COLDWATER REMEMBERS
PRIVATE LEONARD L. MORRISON

Leonard Lynwood Morrison was born in Coldwater, Ontario, on June 5, 1897, son of William James and Elizabeth (Porter) Morrison. On February 29, 1916, Leonard enlisted in Toronto with the Royal Canadian Dragoons, Canadian Expeditionary Force. He was 18 years old and single. On his Attestation Form he is described as 5 feet 8 inches tall, with grey eyes and dark hair. He identified his religious denomination as Methodist, and his trade as clerk. He had no previous military experience. Prior to enlisting he was well known as an amateur rugby and baseball player.

Private Leonard Morrison, regimental number 550155, sailed on the S.S. Lapland, arriving in England on March 24, 1916. After training in England for several months, he landed in France and joined his front line unit in the field on September 5. Although formed as a cavalry unit, the Royal Canadian Dragoons fought mostly as infantry in the latter part of the war.

Yet on March 30, 1918, at Bois de Moreuil (Moreuil Wood), the Dragoons participated in what was to be one of the last of the great cavalry charges. Moreuil Wood was a German strong point that the Canadian Cavalry Brigade was ordered to attack. While part of the brigade was to gallop around the northwest corner and thrust at the enemy, Leonard's squadron was tasked to attack on foot and seize the corner of the wood. Attackers were met with heavy machine gun fire and at the end of the 90 minutes battle, 95 Dragoons were either killed, wounded, or missing. During the battle, while taking part with his squadron in an attack on an enemy machine gun company, Private Leonard Morrison was hit by a bullet and killed instantly. His older brother, Gunner Royland Morrison, was wounded later that year, but survived the war.

Four years later, Leonard's parents 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 would also have received a "Mother's Cross".

Private Leonard Morrison is commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France, about 8 km northeast of Arras. In Canada he is commemorated on page 474 of the *First World War Book of Remembrance*, located inside the Memorial Chamber in the Peace Tower in Ottawa. 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.