

**Private John Frederick Mack**<sup>©</sup>  
**Regimental number: S10647**  
**5th Battalion, Queens Own Cameron Highlanders**

**born: 9 September 1892 – died: 19 March 1916**

John Frederick Mack was 21½ years of age when he enlisted in the 5th Battalion of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.<sup>1</sup> Less than a month after war was declared on 4 August 1914, John decided to enlist. His official papers show he did so on 1 September 1914.<sup>2</sup> They indicated that he was a slight young man weighing 122 pounds, 5 feet, 6 inches tall with blue eyes, brown hair and a fair complexion.<sup>3</sup> He gave his religion as Presbyterian and his occupation as Engineer.<sup>4</sup>

The 5th Battalion landed at Boulogne-sur-Mer as part of the 26th Brigade in the 9th (Scottish) Division in May 1915 for service on the Western Front, where the battalion served for the remainder of the war.<sup>5,6</sup> As a result, John would have experienced life in the trenches for close to a year. On 28 September 1915, he suffered a gunshot wound to his left foot.<sup>7</sup> On 15 October 1915 "*The Dundee Courier*" reported that there were 36 casualties among the 5th battalion of the Cameron Highlanders on that day.<sup>8</sup>

One fatality and 34 wounded. The newspaper also noted that the Highlanders suffered heavily in the fighting in the West on 29 September 1915.<sup>9</sup> The latest casualty lists included 157 officers and 2851 men.<sup>10</sup>

On 19 March 1916 John suffered an abdominal wound and was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. He died later that day.<sup>11</sup> He was 23 years old and had served for one year and three months.<sup>12</sup>



Source: *Weekly Cartoon from the Aberdeen Daily Journal, British Newspaper Archive*, Friday, October 15, 1915, which reported that Private John Frederick Mack had been wounded.

John is buried at the Bailleuil Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Plot II, Row B, Grave 13). The cemetery contains 4344 identified casualties from the first and second World Wars.<sup>13</sup>

John was posthumously awarded the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre), the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the 1914–1915 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).<sup>14</sup> Private John Frederick's death was reported in *The Dundee Courier* in an article on heavy casualties among the Cameron Highlanders on 22 April 1916<sup>15</sup> and again in the *Courier* on Britain's Roll of Honour on 12 October 1916.<sup>16</sup>

John was born in the St. Cuthbert's Parish of Edinburgh, Scotland,<sup>17,18</sup> which was the birthplace of his father, James Mack, and his grandfather, David Mack.<sup>19</sup> John's father had married Cristian McLeod on 8 January 1886<sup>20</sup> and by 1901 they were raising four children in their home at 2 Lochrin Place, Edinburgh.<sup>21</sup> John had two brothers and one sister (Ethel Mack, b. 1887; James William Mack, b. 1890; and Harry Douglas Mack, b. 1900). John's father James worked as a house painter.<sup>22</sup>

After World War I began each of the Mack men would enlist. John enlisted on 1 September 1914<sup>23</sup> and his father followed later that month on 25 September.<sup>24</sup> James Mack Sr. was recruited as a corporal and by 8 October 1914 had been promoted to sergeant. Then on 11 November 1914 James was discharged in Edinburgh.<sup>25</sup> The reason given on file was that he was "Not likely to become an efficient soldier."<sup>26</sup> He served in the Royal Scots for 46 days.<sup>27</sup>

John's older brother James William also enlisted, but his record was not available, so his enlistment date is not known. He signed on with the 11th Battalion, Lothian Regiment, of the Royal Scots and was killed in action at Loos in France on 27 September 1915.<sup>28</sup> His body was not recovered, and his name is part of the Loos Memorial.<sup>29</sup>

John's younger brother Harry Douglas was just 14 when war broke out, so could not enlist until February 1917.<sup>30</sup> Unlike his siblings, Harry enlisted in the Royal Navy. His first ship was the HMS *Ganges*,<sup>31</sup> and he later worked as a telegraph messenger on HMS *Dunedin*.<sup>32</sup> At some point, Harry moved to live in New Zealand, where he married Gwendolyn Winifred Ethel Schmitt in 1928.<sup>33</sup> Harry and Gwendolyn lived at 34 Elliott Street, Papakura, Auckland, New Zealand.<sup>34</sup> He died on 20 July 1942.<sup>35</sup> When he died, Harry was still in the Royal Navy, where he was employed as a petty officer.<sup>36</sup> His ashes are interred at the Walkumete Cemetery in Auckland, New Zealand.<sup>37</sup>

John's father James died on 2 July 1934 and left an estate of £ 540:11:2 to his widow, Christian McLeod Mack.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John Frederick Mack, S/10647, burned records

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "5th Battalion Queens Own Cameron Highlanders," *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%27s\\_Own\\_Cameron\\_Highlanders](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen%27s_Own_Cameron_Highlanders): accessed 5 July 2019)

<sup>6</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John Frederick Mack, S/10647, burned records

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "The Dundee Courier," *British Newspaper Archives* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>: accessed 7 August 2019), 15 October 1915, Page 7

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John Frederick Mack, S/10647, burned records

<sup>12</sup> "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 9 May 2017), entry for John Frederick Mack

<sup>13</sup> "UK, Commonwealth War Graves, 1914–1921 & 1939–1947," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for Mack, John Frederick, Service No: S/10647; Bailleuil Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, <https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2000048/bailleuil-communal-cemetery-extension-nord/>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "The Dundee Courier," *British Newspaper Archives* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>: accessed 7 August 2019), Saturday, 22 April 1916, Page 3

<sup>16</sup> "The Dundee Courier," *British Newspaper Archives* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>: accessed 7 August 2019), Wednesday, 12 October 1916, Page 3

<sup>17</sup> "Statutory Registers - Birth Indexes," *ScotlandsPeople* ([scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk): accessed 5 July 2019) entry for John Frederick Mack, Year: 1892, RD Name: St. George

<sup>18</sup> "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John F. Mack, Registration district: St. George, Civil parish: Edinburgh St. Cuthbert's, County: Midlothian, Address: 2 Lochrin Place, ED: 40, Household schedule number: 55, Line 2

<sup>19</sup> "1871 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 22 November 2018), entry for James Mack, Registration district: St. Andrew, Civil parish: Edinburgh St. Cuthbert's, County: Midlothian, Address: 8 India Place, ED: 77, Household schedule number: 36, Line 17; "1881 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 22 November 2018), entry for James Mach [sic], Registration district: St. Andrew, Civil parish: Edinburgh St. Cuthbert's, County: Midlothian, Address: 62a Cumberland St., ED: 53, Household schedule number: 47, Line 9

<sup>20</sup> "British Army WWI Pension Records 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 5 July 2019), entry for James Mack, 17686, Royal Scots Battalion

<sup>21</sup> "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John F. Mack

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for John Frederick Mack, S/10647, burned records

<sup>24</sup> "British Army WWI Pension Records 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 5 July 2019), entry for James Mack, 17686, Royal Scots Battalion

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> "UK, Soldiers Died in the Great War, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 27 May 2017), entry for James William Mack, 12844

<sup>29</sup> "Robert Mack Family Tree, Burial Note on Loos Memorial Image," *Ancestry* ([https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/66203685/person/40150279436/media/e0b2ed3f-7e91-4ac5-a1bf-3b4c5e7721aa?\\_phsrc=qCy11&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/66203685/person/40150279436/media/e0b2ed3f-7e91-4ac5-a1bf-3b4c5e7721aa?_phsrc=qCy11&_phstart=successSource): accessed 5 July 2019)

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<sup>30</sup> "UK, Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services, 1848–1939," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 22 November 2018), entry for Harry Douglas Mack, First Service Date: 21 February 1917, Service Number: J69360

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> "UK, Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services, 1848–1939," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 22 November 2018), entry for Harry Douglas Mack, First Service Date: 11 October 1929, Service Number: J69360

<sup>33</sup> "New Zealand, Marriage Index, 1840–1937," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 5 July 2019), entry for Harry Douglas Mack and Gwendolyn Winifred Ethel Schmitt

<sup>34</sup> "New Zealand, Cemetery Records, 1840–2007," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 22 November 2018), entry for Harry Douglas Mack, Death Date: 20 July 1942

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> "Scotland, National Probate Index (Calendar of Confirmation and Inventories), 1876–1936," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com): accessed 5 July 201), entry for James Mack, Death Date: 2 July 1934