

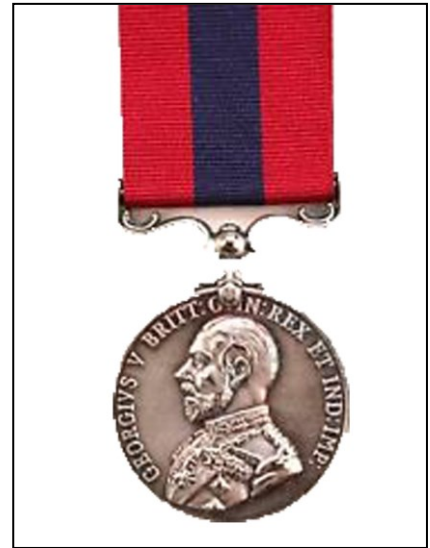


COLDWATER REMEMBERS

LANCE-CORPORAL WILLIAM RUSSELL MIDDLETON, D.C.M.

William Russell Middleton was born in Medonte Township near Coldwater, Ontario, on October 23, 1891, the son of Isaac and Mary Ann Middleton. On February 23, 1916, Russell enlisted in Orillia with the 157th Overseas Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He was 25 years old and single. On his Attestation Form he is described as 5 feet 9½ inches tall, with brown eyes and brown hair. He identified his religious denomination as Methodist, and his trade as farmer, with no previous military experience.

Private W. Russell Middleton, regimental number 644073, sailed to England on the S.S. Cameronia, arriving on October 28, 1916. After training in England for several months, he landed in France and on July 27, 1917, he joined his front line unit, the 116th Canadian Infantry Battalion, part of the 3rd Canadian Division. He was appointed to the rank of Lance-Corporal on August 27, 1918.



Lance-Corporal Middleton was killed in action on September 29, 1918, during what became known as the "100 Day" final advance in the area of Cambrai. There are no details on how he was killed.

On October 17, 1918, Lance-Corporal Middleton was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.), the second highest award for gallantry in action (after the Victoria Cross) for all army ranks below commissioned officers. The award was officially published in the London Gazette on June 14, 1919. The citation for the award speaks for itself:

"On the 8th August, 1918, near Domart, he was the means of capturing three enemy machine guns. On one occasion when the platoon was held up by machine gun fire he advanced across the open, firing his gun from the hip, and, although under heavy machine gun fire himself, he put out of action the gun he attacked, and made prisoners the entire crew of seven men."

Lance-Corporal William Russell Middleton is buried at Crest Cemetery, 3 km of Cambrai, France. In Canada he is commemorated on page 470 of the *First World War Book of Remembrance*, located inside the Memorial Chamber in the Peace Tower in Ottawa. Locally, he is commemorated on a plaque inside the Willis Presbyterian Church in Oro-Medonte and, 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.