## WW I Enlisted Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

## **Private Duncan Archibald Coleman**

Pte. Duncan Archibald McKillop COLEMAN, son of William Stephen COLEMAN and Margaret McKILLOP, was born on Aug 11, 1897 in Ross Township. He was the 7<sup>th</sup> of 9 children and had 4 brothers and 4 sisters. His brother Pte. George Harvey Kay Coleman also served in WWI and lived to 91 years in Forester's Falls. A nephew Lt. George Richard Kitchener Coleman served in WWII and died in Italy in 1944. <sup>1</sup>



Archie Coleman enlisted into the 77<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force on Aug 17, 1915 at Smiths Falls. His occupation was listed as high school student and he was 6 days past his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was described as 5' 7" with dark complexion, brown eyes, and brown hair. He weighed 128 lbs. On some military records he is listed as Duncan Albert Coleman. He transferred into the 21st Battalion, CEF on Mar 15, 1916 at Ridgewood, France. A month later, on April 21, 1916, a shell came through the dugout he was in and exploded, killing, and wounding his companions. He received small wounds in left thigh, buttock, and right knee. He was operated upon three days later and a fragment of shell was removed from his thigh. Wounds healed rapidly and resulted in no disability except a feeling of stiffness in left thigh and knee. He was considered fit to return to duty on July 25, 1916.<sup>2,3</sup>

*Image 1: Pte. Archie Coleman*<sup>4</sup>

On April 24<sup>th</sup> he joined the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion in the frontline trenches just beyond Vimy Ridge.

The 21st Battalion, as part of the 2nd Division of the Canadian Corps attacked the high ground near Lens, France known as Hill 70<sup>3</sup>. The Battle of Hill 70 took place on the outskirts of Lens, France between Aug 15-25, 1917. Lens lay inside German-occupied territory near Vimy and it was tactically planned to take the higher elevation just outside Lens to draw troops away from the 3<sup>rd</sup> battle at Ypres and to make the hold on Lens untenable. The capture of Hill 70 was an important victory for Canadian Troops.<sup>5</sup>

On August 15, 1917, Pte. Archie Coleman was wounded and removed to a nearby field ambulance for first aid before being evacuated to the No. 6 Casualty Clearing Station where he died of his wounds.<sup>3,6</sup> On that first day that Pte. Coleman died, 1,055 other Canadians<sup>5</sup> also died including Pte. Donald Francis Coffey of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion, another Foresters Falls native. Pte. Coleman was buried in the Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension at Barlin, Pas-de-Calais, France. 7,8,9

His name is listed on the Honor Roll for WWI at Trinity United Church, Foresters Falls, ON as well as the family gravestone at Howard Cemetery, Foresters Falls, and the Pembroke War Memorial.



Image 2: Pte Archie Coleman<sup>4</sup>

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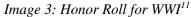




Image 4: Gravestone<sup>3</sup>



*Image 5: Family Gravestone*<sup>12</sup>

## Sources:

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- "Personnel Records of the First World War." Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Digital images. Library and Archives Canada. https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/search.aspx. <a href="https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=109164">https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=109164</a>
- 3. Tributes to the Men of the 21st Battalion CEF, https://21stbattalion.ca/tributeac/coleman\_da.html
- 4. Photograph of Pte. Archie Coleman from the collection of Ross Museum
- 5. Greenhous, Brereton & Jon Tattrie, <u>Battle for Hill 70</u>, The Canadian Encyclopedia, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hill-70, Feb 7, 2006
- 6. Circumstances of Death Registers, First World War; Library & Archives Canada, <a href="https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/circumstances-death-registers/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=42155">https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/mass-digitized-archives/circumstances-death-registers/Pages/item.aspx?PageID=42155</a> Go to 745/1384
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- 9. Find A Grave, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56513912/duncan-archibald-coleman
- 10. Book of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada <a href="https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/books/page?page=218&book=1&sort=page">https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/books/page?page=218&book=1&sort=page</a> Asc
- 11. Honor Roll of WWI, Ross Twp., at Trinity United Church, Foresters Falls, ON. Photographed by Fay Bennett
- 12. Coleman Gravestone, Howard Cemetery, Foresters Falls, ON. Photographed by Fay Bennett.