

WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

Private George Alexander Murdock

George Alexander Murdock, son of **John Campbell Murdock** and **Margaret Harriett Moore**, was born on 18 Oct 1897 in Ross Twp., Ontario according to his birth registration which was completed shortly after his birth. The date given on his attestation papers suggests he was born on Oct 15, 1896. Both of George's parents were born in Ross Twp., as well. George's dad was married first to Isabella Margaret Bulmer, also of Ross Twp. She died in 1889. She gave birth to at least two children, one dying in infancy. The other daughter Elizabeth Jane lived to be married and give birth to a daughter but died in 1904. From his father's second marriage to Margaret Harriett Moore, there were at least 11 births with at least 4 dying in childhood. Of his living siblings, there were 2 brothers and 4 sisters.¹

George Murdock enlisted on Apr 14, 1915 at Ottawa, Ontario at the real age of 17 years, and almost 6 months. His stated occupation was labourer. He was described as 18 yrs, 4 months old, 5' 7" tall with a fair complexion, blue eyes and fair hair. He served with the 38th Battalion, Canadian Infantry and arrived in France on Aug 14, 1916. On Nov 1, 1916 he Sustained a gunshot wound to the left 4th finger which required amputation. He was discharged back to the field on Jan 26, 1917.²

In June, 1917, the 38th Battalion were engaged in Battle of Arras and specifically the capture of Avion. Pte. George Murdock lost his life on June 28, 1917 during the attack. The circumstances of death register states:

"Died of Wounds

*He was wounded by shrapnel from an enemy shell while taking part in an attack on Avion. His wounds were dressed and he was taken to No. 7 Casualty Clearing Station where he died."*³

He was 19 years, 8 months of age. Pte. Murdock was buried in Noeux-Les-Mines Communal Cemetery at Noeux-les-Mines, Pas de Calais, France.⁴ His name is also commemorated on the Ross Township WWI Memorial Plaque at Trinity United Church, Foresters Falls.⁵ He is listed there as L/Cpl George Murdock. In his military personnel file, there are several references to L/Cpl noted as 'rank' at the top of several pages however I could not find a report of his promotions and the discharge papers all use "Pte." as his rank. I do not know how records were kept straight in such dire circumstances. A report published in the Ottawa Journal on July 3, 1917 indicated he was dangerously wounded.⁶ A report in the Renfrew Mercury dated July 20, 1917 stated that he died of wounds on June 28th.⁷

Another local boy Sgt. Clifford Briscoe of the 38th Battalion was also killed on the same day.

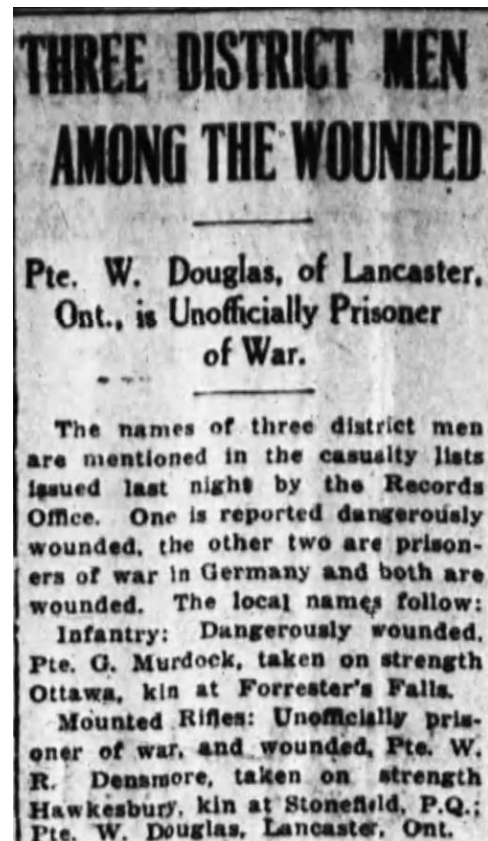


Image 1: Pte. George Murdock wounded⁶

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Sources:

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<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=207549>
3. "Circumstances of Death Registers, First World War." Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Digital images. *Image 2: WWI Memorial Tablet⁵*
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