

“Those of us that worship at St. Stephens Anglican Church, Hornby, ON blindly find our pew seats and disperse at the end of service through the main aisle, without giving much else a thought. However, on the rear wall in the corner are two war memorial lists from the First and Second World Wars. The World War One Memorial holds the names of thirteen men that presumably served the Great War. My intention was to write short profiles on some of the men if I could positively identify them. They seem to be local born folks, residents or employees from the area. I have been able to positively identify all but two. However, the first man listed has actually proved the most interesting so far.

This man is described in his Military Medal citation as “courageous and brave”. He was also awarded a



Belgian Croix de Guerre for valour on the battlefield. He served continuously from August 1914 to March 1919, fighting in some of the fiercest battles of the war like Ypres, Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Amiens and Cambrai. In the process he received gunshot wounds 3 times, lost a thumb and was awarded both the Military Medal and aforementioned Croix de Guerre. More importantly, he is buried within our beautiful St. Stephens Cemetery (with his wife Jean) without any notification or any sign of his heroics or contributions to the Canadian Expeditionary Force. *”Bob Richardson then enlisted some of Leslie’s family to contribute and so the story goes.”*

Leslie Bradley was born March 15, 1889 in the small hamlet on Linton, King Township (between Schomberg and Nobleton, Hwy. 27) as the 4th child of farmer John Bradley and Elizabeth Bryan. Sometime between the 1891 and 1901 Canadian Censuses, the family moved to a farm in Trafalgar, Lot 12, Concession 7. In the 1911 Census, Leslie is shown as a 22 year old farm labourer still on his father’s farm and one of 8 children at home. There is no sign of the impending heroics or leadership skills to come in a few years.

He attended S.S. #7 Trafalgar. As the records show, most of the farm boys were absent during seeding and harvesting. Leslie belonged to not only the St. Stephens congregation but also the No. 165 Hornby Orange Lodge and the 20th Halton Battalion Lorne Rifles militia regiment (“H” Coy. Hornby). The 36th Peel Battalion and the 20th Halton Rifles provided 16 officers and 404 other ranks to the 4th Battalion of the 1st Canadian Division, CEF. 4th (Central Ontario) Battalion, CEF was organized at Valcartier under Camp Order 241 of 2 September 1914 and was composed of recruits from Military District 2 (Aurora, Brampton, Brantford, Hamilton and Niagara Falls). The battalion was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel W.S. Buell who was replaced within days by Lieutenant-Colonel R.H. Labatt. Leslie Bradley was one of the 404 men to travel to Valcartier attesting to the 4th Battalion on September 22, 1914, giving his occupation as a carpenter, address as R.R. 3, Georgetown and shaving a year off his age.

Leslie went over in the 1st Division and was thrown into the meat grinder right away and was very lucky to have survived the war since being in the 1st Division meant you were in harms way that much longer. After training in Val Cartier, Quebec they took the train to Halifax and embarked in the Canadian Troop Convoy for Southampton, but at the last minute were diverted to Plymouth because of an enemy sub.