

# IN MEMORIAM



**Private**  
**William Del Donegan**

16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry  
Battalion (The Canadian  
Scottish), CEF



**Private**  
**Henry Edmonds Priddle**

16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry  
Battalion (The Canadian  
Scottish), CEF

**Private**  
**John Henry Thomas**

26<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry  
Battalion (New Brunswick),  
CEF

**Sergeant**  
**Archibald Wilson**

16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry  
Battalion (The Canadian  
Scottish), CEF

CWGC Loos British Cemetery  
Loos-en-Gohelle, France  
23 August 2018



National  
Defence

Défense  
nationale

Canada





CANADIAN ARMY  
ARMÉE CANADIENNE



## Private William Del Donegan



Source: Family of Caroline (Cavanagh Donegan) Consitt

**William Del Donegan** was born 27 March 1897 in Ottawa, Ontario, to parents William Donegan and Elizabeth Donegan (née Shields). At some point during William's youth, the Donegan family moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Donegan enlisted at age 18 on 21 February 1916 with the 179<sup>th</sup> Battalion (The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada), Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).

Prior to enlisting with the CEF, Donegan spent four years in the Highland Cadets with the 79<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders of Canada and later worked as a railway clerk in Winnipeg.

The 179<sup>th</sup> Battalion sailed from Halifax on 4 October 1916, arriving in Liverpool, England nine days later on 13 October 1916. After spending time in several training battalions, Private Donegan transferred to the 14<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion (The Royal Montreal Regiment), CEF. The 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (The Canadian Scottish), CEF took Private Donegan on strength on 21 April 1917.

On 15 August 1917, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion participated in the assault on Hill 70. The Canadian Corps defences suffered heavy shelling for several days following the initial attack. Private Donegan was killed in action on 16 August 1917 at the age of 20.

Complete biography: <https://tinyurl.com/WDDoneganEN>



## Private Henry Edmonds Priddle



Source: The DeCooman Family

### Henry Edmonds Priddle

was born on 17 May 1884 in Norwich, Ontario, to parents William and Mary Ann Priddle. In 1910, he married Florence Hazen in his hometown before the couple settled down in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Prior to enlistment, he worked as a broom-maker.

Priddle enlisted with the 183<sup>rd</sup> Overseas Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), on 1 April 1916 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Battalion embarked from Halifax on 4 October 1916, arriving in Liverpool, England nine days later on 13 October.

Two weeks after arriving in England, Private Priddle was transferred to the 108th Battalion located in Witley, England. On 10 January 1917, he was transferred to the 14<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion (The Royal Montreal Regiment), CEF. On 3 May 1917, Priddle proceeded to France where the 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (The Canadian Scottish), CEF took him on strength on 9 May.

On 15 August 1917, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion participated in the assault on Hill 70. On 16 August, the battalion suffered substantial losses when German artillery focused on the Canadian Corps' new defensive positions. Private Priddle was killed in action on 16 August 1917 at the age of 33.

Complete biography: <https://tinyurl.com/HEPriddleEN>



## Private John Henry Thomas



Source: Bonnie Murphy,  
descendant of Private Thomas

**John Henry Thomas** was born on 25 January 1889 in Chewale, South Wales, United Kingdom to parents Henry Arthur Thomas and Jane Thomas. He grew up in Birch Ridge, Victoria County, New Brunswick with his brother and four sisters where he worked as a farmer.

Thomas enlisted with the 115<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) on 20 April 1916 in Saint John, New Brunswick. The Battalion embarked for England on 23 July 1916, arriving in Liverpool on 31 July 1916.

Following a couple months of training, the 112<sup>th</sup> Battalion, CEF took Private Thomas on strength from the 115<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 16 October 1916 at Camp Bramshott, England. He remained with this battalion until the following year, when he transferred to the 13<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion, CEF on 2 February 1917. Private Thomas was then assigned to the 26<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (New Brunswick), CEF on 20 April 1917.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion participated in the assault on Hill 70 that began 15 August 1917 and continued until 25 August 1917. On 19 August, while holding their forward position against German counter-attacks, Private Thomas was killed in action at the age of 28.

Complete biography: <https://tinyurl.com/JHThomasEN>



## Sergeant Archibald Wilson



Source: Heather Lee Aldrich and Holly Lynne Chong, granddaughters to Margaret Wilson (sister to Sgt Wilson)

**Archibald Wilson** was born 12 February 1892 in Campsie, Stirling, Scotland, one of 11 children to Archibald Wilson and Christina Wilson. Planning to farm in Manitoba, he came to Canada with five of his siblings aboard *RMS Hesperian* out of Glasgow, Scotland in June 1910.

Wilson was a barber before enlisting with the 43<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada), Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) on 18 December 1914 at the age of 22, in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion sailed from Montreal on 1 June 1915, arriving in England on 10 June 1915. On 21 December 1915, Wilson transferred to the 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion (The Canadian Scottish), CEF who took him on strength on 22 December 1915. Private Wilson participated in several battles throughout 1916 and the first part of 1917. On 4 June 1917, Wilson received a promotion to the rank of Sergeant.

On 15 August 1917, the 16th Battalion participated in the assault on Hill 70. Sergeant Wilson was killed in action 16 August 1917 at the age of 25.

Complete biography: <https://tinyurl.com/AWilsonEN>



## The Battle of Hill 70

15-25 August 1917

In July 1917, the Canadian Corps received orders to capture the city of Lens. Lieutenant-General Sir A.W. Currie, the newly appointed Corps Commander, planned to first take the high feature of Hill 70 that dominated Lens from the north.

The attack, originally planned for the end of July, was postponed due to weather until mid-August. This allowed the Canadian Corps to increase its preparations for the coming operation.

As part of its preparations, the Canadian Corps conducted raids against German outposts and the Canadian gunners undertook a programme of wire-cutting, destroying German artillery positions and gas shelling. Engineers also prepared special drums of oil to be used on the morning of the attack to create a smoke screen.

The infantry rehearsed their attack over similar terrain, but unlike previous attacks, there was no large preparatory barrage which would have given the enemy warning of an impending operation.

Surprise was achieved when the attack started in the morning of 15 August under cover of an immense artillery barrage. A simulated attack by the 4<sup>th</sup> Division led by Major-General Sir D. Watson in front of Lens served as a diversion for the 1st Division led by Major-General Sir A.C. Macdonell and 2<sup>nd</sup> led by Major-General Sir H.E. Burstall who successfully captured Hill 70.

The 16<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> Battalions began their assault at 4:25 am, capturing their first objective, the "Blue Line," and their final objective, the "Green Line," on schedule with limited casualties. On 16 August, the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion suffered substantial losses when German artillery focused on the new Canadian Corps' defensive positions.



They were relieved by other Canadian troops in their frontline position at 4:00 am on 17 August. Meanwhile, the 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion rotated through defensive duties with other battalions of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade while remaining in the area for several days.

Having planned for the inevitable German counter-attacks the Canadian formations consolidated their gains rapidly and the artillery began its programme of shelling the known areas where the Germans would assemble for their counter-attacks. Over the next several days, the Germans mounted at least 21 counter-attacks against the Canadian defenders of Hill 70.

On 18 August, General Currie planned to improve the position in front of Lens on the southern edge of Hill 70. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions, supported by the grouping of the artillery from three Divisions plus the Corps Heavy artillery and guns of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, launched their attack on 21 August.

However, the Germans had anticipated the attack and even under the heavy barrage made the Canadian advance difficult. The attacks continued for the following days with little success and operations came to an end on 25 August. Even if the Canadians had not taken Lens, they had secured Hill 70 which dominated that city and it remained in Allied hands until the end of the war.

The capture of Hill 70 and the subsidiary attacks on Lens, achieved the desired results, even though much of the town was still in German hands. The fighting between 15-25 August cost the Canadians almost 10,000 casualties (killed, wounded and missing). The Canadian Corps battered five German divisions and their effort had contributed towards wearing down the enemy.

Over 1,300 soldiers of the Canadian Corps killed in action between 15 and 25 August 1917 have no known grave.



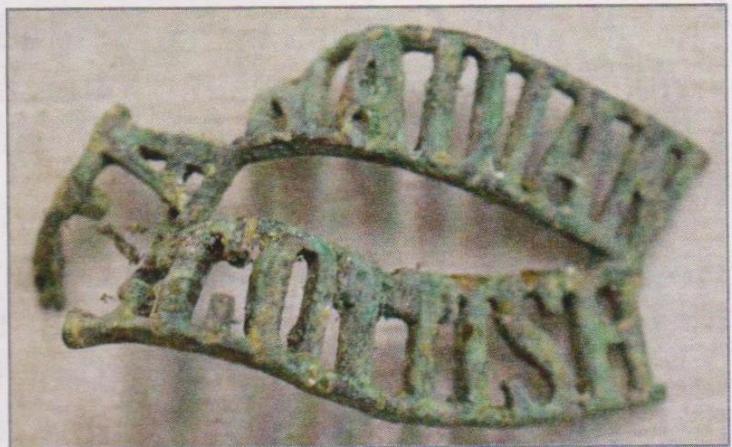
## Identification

Following the war, Private Donegan's, Private Priddle's, Private Thomas's and Sergeant Wilson's names were engraved on the Canadian National Vimy Memorial commemorating Canadian soldiers who died during the First World War and have no known grave.

Through historical, genealogical, anthropological, archaeological, and DNA analysis, with the assistance of the Canadian Forces Forensic Odontology Response Team, and the Canadian Museum of History, the Casualty Identification Review Board was able to confirm the identity of these soldiers in October 2017.



26<sup>th</sup> Battalion collar badge



Canadian Scottish shoulder title

## CWGC Loos British Cemetery

The Commonwealth War Grave Commission's Loos British Cemetery was begun by the Canadian Corps in July 1917. The remainder of the cemetery was formed after the Armistice by the concentration of graves from smaller cemeteries and the battlefields over a wide area North and East of the village of Loos. It is in this area that the four casualties being buried today were discovered. Most of the Canadians buried in this cemetery are from the Battle of Hill 70. Two thirds of those commemorated in this cemetery remain unidentified.



# Order of Service

## Introduction and Words of Welcome

### Opening Prayer

### The Written Word:

#### Old Testament: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honour to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honour me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

#### New Testament: John 14:1-6

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.”

“No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

### The Spoken Word – Stones of Remembrance



## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

### **The Committal**

#### **The Act of Remembrance:**

They shall not grown old as we that are left grow old;

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them.

We will remember them.

#### **The Last Post**

#### **Moment of Silence**

#### **Rouse**

#### **Lament**

#### **Closing Prayer & Benediction:**

##### **Numbers 6:24-26**

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.

#### **Undressing and Lowering of Casket**

**Kohima Epitaph:** India/Burma, April 1944:

When you go home tell them of us and say,

“For your tomorrow we gave our today.”

#### **Final Respects (Laying of Flowers and Wreaths)**