



## COLDWATER REMEMBERS

# GUNNER ARNOT LEATHERDALE

Arnot Thomas Dale Leatherdale was born on June 12, 1897, the son of Luke and Amelia Leatherdale of Eplett Street in Coldwater. He enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Kingston, Ontario, on November 1, 1915. On his Attestation Form he is described as 18 years old, single, five feet tall, with blue eyes and brown hair. He entered "clerk" as his occupation at time of enlistment, and claimed previous military service with the 35<sup>th</sup> [Infantry Battalion] Barrie and "C" Battery of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. He declared his religion as Church of England.



Gunner Arnot Leatherdale, regimental number 348289, crossed the Atlantic on the S.S. Metagama and landed in England on 9 January 1916. He reported for training at the Shorncliffe Camp near Folkestone. Having enlisted as a gunner, he transferred to the Artillery Reserve Battalion and by July 11, he found himself on the front lines in France with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery.

His work as a gunner would have included taking part in moving, loading, firing, and cleaning the heavy guns, often while under enemy bombardment. Artillery duels were part of daily routine during the First World War, both sides trying desperately to break the stalemate of trench warfare.

Gunner Arnot Leatherdale was killed in action on October 2, 1916, in the area of the Somme, in France, during one of the operations that would become known collectively as the Battle of The Somme. The entry in his unit's War Diary indicates for that day that some batteries had endured bombardment and suffered several casualties. Gunner Leatherdale was killed when an enemy artillery shell went through the roof of his dugout near the village of Courcellette, killing him instantly.

Four years later, Arnot's parents would have received the awards their son was entitled to: 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".

Arnot Thomas Dale Leatherdale is buried at Pozieres British Cemetery located some 6 km north-east of Albert, Somme, in France. In Canada he is commemorated on page 117 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.