

In Memory of Private William Boynton Perry

1899 - 1918

(19th Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment))

Age: 19

Parents: James Parker Perry & Eliza Jane Ayerst

Conflict: World War I, The Great War

Country Enlisted In: Canada

Country of Death: Pas-de-Calais, Hauts-de-France, France

Relation: Maternal 2nd Great Uncle



At just 19 years old, William Boynton Perry left Canada to serve in the Great War, enlisting with the 19th Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Central Ontario Regiment). Barely more than a boy, he entered a world where youth was tested daily by the hardships of trench warfare and the ever-present shadow of death.

By June 1918, the war had entered its fourth summer. The German offensives of the spring had left the Western Front a landscape of churned earth, shattered villages, and endless trenches. The 19th Battalion was positioned near Bellacourt, France, in a sector constantly harassed by artillery. The weather was warm but heavy with the scent of dust and cordite, and flies swarmed around the trenches where stagnant water and refuse lingered.

The days were filled with the steady percussion of war: the dull thud of shells landing in the distance, the metallic clatter of rifles being checked and rechecked, and the anxious whispers of men waiting for the next attack. At night, the sky flashed with artillery bursts, star shells illuminating No Man's Land in eerie white light. In these moments of uneasy quiet, William may have thought of home—family, familiar fields, and the life he hoped to return to.

On 22 June 1918, fate struck swiftly. A German high explosive shell landed close to where William and his comrades were positioned. The blast tore through the trench with deafening force, the shockwave swallowing shouts and scattering earth.



*19th Battalion, Canadian Infantry
(Central Ontario Regiment), Private*

William was killed instantly. There was no time for words or farewells—only the sudden silence that follows a shell's explosion. He was just 19 years old.

Private Perry now rests in Bellacourt Military Cemetery, France. His grave is one among many, but each stone carries the story of a young life cut short. His sacrifice, like that of countless others, is remembered not only in stone but in the quiet reverence of those who still speak his name.

*Bellacourt Military Cemetery
Riviere, Departement du Pas-de-Calais, Nord-
Pas-de-Calais, France*

