

WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

Private William Robert Muckle

William Robert MUCKLE, son of **Margaret STRAIN**, was born on 1 May 1897 in Bally, Donaghdee, Co. Down, Ireland.^{1,2,3} Information regarding his early years is scarce however some records indicate his father's name was David Muckle. In his military records, he lists a brother James McWhau (Waugh) as next of kin. In the 1901 Census for Ireland, William is living with his 67-year-old widowed grandmother, Eliza Strain in Ballyhay, Ballycross, Down, Ireland. He is 4 years old and listed as born in Co. Down. Another grandson James Waugh, aged 6 years old, is also living with her. His mother Margaret Strain had died in 1898 of TB in Ballyhay. His grandmother Eliza Strain died of cancer in 1906 in the Newtownards Workhouse.^{1,2}

William Robert Muckle was sent to Canada (a British Home Child) from the Newtownards Workhouse at age 13. He arrived in Montreal aboard the ship "Tunisian" on Aug 5, 1910 from Liverpool, England.⁵ In the 1911 Census, William is living in the household of Samuel McCracken and his sister Elizabeth McCracken of Westmeath Twp.

William enlisted on Nov 19, 1915 at Pembroke, Ontario at the age of 18 years, 7 months. He was described as 5' 7" tall with a dark complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair. He listed his occupation as fireman. He served with the 87th Battalion (Canadian Grenadier Guards), Canadian Infantry (Quebec Regiment).³

Private William Robert Muckle (No. 177739) left England for France on 10 August 1916 from Bramshott Military Camp in Hampshire and was killed in action some two months later, on 21 October 1916.³ The reported circumstances of death are as brief as his reported circumstances of life. It states "Killed in Action."⁶ The attack was one of the Battles of The Somme. It was located north of Courcellette when the 87th Battalion was engaged in a 'creeping barrage' on 600 yards of Regina Trench. It was considered successful.⁷



Image 2: Perretton United Church Roll of Honour¹²



Image 1: Pte. William R. Muckle⁴

Private Muckle has no known grave and is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial^{8,9} in France. He is also commemorated on the Perretton United Church WWI Honour Roll¹², the Westmeath War Memorial,¹³ the Beachburg War Memorial,¹⁴ and the Pembroke War Memorial¹⁵. He was one of four British Home Children planted in Whitewater Region, who lost their lives. One, Pte. Edward Moran, had been killed 13 days earlier in a similar attack on Regina Trench.

This young man lived through much tragedy in his short life. Lest We Forget.

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