

PHILLIPS, James William

Service Number 645431

Rank Private

Canadian Infantry (British Columbia Regiment) 7th Battalion

Born November 18, 1886, Douglas, Isle of Man

Died August 15, 1917, Loos, France

Occupation Carpenter

Marital Status Single

Born on the Isle of Man, James William “Jim” Phillips emigrated to Canada and the west coast with his parents and siblings. They settled in Burnaby, and Jim and his brother followed their father in the carpentry trade, building houses. Jim avidly pursued his interests in photography and painting. Thanks to this work, a photographic record of early Burnaby, people and houses endures. Burnaby Archives is the repository for his photographs, some of which can be viewed online.

Jim and his brother, George, bought property in Errington, and his brother later settled there. It may be that together, they built some Parksville homes.

World War I put a stop to everything. The two brothers enlisted in January 1916 in the Duke of Connaught’s Own 158th Battalion. Jim arrived in England November 1916 and was drafted into the British Columbia Regiment, 7th Battalion. He joined his unit in France in early 1917. During the attack at Hill 70 near Loos, France he was reported missing. His body was never recovered, and the official date of death was given as August 15, 1917.

In his will, James left his interest in the Errington lots to his brother, and half interest in his Burnaby lots equally to his brother and sister. George survived the war and lived in Errington for the rest of his life.

James William Phillips is commemorated on the Isle of Man Great War Roll of Honour and on the Vimy Memorial. His legacy of photographs can be viewed at the Burnaby Archives.

Sources: Photo: Burnaby Archives
Personnel Records of the First World War, Library and Archives Canada
Books of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada
Circumstances of Death Registers, Library and Archives Canada
B.C. Directories / Vancouver Public Library
City of Burnaby Archives
Isle of Man Museum

