

John Mitchell (Reg No 5960 & 512207) enlisted on 6th December 1915 at Buckingham Gate London, joining the 1/14th London Regiment (London Scottish). This regiment was originally raised in 1859 as a volunteer force sponsored by the Highland Society of London; it was the first Territorial Infantry battalion to see action in the Great War. John's surviving records are few and it appears that he did not arrive in France until 9th Nov 1916 almost a year after joining up. It is very possible that John had volunteered for 'Home Service'. However in 1916 the Military Service Act stated that all men would now be rendered fit for drafting overseas.



On May 31st 1917, having spent seven months in the field, John visited the No 6 Stationary Hospital in Frevent, Arras and was diagnosed with 'Pyrexia of unknown origin'- meaning a rise in body temperature. Later, on June 10th he was transferred in No. 12 Ambulance Train to No 6 Convalescent Depot where it was hoped he might regain his fitness. Sadly, he was diagnosed with Pleurisy and three weeks later boarded the Hospital Ship 'Essequibo' and sailed back to England to Tooting Military Hospital in London where he 'accepted' sanatorium care.

John's hospital medical notes, dated Aug 29th 1917, report that on entering the Army John's weight was 11st 12lbs – it was now just 10st. The notes continue, "*he occasionally coughs blood. Left pleural cavity small amount of effusion... suffers pain...right upper & middle lobe tuberculosis infiltration*". The Report of the Medical Board records that John's illness originated in France in May 1917 and was the result of 'active service, hardships and exposure'. He had a "*permanent total incapacity*" and was discharged from the Army on the 17th Sep. 1917 due to ill-health, with this testimony:-'This man bears a good character and is clearly well conducted. He has served O.S'



Before enlisting, John worked as a commercial clerk; in 1911 lodging in Kensington, giving his place of birth as Huntly, Aberdeenshire, and then living in Chiswick. In 1913 he married Ethel Platten in Brentford and they had a son, Eric John, in 1914. After the war, John can be found on the Electoral Registers 1919/20, boarding at 27 Percy Road Isleworth, along with a George & Jane Gibbs and their "nephew sons" Harold & Albert Hewlett. **John died on February 2nd 1920, and is buried in Isleworth Cemetery.** Later that year, Ethel married Harold Hewlett, and Eric John took the Hewlett surname too. All three can be found on the 1939 Register in Edmonton. Ethel died in 1976 in Brighton.

