

Colonel Roscoe Vanderwater, D.S.O.

Inducted 2011

Roscoe Dudley Vanderwater was born near Foxboro in Sidney Township on January 6, 1889, the son of **Charles Vanderwater** and **Hope Yates**. He was educated at Marsh Hill Public School, Foxboro, Stirling High School, and Albert College, which was a post-secondary school at that time, and after graduating he joined the militia and enrolled for Officers Training. He soon became a Captain with the Militia. When World War 1 broke out, he enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Forces on Feb. 26, 1915 in Belleville and was assigned to the 39th Battalion as a Major. Once overseas, he reverted to the lower ranks and was reassigned to the 2nd Battalion but was soon again promoted to rank of Major. He served in the Ypres Salient, Hill 60, Hill 70, and other battles. For his efforts he was mentioned twice in despatches and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order noted in the London Gazette, December 1916 as follows:



For conspicuous gallantry in action. He commanded the attacking party with great determination, and held and consolidated the captured trench. He personally supervised the digging of the new communication trenches. On other occasions he has done fine work.

After the war, Vanderwater returned to farm near Foxboro. He soon became involved in politics, serving as councillor for Sidney 1922 through 1924, Deputy Reeve 1925 and 1926, and Reeve from 1927 to 1930. He was appointed as warden of Hastings County in 1930. He ran unsuccessfully as a federal Liberal Candidate in 1926.

For his valiant service in WW1, he was appointed as Honourary Colonel of the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, and today his uniform and saddle, which he took over during the war along with his own horse, is on display in their museum at the Belleville Armouries. He served for over 20 years on the board of Bay of Quinte Agricultural Mutual Insurance, and was president for a year of the Mutual Fire Underwriters Association of Ontario. He retired from farming in 1954. Col. Vanderwater became a charter member of the Bay of Quinte Branch UEL on its formation in 1956, and served as 4th vice-president on its first executive.

The Vanderwaters were not a loyalist family but he was a direct descendant of three Quinte area Loyalists: **Joshua Booth UE, Daniel Fraser UE and Jacob Hess UE.**

Keenly interested in conservation, Vanderwater became one of the first farmers in Ontario to start reforestation of their land, planting a stand of pine trees on the family farm in 1927. He continued to strive to promote conservation in the Quinte area, and is considered the founder of the Moira River Conservation Authority, created in 1947, serving as secretary-treasurer and the representative for Sidney. One of his first projects he headed with the Conservation Authority was the creation of the O'Hara Mill Conservation area. Today the Vanderwater Conservation area, located south of Tweed is named in his honour.

He was married twice, first to **Hettie Ketcheson**, 2nd in 1921 to **Agnes Aileen O'Hara**. By his second wife he had three daughters, Alison, Margaret, and Gena. Colonel Roscoe Vanderwater died in Belleville on June 16, 1957.

For his service to his country and community, he was inducted into our Loyalist Hall of Honour on Sept. 10, 2011 by President Brian Tackaberry.