

WW1: Honouring Those Who Volunteered In June, 1916

In June, 1916, only one community member of MBQ volunteered to serve.

JOSEPH EDWARD BERNHARDT
Regimental Number: 637180

Please Note: Joseph's surname as he has signed it on his attestation paper is what we have used for this article and note that there is a discrepancy between that and the spelling of his parent's surname.

Joseph Edward was the son of David & Susan (Bey) Barnhart. According to the 1901 census, he was born on the 6th of March, 1901. When Joseph signed up, he said his date of birth was the 6th of March, 1898. This was later corrected and his attestation paper amended.

Joseph volunteered on the 14th of June, 1916, at Barriefield Camp (now CFB Trenton) for the 155th Overseas Battalion.

From his military personnel file we learn that before the war he was a labourer with no previous military experience. Other documents in his file indicate he was more specifically a machinist.

He left Canada on the 18th of October, 1916, and arrived in England on the 28th of October, 1916. He was transferred to the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles that November. Joseph arrived in France on the 29th of that same month and from there, he was sent to the Field on the 3rd of December, 1916.

In May, 1917, he suffered from appendicitis and was evacuated from France. He underwent an operation at the end of May. At some point after the surgery, around October, 1917, he was found to be underage. He was transferred to the 2nd Central Ontario Regimental Depot. Then later, he was sent to the Depot Company.

Joseph reported having difficulty breathing and some chest pain. This started while in France, during marches, but became gradually worse.

Although he recovered from the surgery for his appendicitis Joseph Edward was sent back to Canada as medically unfit and "services no longer required". He was discharged in Kingston on the 12th of March, 1918.

The record states that he served 6 months and 17 days in France. His conduct and character were described as "Very Good".

Joseph Edward Bernhardt married Alice Sutton on the 16th of August, 1918, in Shannonville [*AO Marriage Registration*].

On the 1921 census, Joseph Edward, Alice, and their two children, Joyce and Edward were living in Belleville.

The family enfranchised in October, 1921.

According to his military personnel file (there is a hard copy at Kanhiote Library), Joseph Edward died in Toronto on the 10th of February, 1970.

Most of the information here is from his military personnel file [*LAC RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 680 - 28*]. This file has been digitized and can be found at <http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca>. Other information has been taken from MBQ Records.