



COLDWATER REMEMBERS PRIVATE WILLIAM T. CASWELL

William Theodore Caswell was born in Coldwater, Ontario, on February 1, 1884, the first son of Lorenzo and Annie (Murray) Caswell. On July 30, 1915, he enlisted in Vernon, B.C., with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He was 31 years old and single. On his Attestation Form he is described as 5 feet 8½ inches tall, with brown eyes and black hair. He identified his religious denomination as Roman Catholic, and his trade as logger, with no previous military experience.

Private William Caswell, regimental number 463246, sailed from Montreal to England on the S.S. Scandinavian, arriving on October 11, 1915. After training in England for several months, he landed in France on March 9, 1916, initially assigned to the 48th Canadian Infantry Battalion, but transferring later to the 3rd Battalion, Canadian Machine Gun Corps. He was wounded twice during the Canadian assault on Vimy Ridge in April 1917, and on May 18, was awarded the Military Medal (M.M.), for gallantry in action during that operation. The citation for the award speaks for itself:



"For conspicuous courage and devotion to duty during the attack and capture of VIMY RIDGE on April 9th, 1917, when on a VICKERS machine-gun crew detailed to move with the third wave to an advanced position to the rear of the enemy lines at A.4.a.7.7 LA FOLIE map 1:5000: - in that he, though wounded at 5:30 a.m. in that day, while passing through the enemy barrage stayed at his post of duty as No.1 on the gun, remaining in action until the night of April 10th when he was ordered to report to the Dressing Station by the O.C. Battery: - in that he having in addition been severely bruised by shrapnel the night of April 7th has shown by the spirit in which he carried on his duties a splendid example of courage and determination to all his comrades."

Private Caswell was killed in action by machine-gun fire near St. Olle on September 30, 1918, during the "100 Days" final offensive from Cambrai to Mons. Four years later, his parents would have received the awards their son was entitled to: the Military Medal; the 1914-1918 British War Medal; the Inter Allied Victory Medal; a Memorial Plaque (a bronze medallion often referred to as "Dead Man's Penny"); and a scroll from King George V. His mother would also have received a "Mother's Cross".

Private William Caswell is buried at Drummond Cemetery, Nord, near the village of Raillencourt on the main Arras-Cambrai road, France. He is commemorated on page 382 of the *First World War Book of Remembrance*, located inside the Memorial Chamber in the Peace Tower in Ottawa. As of November 11, 2018, he is also commemorated on a plaque on the Cenotaph in front of the Coldwater Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion.

We will remember him.