



Canada  
Veterans Hall  
of Valour

Temple de Courage  
des Anciens  
Combattants du  
Canada

*The Board of Directors  
Certifies That*

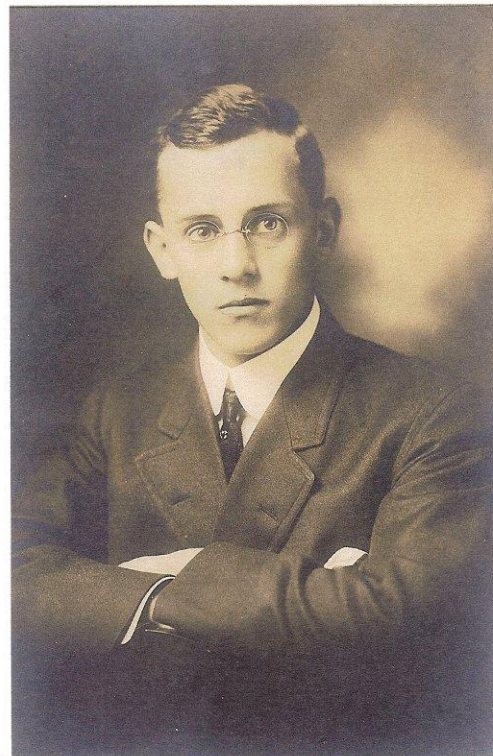
**Mervin Lionel Woods**

*Has Been Inducted  
In the Year 2010*



**Honorary President**  
Hon. John R. Matheson  
Kingston, ON

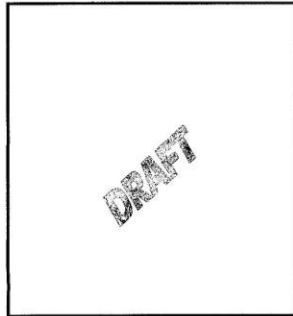
**Honorary Vice-Pres.**  
Lt. Gen. (R) Charles Belzile  
Ottawa, ON



**Mervin Lionel Woods**

14 March, 1892 – 25 April, 1916

CEF Regimental No. 76140



**Trooper Mervin Lionel Woods**  
1892 — 1916

**Mervin Lionel Woods** was a native of North Vancouver, British Columbia, and was born in Tacoma, Washington, son of John Jex Woods and Anna (Koenig) Woods.

In January, 1915, Mervin Woods enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He embarked for the United Kingdom (England) in May 1915 and after additional training was soon at the Western Front in Belgium and France.

Near Ypres Belgium, in the area traditionally called Flanders. Some of the heaviest fighting of the First World War took place there during what was known as the Second Battle of Ypres.

In April 1915, the Germans used deadly chlorine gas against Allied troops in a desperate attempt to break the stalemate. Despite the debilitating effects of the gas, Canadian soldiers fought relentlessly and held the line for another 16 days, although half of the brigade died during that nightmarish time.

By the summer of 1915, the war on the Western Front had stalemated into one of attrition. After the second Battle of Ypres there followed sporadic frontal attacks on both sides without any result other than the slaughter of tens of thousands of men. Conditions were appalling. The troops lived in the squalor and darkness of rat infested trenches often knee deep in water and mud.

By September 1915, Mervin Woods was serving with the 29th Battalion CEF. On April 6, 1916, Woods was serving at St. Eloi, located less than five miles south of Ypres. The year 1916 was the year of the Battle of the Somme also known as the slaughter of the Somme. The Battle of St. Eloi in April 1916. On April 5th, at St. Eloi, the 27th Battalion was in the process of being relieved by the 29th Battalion.

One part of the Battle of St. Eloi involved attacks and

counter-attacks to capture various mine craters (#1, #2, #3, #4, and #5.) caused by Allied tunnelling and artillery shells from both armies. Mervin Woods was one of the ones sent as a forward observation scout, to warn his colleagues about potential enemy action. However about the time Woods and other scouts had reached their posts, the Germans opened up the fiercest concentrated and most terrific bombing, his unit had faced up to that time.

The enemy attack obliterated machine gun posts and any semblance of trenches. Woods had been wounded so severely that he could not get back to the Canadian front line. First he was reported "missing in action." Later he was officially reported "killed in action." Later it was learned that he died of wounds in a German "prisoner of war" camp.

In France during the Battle of the Somme, from July 1, 1916 to December 30, 1916 a total of 836,000 Germans and Allied troops were killed including 24,029 Canadians, for an Allied advance of only six miles.

At 5:00 am on April 9, 1917, Canadian Forces, in driving snow and sleet and under a barrage of artillery fire, began their assault on Vimy Ridge. An hour later they had taken the first line of enemy trenches and by mid afternoon had captured the crest of Vimy Ridge except for two positions which fell three days later. More than 4,000 prisoners were taken, some chained to their machine guns.

The Battle of Passchendaele took place between October 30, 1917 and November 10, 1917. The cost was horrific: 16,000 casualties, all for a paltry ground gain of four and one half miles. Prime Minister Winston Churchill described it as a *forlorn expenditure of valour and life unequalled in futility.*

*cont'd on back of page*

Trooper Mervin L. Woods *cont'd*

On March 21, 1918, through a blanket of heavy white fog, 64 German divisions attacked the allied line on a 54 mile front between St. Quentin and Arras. As part of a three pronged drive, it aimed at splitting the British and French armies and gaining a quick victory before the American presence on the Western Front could be felt. It reached the Marne River 40 miles from Paris, but by June the drive had petered out and the Allies were attacking all along the line.

On August 8, 1918, at 4:20 am without the customary bombardment but supported by tanks, from near Amiens, the Canadians charged forward on a front 8,500 yards wide. By nightfall, the "shock

troops" as the enemy labelled them, had advanced almost eight miles, and captured 8,000 prisoners.

By August 22nd, the Canadians had overcome 10 German divisions, occupied 27 towns and villages and penetrated a distance of 14 miles. This attack was later called "the last 100 days" and was the beginning of the end with Allies as victors.

Mervin Lionel Woods was one of those courageous and brave Canadians who helped the Allies defeat the forces of evil and maintain democracy in North America and Western Europe but who lost his life and made the supreme sacrifice in doing so.