

Lance Corporal Arthur Simpson Martin, MM

The Royal Canadian Dragoons

Family Life

Arthur Simpson Martin was born August 21, 1889, to Daniel A. Martin and Emily Simpson in Wiarton, Ontario. He was from a Wesleyan Christian family, and received an elementary-level education in Tobermory. Before joining the military, he worked as a marine engineer on fishing tugs in Tobermory.

Some time later he moved out west with his family to Winnipegosis, Manitoba. While serving overseas, Arthur married Elizabeth “Bessie” Van Draeger, a Dutch immigrant to England, in 1919. Arthur and Bessie moved back to Tobermory in 1929. Together they had three children, Florence Lillian (born in England in 1917), and twins Bessie Caroline (later Mrs. William Smith), and Arthur Ernest in 1922.

Upon his return to Tobermory, Arthur worked as a well-known tourist guide. On July 6, 1946, Arthur died of a heart attack while escorting a group of tourists on a fishing trip.



Decorations

- Military Medal
- 1914-1915 Star
- British War Medal
- Victory Medal
- Army Class A Badge

Service History

Lance Corporal Martin enlisted in The Royal Canadian Dragoons of the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Camp Valcartier, Quebec on September 24, 1914. He originally joined the 32nd Manitoba Horse Guards and was eventually promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal. He also served in the Canadian Cavalry Brigade Machine Gun Squadron in France.

Arthur received the Military Medal while serving with the Dragoons. He was part of the advance on the Hindenburg Line in 1918, during which they attacked the German stronghold and cleared the enemy but suffered a devastating loss of men and horses. It's likely that Lance Corporal Martin was gassed during this raid. He was discharged from service on April 9, 1919.

Personal Stories

Arthur was the first president of the Tobermory Legion which received its Official Charter in 1938. The first Legion building was constructed in 1946 on property donated by the president. He had the cap badge of The Royal Canadian Dragoons tattooed on his left forearm.

His son, Arthur E. Martin, would also serve in the military during the Second World War, enlisting in the Royal Canadian Air Force in Toronto in 1941.