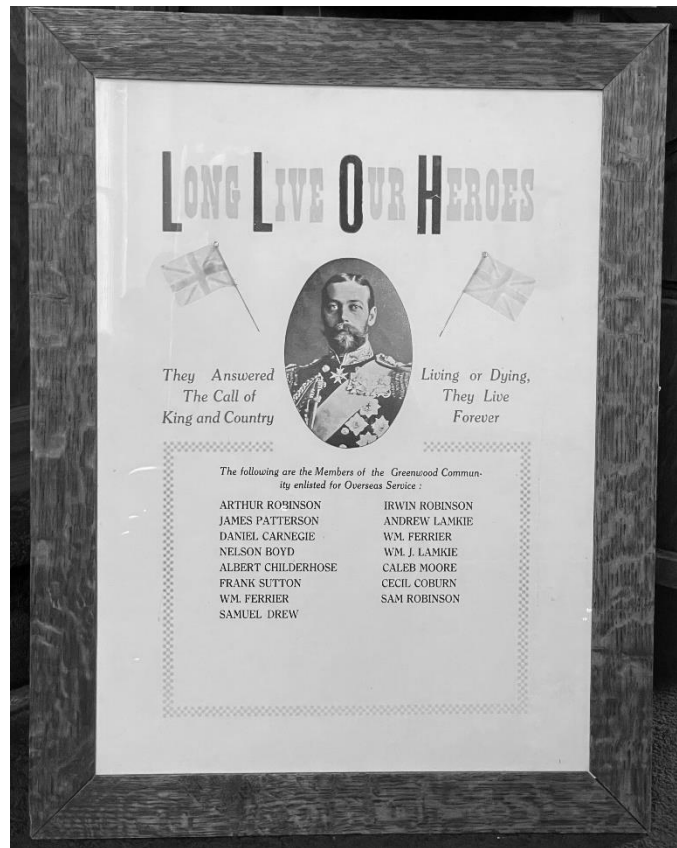


Image 2: Members of Greenwood Community serving overseas in WWI<sup>12</sup>

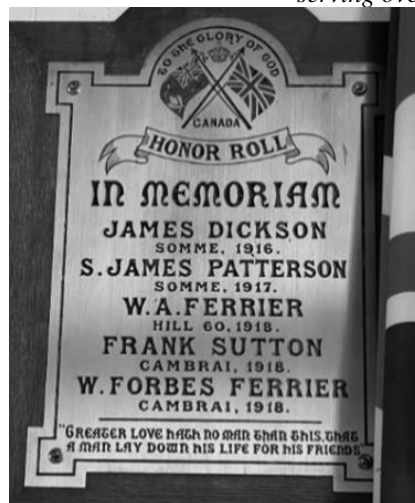


Image 3: Greenwood United Church Honour WWI Honour Roll<sup>13</sup>

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