**For this week’s Article of the Week, let’s try a different skill. *Instead of* making notations, *please write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph.* You may type or handwrite the summary; don’t forget to add your “Food for thought” answers before submitting.**

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**The Last Hours, The Last Man**

**An account of the last hours of World War I, November 11, 1918, by Robert Lindsay, published in *www.nwbattalion.com***

The 28th Battalion was passing through Bois la Haut at 9:00 a.m. when the battalion received the cease fire order.(1)

*Hostilities will cease at 11:00 hours on November 11th - Troops will stand fast on the line reached at that time which will be reported to Corps Headquarters - Strictest precautions will be maintained - There will be no intercourse of any kind with the enemy.*

This meant that the advance was to continue until that hour. The troops were then to halt and establish outposts to secure the line they had reached and have no dealings with the enemy. Brigadier Alex Ross drafted an order that added that officers were to use their discretion about involving troops under their commands in heavy fighting. He also noted that troops should secure some habitable accommodation before stopping because there was little shelter in the area in which the battalion was operating. This he sent forward by runner to the troops in the forward line.(1)

The 28th Battalion had two objectives for November 11 and was able to reach both before 11:00. No casualties were taken in occupying the village of Havre and overcoming some late resistance in a dash to the Canal du Centre. 'B' Company was in the lead through the village and the advance to the canal followed by 'A' Company, then C and D Companies close behind. German soldiers were clearly seen retreating on the other side of the canal and over the high ground to the east.(1) The Battalion took up a defensive position at the Canal du Centre, position four and a half miles northeast of Mons.(2)

Just after the 28th had reached the line of the Canal du Centre, Private George Lawrence Price of 'A' Company led a patrol across to the far side of the canal.(1) The 20 year old Nova Scotian was accompanied on this patrol by Private Arthur Barrett "Art" Goodmurphy, and two others from A Company.(1) George Price had joined the 28th Battalion as part of a reinforcement draft nine months before. Arthur Goodmurphy was a fair haired 22 year old and had originally enlisted in the 68th battalion in his home town of Regina on November 29, 1915.

It is not entirely clear why the patrol would cross the canal just before the official cease fire. Perhaps to see if the houses on the other side would make good billets or to see what the Germans were doing. It is recorded that a German machine gun had fired upon Price as he approached the bridge that crossed the canal(3) and they went to search the house from which the firing came.(1) The patrol rushed the house, but found only the owner and his family.(1) The Germans had slipped out the back door just before the Canadians came in the front.(1)

The Canadians moved to the next and again found it occupied,(3) but no Germans.(1) The occupant of the house told Price to be careful. The account of his death in the Mons City Museum states: 'Despite this advice, Price went out to attack the enemy with his Lewis machine gun, but he was mortally wounded by a bullet in the region of the heart.(3) Art Goodmurphy recalled that a single shot was heard as he and Price stepped back into the street. Price half turned and slumped into Goodmurphy's arms. Art quickly dragged George back into the house. A neighbor, a young Belgian girl, saw Private Price fall. She risked her life to cross the street to come to his aide. The occupants of the house and the neighbor attended to Price, but to no avail. Private George Lawrence Price died at 10:58 a.m., just two minutes before the cease fire.(1)

Captain Evans Ross, the commander of 'A' Company, was furious when told of Price's death. "What the hell did you go across for?" he raged at the other members of Price's patrol "You had no orders to go across there." The Captain added, in frustration: "Hell of a note, to think that that would happen right when the war's over."(4) The official records of the Department of Defense state that Private G.L. Price, regimental number: 256265; rank: Private; died November 11, 1918 and that the cause of death was "killed in action". It goes on to record that an enemy sniper near the canal killed Private Price at 3 minutes to 11. He was shot through the right breast and died shortly after being hit, although every attention possible was given him and he was buried at the Communal Cemetery in the Town of Havre.(3) Private Price is considered the last Commonwealth soldier killed in action on the Western Front.

Sources:

1 (Pages 60-61 - Up the Johns - the Story of the Royal Regina Rifles by Stewart A.G. Mein)

2 (Page 18 - To Seize the Victory - The Canadian Corps in World War 1 by John Swettenham)

3 Page 116 - The Last Day, The Last Hour - the Currie Libel Trial by Robert J. Sharpe

4 (Page 205 - Spearhead to Victory - Canada and the Great War by Daniel G. Dancocks)

5 (Page 22 - Regimental Numbers - Canadian Expeditionary Force by C.W.O. R.J. O'Connell)

Also (Page 236 - The History of the 28th (Northwest) Battalion, C.E.F. (October 1914 - June 1919) by Major D.G. Scott Calder E.D., Official Historian of the Regina Rifles Regiment.)

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**Food For Thought:**

**If you could ask Private George Price three questions, what would they be? (Applying)**