

LAWLER, Tom

Service Number 703329

Rank Private

Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 102nd Battalion

Born October 29, 1881, Reading, Berkshire, England

Died October 22, 1916, Regina Trench, Courcelette, France

Occupation Chainman (surveyor)

Marital Status Single; engaged to Miss Marguerite Baird of Parksville

Tom Lawler is listed in the 1912 and 1913 City Directories as a rancher in Parksville; however, he gave his occupation as a chainman on his attestation papers.

He enlisted January 1916 with the 102nd Battalion, which was gathered in Comox of men from Vancouver Island and as far north as Atlin. He disembarked in Liverpool in June, arriving in France on August 12, 1916. Conditions on the front were ghastly, and the weather became miserable. By October, rain had set in and the trenches were hip deep in mud.

On October 22, 1916, Tom Lawler was on the machine gun section of his battalion at the taking of Regina Trench, Courcelette. He went 'over the top' and beyond his objective and was killed by an enemy shell.

The Circumstances of Death Register lists Tom Lawler's burial place as Pys British Cemetery; however, many of the men buried there have never been identified. His military records state that he was reported missing, and later that he was killed in action. He is commemorated at the Vimy Memorial.

Sources: Photo: Books of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs, Canada
Personnel Records of the First World War, Library and Archives Canada
Books of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada
Circumstances of Death Registers, Library and Archives Canada
British Columbia City Directories / Vancouver Public Library
The Story of the 102nd Canadian Infantry Battalion, Chapter 4

