



## COLDWATER REMEMBERS

# PRIVATE GEORGE MARACLE

George Mark Maracle was born on July 10, 1895, the son of Annie and Albert Maracle of Point Anne, then a small community near Belleville, Ontario. Along with five "chums" (as described in a 1917 Toronto Star article), he enlisted in Coldwater with the 157<sup>th</sup> Overseas Battalion (The Simcoe Foresters), Canadian Expeditionary Force, on February 12, 1916. Yet, for reasons unknown, he enlisted under the name George Mark Hill. His and his mother's last name were corrected in his file after his death. George was 20 years old and single at the time of enlisting. On his Attestation Form he is described as 5 feet 6 inches tall, with dark eyes and black hair. He identified his religious denomination as Church of England, and his trade as labourer, with no previous military experience.



Private Maracle, regimental number 644015, sailed to England on the S.S. Cameronia, arriving on October 28, 1916. Within a month he joined his front line unit in France, the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (Western Ontario Regiment), on November 29.

Private Maracle was killed in action on the fourth day of the Canadian troops' assault on Vimy Ridge, April 12, 1917. At that stage of the operation, the battalion had captured its objective and prepared to push back an expected counter-attack. Although one can only speculate as to the exact cause of his death, messages from the battalion during the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup> reported casualties resulting from both friendly and enemy artillery shelling reaching advanced posts.

In the weeks that followed, an official telegram would have reached Private Maracle's parents to deliver the tragic news. Four years later, they 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, Annie, would also have received a "Mother's Cross".

Private George Maracle has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France, about 8 km northeast of Arras. Even though he enlisted and lived his young life in Coldwater under the name Hill, he is listed on the Vimy Memorial as "GM MARACLE served as GM HILL". In Canada he is commemorated on page 232 of the *First World War Book of Remembrance*, located inside the Memorial Chamber in the Peace Tower in Ottawa. He is also commemorated by the Bay of Quinte Mohawk community on a memorial located at Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory near Deseronto, Ontario. 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.