

GRAMPA IN THE FIRST WAR - "CHAPTER" 1

49TH BATTALION (LOYAL EDMONTON)- 1915

433177	Private	West, John Aldworth	15th Huss.	West, Mrs. Emma	9721, 100th St., Edmonton, Alta.	England	Edmonton	May 8, 1915.
433291	Private	White, Albert Richard	Nil	White, Mrs. Mary	546 Kennedy St., Edmonton, Alta.	Canada	Edmonton	May 8, 1915.
432562	Private	White, Frederick Samuel	40th Regt.	White, Mrs. Nellie Wilson	Suite 2, Powell Block, Edmonton, Alta.	Canada	Edmonton	Jan. 9, 1915.

http://www.albertagenealogy-research.ca/LER/Nominal_Roles/49thBnCEF.pdf

Grampa (John Aldworth West - regimental # 433177) signed up May 25th, 1915. Excerpts from the 49th battalion's history (<http://www.loyaleddies.com/history.html>) tell us that on 29 May 1915 they left Edmonton by train.... After a brief stop in Ottawa to parade on Parliament Hill, the unit reached Montreal and embarked on the Canadian Pacific ship Metagama for the sea voyage to Britain (St. Martin Field - near Folkestone). There the unit trained further until the word came to depart for France. The battalion's Colours were deposited in Canterbury Cathedral for the duration of the war (they are now displayed in the Regimental Museum). The 49th landed in France early in October 1915, but grampa's platoon was held in reserve in England. What happened during the next month is not clear, but Grampa was wounded (stomach or ankle bullet?) and received a medical discharge on November 10. Excerpts from an article by Paul Bacon, Edmonton Journal, July 18, 2014 tells us that most

CANADIAN OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
Discharge Certificate

This is to Certify that No. 433177 (Rank) Pte.
(Name in Full) John A. West enlisted in
49th Bn.
Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force, on the 6th May
1915, and accompanied said unit to Quebec
and discharged from the service at Quebec
on the 10th November 1915, in connection with Medical Discharge
Medically Unfit.

DESCRIPTION ON DISCHARGE

Age 23 1/2
Height 5' 5 1/2"
Complexion Fair
Eyes Grey
Hair Dark
Teeth Good
Signature of Man John A. West
Place and Date _____

Marked as Discharged by J. J. Mearns
Officer in Charge Discharge Dept.

RECALLS THIS DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE BE LOST, NO DUPLICATE OF IT CAN BE OBTAINED.
If a duplicate is required it should be forwarded to the nearest office of the Department.

of the 1,000 recruits were originally from Britain, and had come to northern Alberta to make their fortunes. Only 208 were Canadian-born. The battalion's commander, Lt.-Col. William Griesbach, was a well-connected former Edmonton mayor and Boer War veteran. Like him, about a third of the men had seen active military service, and 80 per cent had previous military training. On the rainy evening of May 29, the battalion departed by train for Montreal, headed for Europe. It would go into the line in France on Oct. 16 as part of the 3rd Canadian Division. About 4,000 men passed through the battalion. More than 970 were killed or went missing, more than 2,200 were wounded.

Daily rates of pay and (field allowances for days on the battlefield) for members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1914:

- \$5 – Colonel (\$1.50)
- \$1 – Private, Gunner, Sapper (“pioneer” or engineer), Driver, Batman (personal servant to officer) (\$.10)