

In Memory of

Private CHRISTOPHER HERBERT DAWSON

**218, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
(Eastern Ontario Regiment) who died on 28 February 1915**

**Son of Marion Dawson and nephew of Alfred Clark
both of Dauntsey Road, of Christian Malford**

Remembered with honour VOORMEZEELE ENCLOSURE No 3

Voormezele Enclosure No.3 is located 4 kilometres south-west of Ieper town centre. The Enclosures were originally regimental groups of graves, begun very early in the First World War and gradually increased until the village and the cemeteries were



captured by the Germans after very heavy fighting on 29 April 1918. Enclosure No.3, the largest of these burial grounds, begun by the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in February 1915. There are now 1,611 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in the Enclosure. 609 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to 15 casualties known or believed to be buried among them.

From the Battalion War Diary – 28 February 1915: Attack on German Sap. The attack was undertaken with a view to giving a set back to the enemy who, from the sap opposite trenches 20 & 21 had become very aggressive & was doing considerable damage to 21 with bombs etc. No 4 Coy was detailed for the attack & organised as follows: 3 snipers under Cpl Ross – Lieut Crabbe – 3 bomb throwers under Lieut Papineau – remainder of snipers – 1 Platoon of No 4 Coy under Sergt Patterson – 1 Platoon No 4 with shovels to be ready as soon as trench was captured to demolish the parapet – 1 Platoon in Reserve. The force was led by Cpl Ross from Shelley Farm along hedge ... to Trench 22, thence to left end of Trench 21 which was selected as jumping off point. From this point to the nearest point of German Sap was about 15 yards. The attackers crossed this without difficulty and entered the sap. Cpl Ross was killed immediately on entering the sap. Lieut Crabbe then led the Coy down the trench whilst Lieut Papineau ran down the outside of the parapet throwing bombs into the trench. Lieut Crabbe continued down the trench until brought up against a barrier behind which Germans had collected; at this point all rifles except one of the party with Lieut Crabbe were out of action. In mean time Sgt Patterson's platoon occupied the rear face of sap to guard against a counterattack. Sgt Major Lloyd & 1 Platoon attacked & demolished the parapet for about 30 yds. After some 20 minutes occupation of the trench combined with work in demolishing the parapet, orders were given for the attackers to withdraw. The withdrawal was successfully carried out though daylight was rapidly appearing. The attack was carried out with considerable dash notwithstanding the fact that the men had been for 6 weeks employed in trenches under not very favourable conditions. ... Casualties – 5 killed, 9 wounded & 2 missing.

From the Parish Magazine: The return of the proof by the printers for correction gives us an opportunity of saying a few words about the first brave soldier, immediately connected with this parish, who has been killed in action, and he belonged to the Loyal Canadians. Christopher Herbert Dawson, of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, was a son of Mrs Dawson, and nephew of Mr Alfred Clark, both of Dauntsey Road. Our intense admiration of the Canadian patriots who have come to the help of the Mother Country is heightened by the fact that the first of ours to die in action is a Canadian. We honour his memory and deeply sympathize with his relatives.

Christopher was the son of Marion Dawson who, at the date of his attestation in 1914 in Ottawa, lived in Eastbourne in Sussex. Born in India on 13 December 1886, Christopher saw previous military service in the Ceylon Rifle Corps before emigrating to Canada where he worked as an electrician.