

The City Of Sarnia  
**WAR REMEMBRANCE  
PROJECT**



A Record of Sarnia's  
Contributions and Sacrifices  
Made During War

The Boer War (1899-1902) • World War I (1914-1918)  
World War II (1939-1945) • The Korean War (1950-1953)  
Afghanistan Peacekeeping (2001-2014)



September 2014

It is an honour as Mayor of the City of Sarnia to write the foreword for *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project*.

A poignant book that contains the life stories of those Sarnians and Lambton County residents who served their country from the Boer War to Afghanistan and who paid the ultimate sacrifice. *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* gives us grateful citizens the opportunity to look back and to remember those who volunteered to serve their country and who rest today forever in eternal peace. This project is a labour of love which ensures that the memory of those who died protecting our liberty and freedom will live on.

For generations, Sarnians have gathered every Remembrance Day in Veterans Park to mourn and to honour our fallen. Each year as we stand at the cenotaph, who of us has not wondered about the personal stories behind the 264 names inscribed on it? Who were these men? What did they do in civilian life? What were their hopes and dreams? Now we know through *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* that they were ordinary men who had the courage to serve their country. They were men from all walks of life and backgrounds who left family and friends and sadly never returned. We know their passing left deep grief and forever changed the lives of their loved ones. We know also their sacrifice left Canada a diminished nation without their youth, intelligence and talents.

In Sarnia's Centennial Year, as we remember and honour our past, *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* will ensure in the words from Ecclesiasticus 44:14: "Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore." We will remember them.

Mayor Mike Bradley

The City of Sarnia and Mayor Mike Bradley provided incredible support and generosity for *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project*. They provided funds necessary to print copies of this Project so that they could be donated to the following:

Sarnia City Hall Records; Sarnia Public Library; Lambton County Archives; Lambton Heritage Museum; The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 62; The Sarnia Royal Canadian Naval Association; Sarnia #403 Airmen's Club; The Sarnia Armoury-1st Hussars; Central Baptist Church; Central United Church; Our Lady of Mercy/St. Joseph's Catholic Parish; St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; All Saints Anglican Church (St. George's /St. John's); St. Clair United Church; St. Paul's United Church; *The Sarnia Observer*; *Sarnia This Week*; *The Sarnia Journal*; Sarnia Radio; TV COGECO; and all Sarnia and Lambton County High Schools including Alexander MacKenzie, Lambton Central Collegiate, Northern Collegiate, North Lambton Secondary, Sarnia Collegiate, St. Clair High School and St. Patrick's Catholic High School.



For the author and for all those who assisted him,  
*The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project*  
was a completely volunteer, non-profit undertaking.

The following have contributed greatly to ensure that  
*The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project*  
would be completed and would be made available to others.  
The author is very appreciative of their kindheartedness and generosity.



**The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 62 Sarnia,**  
made a financial contribution to assist in covering a portion of the cost  
of printing copies of this project so that copies could be donated.

**Randy Evans and Randy Fisher** (in memory of Private Melvin Fisher),  
also made a financial contribution to assist in covering a portion of the cost  
of printing copies of this project so that copies could be donated.



**Haines Frontier Printing Limited** (owner Bill Chong),  
generously donated all labour costs, and a portion of production and  
material costs associated with the printing of this book.



**The Book Keeper** (owner Susan Chamberlain),  
in consultation with the project author, is generously donating  
a portion of the store's profits from the sale of this project to the charity, Noelle's Gift.

Noelle's Gift Charity provides funds for Sarnia and Lambton County students in need.



## DEDICATION

Sarnia, like thousands of other communities across Canada, had many of its sons and daughters answer the call of duty to serve their country during times of war. They left the comforts of their homes, as well as their schools, farms, jobs, trades and careers. They left their loved ones--grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives, children and friends--in response to a call by this nation to fight in far off lands to defend freedom.

The men and women of Canada's military served, and continue to serve, with pride, valour and honour, sometimes making the supreme sacrifice to secure for others the peace and freedoms that we enjoy in this great country. For the fallen soldiers of Sarnia-Lambton, the courage, fortitude and the sacrifices that they and their families made deserve to be remembered.

The following project is a comprehensive record of Sarnia's many contributions during times of war and the sacrifices made by its citizens. It covers, in detail, the Boer War, World War I (The Great War), World War II, the Korean War and the Peacekeeping Mission in Afghanistan. The project is also a comprehensive record of all those soldiers from Sarnia who lost their lives while serving in these wars.

For the men profiled in this project, being linked to Sarnia means one of the following: they were born and raised here; they or their families moved here; or they married someone from Sarnia and resided here. A number of the men included in this project are also linked to surrounding communities within Lambton County.

**Though this project is a record of Sarnia's fallen soldiers from the aforementioned wars, it is dedicated to all the young men and women who served, as well as to their families, who all sacrificed so much.**

*“LEST WE FORGET”*

This project is a completely volunteer, non-profit endeavour by its author and contributors. Many people graciously donated their time, efforts and information to ensure its successful completion.

Their support and generosity ensured that *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* is an accurate, comprehensive and enduring tribute to these local heroes and their families, so that their sacrifices will be forever commemorated and remembered.

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Additional WWI Research: Randy Evans  
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Cover design and illustration: Bennett Slater  
Back cover photograph courtesy: Glenn Ogilvie Photography

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*To The Dead Soldiers*

*No more shall you see mountains, woods, earth,  
Handsome eyes of my soldiers, just twenty years old,  
Who fell last spring  
When light was at its softest.*

*We dared not remember the golden fields  
That dawn covered with iridescent glory;  
Only the sadness of war was in our thoughts  
When, behind the hamlets, came news of your death*

*Since your departure, at the angle of the mirror,  
Your image attracted both heart and eyes;  
No one sat on the rickety stool  
Where each night, by the fireplace, you took your place.*

*Alas! Where are your young, strong and wild bodies?  
Where are your arms, your hands and the superb gestures  
You made with the big scythes in the fields?  
Alas, the immense night has descended upon you.*

*Your mothers have wept in their closed thatched cottages,  
Your lovers have spoken their sorrow to the villagers,  
Every day you have been mentioned, sadly,  
But, one evening in June, talk turned to something else.*

*By Emile Verhaeren*

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*A Canadian's Message*

*Although to-day we're parted,  
And your hand I cannot take;  
I send this loving message,  
With a thought for old times sake.*

*All the time we're divided,  
You are ever in my mind;  
And the lonely days now passing,  
Shall our hearts more closer bind.*

*So when you get this greeting  
You will know what thoughts are mine;  
And that my love I send you  
For the sake of Auld Lang Syne.*

*n.d. (1915)*



## PREFACE

This work originated in the spring of 2012 with project author Tom Slater's desire to create a war memorial to recognize and to honour former St. Patrick's Catholic High School students who had served and possibly fallen while serving in World War II (1939-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953). St. Patrick's High School, which was founded in 1935, was one of only two secondary schools in Sarnia during these war years.

To initiate the war memorial project, Slater began by searching for a complete list of all of Sarnia's war casualties, those individuals who had volunteered, fought and died while in service of their country during these two wars. He was surprised to find that no such list existed, at least not in the form that he had hoped. Slater has always believed that it was important to remember who these people were, what they sacrificed, and what deeds they accomplished.

If we don't remember them, Slater reasoned, it would be as if they never existed. And that would be wrong.

Initial sources of information included the City of Sarnia Cenotaph War Memorial in Veterans Park; the City of Sarnia records (with assistance of Mayor Mike Bradley); the Royal Canadian Legion Sarnia Branch 62 records; Sarnia Public Library and Lambton County Archives. Surprisingly, each of these sources provided the same list that records Sarnia's fallen soldiers with only a last name and an initial (or two). No first names were provided.

With the above discovery, Slater decided to re-direct his project and to create a more comprehensive list of all of Sarnia's soldiers who had lost their lives while in service to this country during the Boer War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and in the Peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan. This more detailed list would, if possible, include both the first name and last names of all of Sarnia's fallen soldiers from these four wars and Afghanistan, along with some basic information about each individual. These heroes deserved the honour of being remembered by their full names.

Learning a little bit more about the identities of each of these individuals helps us to understand and to appreciate the sacrifices these brave young souls made. These individuals were active in local churches, in local sports, in volunteer activities, in cultural societies and in community organizations. They voluntarily left their homes, their schools, jobs, trades and careers; they left their loved ones--grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, wives, children and friends. They responded to a call by this nation, to fight in far off lands, in the defense of freedom. For those that died in the service of their country, they lost the opportunity to live full lives, enriched by friends and family. Their deaths affected not only their loved ones but also the Sarnia and Lambton community as a whole, not only then, but for future generations.

Beginning with the original list of last names and initials, the author completed his research by using numerous official war memorial websites and written sources, such as, old *Sarnia Observer* files and many reference books. Sources also included local churches, information provided by family members and various people in the community. As much as possible, all information was corroborated by using multiple sources. Where possible, Slater included the following information for each soldier on the list of Sarnia's war dead from four wars and the Afghanistan Peacekeeping Mission: his first and last name; his rank and service number; his birth and death dates; his military force and regiment; his cemetery and grave or memorial information; the names of his parents or next of kin; and, for many, whatever additional information Slater could locate.

The first edition of this project was released in the fall of 2013. The first edition focused primarily on Sarnia's fallen soldiers from World War II, the Korean War and Afghanistan Peacekeeping. About the time of the project's publication, local retired crown attorney Randy Evans contacted Tom Slater. Randy has a tremendous interest in local history, and in particular World War I. After sharing their knowledge, both men decided to write a supplement to the project which would include more thorough information regarding Sarnia's World War I fallen soldiers. Randy was instrumental in researching and in uncovering the names of these fallen soldiers and his enthusiasm and dedication to preserving the memory of these fallen soldiers and their families was inspiring. With Randy's assistance and with another year to do more research, Tom Slater decided to create a second (and final) edition of *The Sarnia War Remembrance Project*. It is not only a comprehensive record of Sarnia's contributions during times of war and the sacrifices made by its citizens. It is also a more detailed record of all of Sarnia's Fallen soldiers, from the Boer War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and Afghanistan Peacekeeping.

The City of Sarnia, through Mayor Mike Bradley, has financed the cost of donating copies of the book to the organizations and institutions as stated on the opening page. Glenn Ogilvie of Glenn Ogilvie Photography generously contributed the beautiful and striking photograph on the back cover of the Sarnia cenotaph. Bill Chong, owner of Haines Frontier Printing, has generously donated all labour costs, and a portion of production and material costs associated with the printing of this book. The Book Keeper in Sarnia has graciously agreed to carry hard copies of the project for those who are interested in purchasing copies. In collaboration with Susan Chamberlain, owner of The Book Keeper, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* will be donated to the charity, Noelle's Gift. This charity, in memory of Noelle Paquette, provides school children of Sarnia-Lambton with school supplies, clothing, food, medical supplies and other needs ([www.noellesgift.ca](http://www.noellesgift.ca)).

The goal of the author has always been to create a comprehensive record of Sarnia's fallen soldiers beginning with the Boer War in the late 19th century. This compilation would serve as a permanent record of our local heroes. The electronic version of the project has been made available on-line through local media, Lambton County Archives and the author.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the list is complete and accurate. If an individual is missing or inaccuracies exist, the omissions and errors are unintentional. Researching documents and records that in some cases are over a century old elicits the possibility of errors.

For every individual on the list, a story exists: stories about who these people were? Who their families were? Why they joined the military? What were their experiences at home and overseas? What were the circumstances of their deaths? These sailors, soldiers and airmen made sacrifices, and so did their families back home in Canada. Their loved ones coped each day with the possibility that those whom they loved might not return, and then ultimately had to face the terrible reality that their worst fears were realized. Government and war memorial websites do not provide this personal information. Those stories were not the goal of this project, but they would be incredible stories to know.

This project does not include information on fallen soldiers from surrounding Lambton County (although a number of the names on the Sarnia cenotaph are from Lambton County). It does not include information on those veteran soldiers who served and survived any of these wars, with many returning home bearing the physical, psychological and emotional wounds of their experiences. The vast majority of men included in this project volunteered to serve their country and their families with pride and honour. Their loyalty to country, faith, family, to their unit and comrades is commendable. All these brave individuals deserve to be remembered and to be honoured with the highest possible tribute.

If one is interested in finding the names of "fallen" soldiers from other parts of Lambton County, an excellent resource is the book *Lambton Remembers*, by John M. Collins of the Lambton Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, Sarnia, Ontario (1998). It provides information on all the War Memorials throughout the County of Lambton, Ontario. It also includes a detailed list of all names recorded on every Lambton County Cenotaph and Memorial, covering the Boer War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War.

Other sources of information exist that might supplement this project. More importantly, the dwindling number of veterans themselves, the family members of fallen soldiers and veterans, and numerous historians and amateur researchers would be ideal sources for additional information. It is hoped that these individuals will submit more information such as stories, photographs, documents or personal memorabilia to websites. Two excellent sources are The Canadian Virtual War Memorial and The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. In this way, the stories of these brave souls and their memories will live on forever. It is a way to honour and to pay tribute to the brave men and women of Sarnia-Lambton who made the ultimate sacrifice for their love of home and country, during a very different and difficult time in Canada's history.

A note regarding two key terms:

**"Fallen"** soldier refers to individuals who fought and died while in service (war dead).

**"Veteran"** soldier refers to those who served, survived war and returned home.

The initial source of names used in this project came from the Sarnia Cenotaph War Memorial in Veterans Park. The Royal Canadian Legion (Sarnia Branch 62) list and the City of Sarnia official list of fallen soldiers were the exact same as the Sarnia Cenotaph list. Through the course of research, Slater discovered a number of names not on the Cenotaph but connected to Sarnia. Sources for these additional names came from the Sarnia Collegiate (SCITS) War Memorial Plaque; local Sarnia church honor rolls; Canadian government websites; various Canadian war memorial websites (where “Sarnia” was used as a search item); numerous other websites such as Ancestry.ca; and information from relatives of the fallen soldiers.

The Sarnia Cenotaph War Memorial has 264 names in total (102 from WWI, 159 from WWII, 2 from Korea, and 1 from Afghanistan). *The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* has **306** names in total (1 from the Boer War, 116 from WWI, 184 from WWII, 3 from Korea, and 2 from Afghanistan). The following names are not found on the Sarnia Cenotaph in Veterans Park, but are included in this project:

Boer War:

Daniel Crone (the Boer War Memorial lists the names of 16 men who participated in that war. D. Crone is included)

World War I:

Thomas Creighton	Alexander Cunningham	Frank Hickey	George Gray
Norman Leckie	Daniel Manning	Walter McKenzie	Leslie Playne
Albert Pringle	Sylvester Earl Simmons	Ira Sumner	George Turner
Joseph Walters	John Wilson		

World War II:

Robert Alexander	Jack Brunette	Thomas Brydges	Carl Burke
Maurice Church	Ross Clark	Wesley Coleman	Ralph Elliott
John Esselment	William Glass	Victor Harris	Rowland Jamieson
William Lavers	Charles Living	Charles McIsaac	John McKernan
John McLagan	Allan McLellan	Donald Neal	Robert Rigby
William Rogers	Douglas Ross	Arnold Schildknecht	Leslie Sutherland
John Yorke			

Korea:

John Toole

Afghanistan:

William Cushley

The Sarnia Cenotaph has a few omissions and a number of spelling errors--not unusual for that time. These kinds of lists were generally often assembled by word of mouth rather than through official documents. Also, a number of the men had no real roots in the community; for instance, they might have been labourers who came to work in Sarnia. As well, the inconsistencies may be the result of, for example, a misunderstood or a mispronounced name.

The spelling of names used in this project is based on the official Canadian Military and Government websites: Commonwealth War Graves Commission; Veterans Affairs Canada (The Canadian Virtual War Memorial); Canada At War (Online War Memorial); Library and Archives Canada; and official Province of Ontario Certificates of Registrations of Death, and most importantly, on the men’s actual signatures on their attestation (enlistment) papers.

Below are the spelling errors associated with World War I and World War II soldiers on the Sarnia Cenotaph:

World War I cenotaph section:

- N. Benward – should be **N. Benware** (Neal Benware)
- N. Brearly – should be **N. Brearley** (Norman Osbourne Brearley)
- F.J. Chester – should be **F.A. Chester** (Frederic Aloysius Chester)
- F. Doxtator – should be **F. Doxstater** (Frederick Doxstater)

- F.W. Edwards – should be **F.C. Edwards** (Fred Christopher Edwards)
- G.D. Hazen – should be **T.D. Hazen** (Thomas Douglas Hazen)
- A. Ireson – should be **A. Iverson** (Amos Iverson)
- F. Johnston – should be **F. Johnson** (Frederick Johnson)
- L.C. McMullen – should be **L.C. McMullin** (Leonard Calvin McMullin)
- J.M. Pierrie – should be **J.M. Pirrie** (James Millar Pirrie)
- J. Salisbury – should be **J. Salsbury** (John Reginald Sergeant Salsbury)
- H. Wallis – should be **C. Vallis** (Clifford George Vallis)
- C. Weatherill – should be **B. Weatherill** (Bertrand Peter Weatherill)
- A. Wiseman – should be **A. Wyseman** (Andrew Wyseman)

World War II cenotaph section:

- J.C. Bell – should be **J.G. Bell** (Joseph Griffiths Bell)
- A.J. Campbell – should be **A.W. Campbell** (Allan William Campbell)
- G.A. Goring – should be **C.A. Goring** (Curtis Albert Goring)
- H.F. Haggerty – should be **H.F. Hegarty** (Hugh Francis Hegarty)
- J.S. Johnson – should be **J.S. Johnston** (Jay Syver Johnston)
- H. Legarrie – should be **H. Legare** (Hector LeGare)
- G.A. Nash – should be **C.A. Nash** (Charles Arthur Nash)
- M. Paithouski – should be **M. Paithowski** (Michael Joseph Paithowski)
- F.F. Thompson – should be **H.F. Thompson** (Howard Fraser Thompson)

The author could not verify with absolute certainty the true identities of five individuals whose names are inscribed on the World War I section of the Sarnia cenotaph. Despite using all the military records and files he could access, Mr. Slater could not prove conclusively that A. Bell; G.J. Janes; M.J. Summers; W. Wilkinson; and C.B. Wilson were linked to Sarnia.

Beginning on page i of the Preface, a quotation is listed at the bottom of each page. The source of these quotations is the book, *Words of Valediction and Remembrance – Canadian Epitaphs of the Second World War* by Eric McGeer. The quotations are actual epitaphs inscribed on the headstones of Canadian World War II soldiers. They represent a sampling of the thousands of Canadian soldiers' graves and markers spread throughout the world. They include headstone epitaphs from war cemeteries such as, to name a few, Beny-sur-Mer and Bretteville (Normandy); Dieppe and Calais (France); Holten (Netherlands); Hanover (Germany); Adegem (Belgium); Gradara and Cassino (Italy); and Agira (Sicily).

Originally called the Imperial War Graves Commission, established in May 1917 in the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission ensures that 1.7 million people who died in the two World Wars will never be forgotten. The Commission cares for cemeteries and memorials at 23,000 locations in 153 countries. Part of its mandate is to commemorate all Commonwealth war dead individually and equally in a uniform fashion. Every headstone contains the national emblem (eg. the Maple Leaf) or regimental badge; soldier rank; name; unit; date of death; and age of each casualty. Inscribed below these are an appropriate religious symbol and a more personal dedication chosen by relatives.

In World War II, the Commission allowed loved ones, if they wished, to write a short valedictory inscription of their choice which would be engraved on the headstone. These moving inscriptions convey in a few words the impact of a young soldier's death on his family. These inscriptions, chosen at a time when most people would be at a loss for words in the face of overwhelming sorrow, were drawn from Scripture, hymns, literature, and popular songs of the day. Some were composed by loved ones who thought carefully about their valediction. The quotations give recognition to the parents, wives, and children who used epitaphs to express the ideals for which Canadians had fought, or to reconcile themselves to the loss of a loved one whose grave they would likely never see.

For fallen (war dead) soldiers, sources such as government, military and war memorial websites are restricted as to the amount of information they are allowed to release. They provide only basic information such as rank, service number, force, regiment, cemetery and grave or memorial reference. Information on the details of their lives, their service, or the circumstances of their deaths are not provided. In some cases, family members have submitted

information to sites such as The Canadian Virtual War Memorial and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

For veteran soldiers who served and who returned from war, the military and government websites contain very limited, if any, information for release because of Privacy Act issues. No online database for veterans' military records exists because of access restrictions. Information relating to an individual who is still living requires that person's signed consent. If the individual has been deceased for fewer than 20 years, limited information may be released to immediate family. If deceased more than 20 years, proof of death is required.

Regarding the addresses in the anecdotal notes section: The residential addresses listed in this project come from various sources and would have been the home addresses of either the fallen soldier, his wife, and/or his parent(s) as they were recorded in their enlistment documentation, or circumstances of casualty records or their obituaries.

In the anecdotal notes sections, a number follows the names of a majority of the fallen soldiers. This is the soldier's regimental or service number. It would have been assigned the soldier at the time of his enlistment, a number unique to them as a means of identification. It would also appear on any of that soldiers' records, such as military awards, death certificates and official communication home informing a parent or wife of the loss of their child or husband.

Any original letters included in this project are in italics and have been transcribed verbatim.

Regarding the Royal Canadian Air Force Regiment information: For many of these airmen, their anecdotal notes may include numbers and words such as the following:

#409 Night Hawk Squadron "Media Nox Meridies"

- "#409" represents the Unit number
- "Night Hawk" is the nickname of the squadron
- "Media Nox Meridies" is the squadron motto, often in Latin, (in this case, the motto translates to "Midnight is our Moon"). Wherever possible, English translations have been included in this project.

Below is a list of some of the main Royal Canadian Air Force Rank codes:

AC: Aircraftman (class I or II)	FS: Flight Sergeant	P/O: Pilot Officer
AG: Air Gunner	G/C: Group Captain	Sgt: Sergeant
BA: Bomb Aimer	LAC: Leading Aircraftman	S/L: Squadron Leader
Cpl: Corporal	N: Navigator	WAG: Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
F/E: Flight Engineer	NB: Navigator/Bomb Aimer	W/C: Wing Commander
F/L: Flight Lieutenant	O: Observer	WO: Warrant officer (class I or II)
F/O: Flying Officer	P: Pilot	

*Sonnet 55 (2nd quatrain)*

*When wasteful war shall statues overturn,  
And broils root out the work of masonry,  
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn  
The living record of your memory*

*By William Shakespeare*

**"HE DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE." HIS FRESH YOUNG LIFE HE GAVE.  
HE LIES IN A SOLDIER'S GRAVE.**



*Anthem for Doomed Youth*

*What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?  
— Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.*

*No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.*

*What candles may be held to speed them all?  
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.  
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.*

*By Wilfred Owen*

## THE STORY BEHIND THE SARNIA CENOTAPH

As mentioned previously, the primary source of names included in this project is derived from the Sarnia cenotaph. Actually two War Memorial Monuments exist in Sarnia, both located in Veterans Park on Wellington Street: The Boer War Memorial which lists sixteen names; and the larger, more familiar Sarnia Cenotaph War Memorial which contains 264 names of fallen soldiers of World War I, World War II, the Korean War and Other Theatres of Conflict (Afghanistan Peacekeeping). The omissions and spelling errors on the cenotaph were not an unusual occurrence based on when and how these lists were derived. No official government body or agency was in charge of recording the names of the fallen or in matching them to specific home centers.

The names on the Sarnia cenotaphs, as they are inscribed, are listed on page 339. Following is some information on the history behind Sarnia's two war memorial monuments.

- Veterans Park was originally known as Wellington Square. It was the only park in existence in Sarnia in 1888, when the Board of Park Management was organized. First Nations people coming to Sarnia to purchase stores would rest there after their journey until they set off home. In 1891, the park was renamed Victoria Park. It was considered a site of beauty and a location for items of historical interest. An old cannon that had its origins linked to the Crimean War (1853-1856), which had been purchased from the Military Reserve at Point Edward in 1879, was located in the west end of the park.<sup>14</sup> The first public library in Sarnia was built in Victoria Park in 1903, thanks to a generous donation of \$15,000 from American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. The Sarnia "Carnegie" Library was designed to hold 4000 books for a population of 8000 people.
- In 1902, a contingent of veterans of the Boer War came to Sarnia, from Windsor, Ontario, with the express purpose of creating a monument to commemorate those men from Lambton County who had served in the Boer War (1899-1902). In January of 1902, at a meeting held in Sarnia, the South African Club, comprising Windsor men who saw service in the Boer War, opened subscription lists for funds for a memorial for their fallen comrades. Public collections would be supplemented by the proceeds from a number of concerts to be given, with the goal to raise \$1500 for the purpose. It was suggested that the memorial would probably take the form of a public drinking fountain to be located near the post office.
- The Boer War Memorial Fountain was erected in Victoria Park in 1908, having been made possible through donations by school children and citizens of Lambton County over a six-year period. The name of each man who served in the Boer War from Lambton County is engraved on the cap of the monument, along with the South African locations where they served. The Memorial lists sixteen men from Lambton County who participated in the South Africa War of 1899-1901. Of the sixteen names on the Boer War memorial, only one man, Daniel Crone, died while serving.
- Plans to create some sort of memorial to Sarnia's fallen of the Great War had begun in November of 1918. Alderman Sanders and "The Great War Veteran's Association of Sarnia" were leaders in this campaign. From the *Sarnia Observer*, November 21, 1918:

*The Imperial City Will Erect a Memorial to Its Sons Who Rest Yonder*

*Sarnia will in the near future open a subscription list to the general public for the purpose of securing adequate funds for the erection of a suitable memorial to the Imperial City's fallen heroes, who sleep where the poppies grow in Flanders. Whether this memorial will be in the form of a monument or in the form of a building is not yet known, but it would seem that the people as a whole will be consulted in the matter.*

- Much debate ensued as to what form the Sarnia memorial should take. There were public meetings at City Hall, discussions and proposals on the issue. The planned memorial was to be paid for by ratepayer donations, and it was vital that it be a fitting tribute and a lasting credit to the city. Many suggestions were made for "a suitable monument for the brave boys of the city, who paid the supreme sacrifice and lie under French soil."<sup>N</sup> One proposal was to purchase a new park site and plant oak trees, with a metal plate with the name engraved for every fallen soldier from the city. Many desired some type of community building, with a suitable monument or statue erected in front of the building. Some argued that a "Veteran's home" would not only commemorate the city's fallen heroes, but also benefit the entire community, including returned soldiers, and the wives, mothers, dependents and sweethearts of the soldiers. This community soldiers' home would include, possibly, a swimming pool, along with billard tables,

meeting rooms, a library, all of which would be useful for future generations of the community. Others in the community felt that erecting a more traditional monument would be a better way to honour the fallen heroes. Mrs. Irene McMullin, who had lost her only son in the Great War, wrote in late November of 1918 why she felt it should be a monument. Her son's information, nineteen-year old Leonard Calvin McMullin, is included in this project. Following is Mrs. McMullin's heartfelt letter;

*Editor Canadian Observer*

*Dear Sir,*

*May I speak for my boy? He is sleeping somewhere in France. I do want to tell you what I believe would please him, could he but speak. For some years prior to enlisting in Lambton's 149th O.S. Bn., he had taken great pleasure in the public library and the park surrounding it (Victoria Park) and since a memorial to the boys who will never return has been under discussion, my greatest comfort has seemed to centre there, and always I can picture to myself a monument of suitable design, bearing the names of all our city's fallen heroes, their graves beyond the reach of loving hands to tend and care for, with no mark save a temporary wooden cross.*

*Reader, have you a boy sleeping over there? If so, does not the little white wooden cross seem a frail thing? And many of our precious boys have not even that much. A granite monument would be a memorial which would withstand the elements for many generations to come and in that way would perpetuate their names as nothing else could. Also it would be something which the residents of our city and visitors as well, would have cause to admire and revere. Furthermore, if this proposed memorial to the boys who have lost their lives should take the form of a home, or a Y.M.C.A. or Y.W.C.A., it would be natural for the original motive to be lost sight of, within a few years.*

*There are already associations formed for the purpose of bringing comfort and pleasure to the returned heroes. We feel that they can never be fully repaid for their sacrifices and services for humanity. They are deserving of as good as can be produced, but our city and country are prosperous and wealthy, and can well afford to give our beloved dead a separate memorial.*

*In the years of the future, when one by one our returned heroes have gone to their reward in the Great Beyond, their earthly remains laid to rest beside their father and mother, perhaps, their names and record engraved upon the family monument, or possibly a gravestone of their very own (not only they but you and I together with all others who have known and loved and been loyal to our faithful armies) this proposed granite monument would still stand firm ever beaming the message of peace on earth.*

*The little white wooden crosses over there seem to send us the message "Do not forget us," though only wrapped in a blanket, perhaps and buried khaki clad, in a soldier's grave.*

*Thanking you, Mr. Editor for space and patience, I am*

*Yours truly,*

*The Mother of One, Mrs. Irene McMullin, 466 Davis Street.*

- In April of 1921, the site for the memorial monument had been chosen, on the west end of Victoria Park, adjoining Christina Street. Actual work on the construction of its foundation began that same month. The monument had a granite base, with a huge rectangular granite block weighing several tons placed on top, with several bronze tablets bolted on its sides. On each tablet would be encrolled the names of Sarnia soldiers who paid the supreme sacrifice, as well as the names of all Sarnians who served with the Allied Forces during the Great War.

- The planned unveiling was originally to be on Dominion Day, July 1st, 1921; however, the unveiling was delayed when Mayor George Crawford visited the Toronto plant of Wm. A. Rogers Company in June of that year and learned that the bronze tablets being prepared there would not be ready in time. Though the stone monument had been in position in the park for some months, the unveiling was postponed until Labor Day, September of 1921, but again, the tablets were not yet completed on that date. In late September of 1921, Mayor George Crawford proposed that the planned unveiling would take place on November 11th, 1921, the third anniversary of Armistice Day of the Great War. At some point after that proposal was made, the unveiling date was changed again, this time to Monday, November 7th, Thanksgiving Day, 1921.

- The Sarnia Cenotaph Memorial, which was erected by the citizens of the City of Sarnia, was officially unveiled in Victoria Park by Mayor George Crawford on Thanksgiving Day, November 7th, 1921. On the actual cenotaph, the date of unveiling was inscribed as November 11th, 1921. At that time of its unveiling, the rectangular stone

monument had three bronze tablets fastened to the stone. On one tablet were inscribed the names of sixty Sarnia men who paid the supreme sacrifice. On two larger bronze tablets were the names of over 1000 Sarnians who served with the Allied forces during the war. The statue of the soldier that sits atop the current cenotaph was not part of the original cenotaph. The three original bronze tablets are now located on the outside west wall of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 62 on Front Street.

- Committees from veterans' organizations and the city council had planned the details of the November 7th unveiling ceremony. The ceremony was preceded by a parade from city hall to Victoria Park. The parade included city officials, relatives of the fallen, members of the Chamber of Commerce, various military units, a firing party, the citizens band, wreath bearers, ex-service men (uniformed and ununiformed), a machine gun company, collegiate cadets, and troops of boy scouts. Over three thousand citizens witnessed the dedication and unveiling.<sup>N</sup>
- The November 7th, 1921 unveiling ceremony began with the parade participants leaving city hall at 10:30 a.m. en route to Victoria Park. At the park, the units took up their positions around the monument and the relatives of the deceased and civic officials took their seats reserved for them. A huge crowd of spectators encircled the group. Alderman J.C. Barr, chairman of the memorial committee, open the ceremony. Rev. Monsignor J.T. Aylward of Our Lady of Mercy Church and Rev. R.H. Barnby of Parker St. Methodist Church followed with hymns and prayers and Ven. Archdeacon Carlisle of All Saints Church in Windsor gave a dedication. Monsignor Aylward stated that on such an occasion one is filled with sentiments of various kinds, but the first thought must go to the wives and mothers of the noble heroes whose bodies lay far away. Canada was made a nation, he declared, by the valor of her boys, and to them is owed a debt of gratitude that can never be sufficiently paid. He also referred to the work carried out by the women of Canada during the war and praised the spirit of self-sacrifice that they displayed. Rev. Barnby stated that the monument stands as a tribute to unselfishness and expressed the hope that it would recall to those who pass it from day to day the unselfishness of heroic deeds of men who lived and died for the Empire. After referring to the fine response of all Canada's sons in his dedication, Ven. Archdeacon Carlisle touched particularly on the magnificent war record of Sarnia, an accomplishment of which Sarnia's citizens should be proud. He declared that memorials stand for two things: inspiration in a glorious and noble past and a challenge for the days to come, a challenge for unity and service. Before carrying out the unveiling, Mayor George Crawford gave a brief address. A glint of sunshine burst through the hovering clouds an instant before he released the flag which shrouded the monument, exposing the granite column with its bronze tablets. This was followed by the placing of wreaths around the base of the monument as the band rendered the "Dead March", followed by the discharge of three volleys by the firing party and the sounding of the "Last Post". While the crowd stood in solemn silence, teary-eyed, with bared heads, the ex-service men and uniformed ranks stood at attention. The National Anthem closed the ceremony and the parade re-assembled and marched back to City Hall.
- Following is the address given by Mayor George Crawford prior to unveiling the Sarnia Memorial on the November 7th, 1921 ceremony:

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*We are gathered together this morning for the purpose of unveiling this beautiful monument--the gift of the people of Sarnia to the loving memory of those brave boys who gave their lives in the defense of their King and their country--the cause of justice and liberty.*

*We have not forgotten those who left all and enlisted, whether in home or in foreign forces, to fight our battles. We have seen to it that the name of every man from this city that served his country in the great conflict is inscribed on the bronze tablets attached to the sides of this granite monument. No matter how much we do, I feel that we can never pay off the debt we owe those lads and their friends for their brave sacrifices.*

*In erecting this monument is a humble way we as a grateful people have undertaken to cherish the memory of our departed boys, and to hand down to succeeding generations the recognition of the noble deeds of those Sarnia boys that so bravely fought and died on the battle fields of Europe--that the homes of their loved ones might be safe and that a free country might be saved for them.*

*It is timely and thoughtful that the unveiling should take place on Thanksgiving day. I feel personally that it is a great honor to have my name connected with the event. The committee responsible for the choosing of this substantial but simple design as a memorial are to be congratulated in their wisdom of choice and location. It is the hope and aim of the committee that another armistice day will see a handsome bronze or marble statue of a Canadian soldier*

*mounted on top of this granite memorial.*

*At this time, also, it is not out of place for me to say a word or two recalling the splendid record made by our citizens during the war. You gave, you worked, and you prayed for the success of our arms. Your reward was victory. I now with a deep sense of pride, honor and humility--on behalf of the people of this city--unveil this monument to the memory of those who served their king and country well--who fought and bled and died, that the world might be made safe for all.*

- A side note on Mayor George Crawford: His grandson would lose his life in World War II. His 18-year-old grandson, LAC George Crawford (of Ottawa), was killed instantly in August of 1944 on the last flight of his R.C.A.F. training course in Lindsay, Ontario. The training plane he was in was experiencing difficulties and he bailed out of it at too low a level. His body was found, with parachute unopened, in a farmer's field. Young George Crawford had family in Sarnia-- J.S. Crawford, 148 South Christina Street and W.H. Crawford, 167 Queen Street-- and he had visited Sarnia on a number of occasions.
- In July of 1922, Mayor George Crawford endeavored to secure a suitable soldier's statue to be placed on the top of the memorial tablet in Victoria Park. He received photographs of several designs modeled in bronze and took the matter to the War Chest Committee to discuss financing the purchase of the figure.
- The selected bronze statue that stands atop the Memorial depicts a Canadian "tommy", a man in the full uniform worn by Canadian soldiers in the First World War. The soldier statue was sculpted in 1921 by Mr. J.G. Tickle of Toronto.
- On November 11, 1922, after a solemn parade left city hall and travelled to Victoria Park, the Sarnia Cenotaph Memorial, with its new bronze symbolic statue, was rededicated/unveiled. The parade included civic and Point Edward officials, the Citizens Band, the Imperial pipe band, the Salvation Army band, a firing party, war veterans in uniform, military units, collegiate cadets, members of the machine gun brigade, American veterans from Port Huron, boy scouts, and the Ladies Auxillary of the Great War Veterans' Association. Captain Rev. A.R.C. Garrett of Forest, who had lost two of his brothers in the war, dedicated the memorial with these words: *"To the glory of God and in loving memory of those from this city who gave their lives for God, for King and for country, I unveil this memorial."* With those words, in a bittersweet moment for Captain Rev. Garrett, he tugged at the rope that held the enveloping flag, unveiling the bronze statue on the soldier's memorial. On the east side of the granite block was also attached a new bronze tablet bearing the names of forty-two Sarnia men who had died in the Great War, but had been inadvertently omitted from the original tablets. Adding to the solemn and impressive ceremony of remembrance, on the fourth anniversary of the Armistice, were hymns, prayers, the laying of wreaths, a salute by the firing party, a sounding of the "Last Post" and the singing of the National Anthem. The four bronze tablets from the original 1921 and 1922 Sarnia cenotaph are now located on the outside west wall of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 62 on Front Street. The transcribed information from the tablets is included in this project, beginning on page 342.
- On the evening of November 11, 1922, Memorial Park was handed over to the Village of Point Edward and a memorial was unveiled. Nearly three hundred people assembled to witness the ceremony. Chairman James Hambleton of the Service Club handed over the park to Reeve Darbyshire, who accepted on behalf of the council and the village and thanked the soldiers for their gift. In acknowledging the sacrifice made by the boys who had gone overseas leaving their homes and families, Reeve Darbyshire stated, *"Through their effort, we still stand as free men. Mothers, teach your children of their deeds. Make them understand what the Memorial stands for. Let them know the price at which our freedom was bought."* The memorial had been fashioned in the village and made possible by the united efforts of the veterans, the council, and the people of Point Edward.
- In Sarnia's Victoria Park in the 1920s, along with the Soldiers Cenotaph Memorial, was also an old cannon that had its origins in the 1850s (Crimean War). It had been purchased from the Military Reserve at Point Edward in 1879. Near the west end of the park was a hard maple tree that had been planted on May 7th of 1914 by Prince Arthur William Patrick Albert, who was the Duke of Connaught and Governor General of Canada. It was on that date that the Duke of Connaught officially declared the municipality of Sarnia a city. The ceremonial nickel-plated spade used for planting the tree was placed in the library, known as the Carnegie Library at that time. The spade today is still housed inside the Sarnia Library. Unfortunately the maple tree was cut down years later during renovations. Also in Victoria Park in the 1920s were a bandstand, benches and a flagpole. The Cairn Thermometer was found in the east end of the park, a gift from the Centennial Committee of 1936. The three-acre Victoria Park was a site for



concerts and open-air church services.<sup>n</sup>

- Located behind (north of) of the current Sarnia cenotaph is the I.O.D.E. Memorial Plaque. Donated to the original Sarnia Library in 1928 by the I.O.D.E, the plaque's first home was in the foyer of the Carnegie Library which stood until 1961, very near the location where the plaque now sits. The plaque reads:

“To the one million dead of the British Empire who fell in the Great War and of whom the greater part rest in France.”

- Even before the end of World War II, people discussed and proposed the creation of some kind of War Memorial for the City of Sarnia to acknowledge the local returning soldiers and to commemorate the local fallen of the Second World War. George Stirrett, a local World War I hero, made a proposal in the fall of 1944 that gained a lot of attention. Stirrett, who had been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal during the Great War (more information on G. Stirrett is in the “Sarnia and Canada War History Notes” – see after The Battle of Somme), proposed the building of a Civic Centre, combining an arena, a Y.M.C.A. and a cultural centre, which would include the public library and an art museum all in one memorial. The Athletic Park was considered the ideal site for such a Centre with the idea that the citizens of Sarnia could raise the necessary funds to build such a Centre. Sarnia Mayor W.C. Hipple was not in favour of such a combination in one memorial on the basis that such a centre could not be operated by a civic commission.

- May 8, 1945 was declared V-E Day (Victory in Europe). During the month of May in Sarnia, concerned individuals met often to discuss proposals on a municipal war memorial for the city of Sarnia and eventually suggested possible ways to perpetuate the sacrifices of the sailors, soldiers and airmen of World War II. Mayor W.C. Hipple, chairman of the Foundation Committee for the War Memorial, released three specific proposals that had been presented to the Committee:

- > a general purpose auditorium to be located adjacent to Athletic Park (with facilities for hockey, skating, and other sports, as well as music, meetings and exhibitions).

- > a memorial recreational centre composed of a park, playing field area (football fields & baseball diamonds) and a recreational building (the nucleus would be an ice arena with a capacity for up to 5,000 people). The auxiliary section would contain meeting places and club rooms for youth and adult groups and could accommodate expansion to include a gymnasium. To obtain the necessary amount of land, the memorial would be located just outside the present city limits, preferably on the east side of East Street in the vicinity of George Street. This proposal was submitted by the local branch of the Chemical Institute of Canada.

- > a War Memorial Library Building which would be located on a landscaped site, such as Victoria Park, and be close to city hall, to business and to shops. It would include an enlarged free public library, a small auditorium, an art gallery and local history room, and hobby and study rooms. The building would also include a small and dignified chapel to the memory of the men and women who gave their lives in the war. This proposal was submitted by the Sarnia Public Library committee.

- Two months later, the Sarnia Canadian Legion forwarded another proposal to the Foundation Committee: a memorial park which would include a formal garden and cenotaph, with buildings suitable for cultural education, exclusive of a rink, erected on an area between forty and fifty acres. That was followed shortly after by the Canadian Legion and Canadian Corps Association branches in Sarnia recommending that no plan should be approved until a majority of their members returned from overseas and had a chance to express their opinion. With the views expressed by the veterans' organizations, the Foundation Committee for the War Memorial resigned.

- At the conclusion of World War II in mid-August of 1945, plans to erect a suitable memorial in Sarnia to those fallen soldiers continued. The planning was re-kindled in 1946, with the Sarnia Memorial Committee. Committee members included representatives from the Canadian Legion (Sarnia branch 62), the Canadian Corps Association (Sarnia branch 10), and a Next of Kin Committee. This Committee of interested citizens began by compiling a list of local men who had made the supreme sacrifice in World War II. The list of fallen soldiers from World War II that appears on the Sarnia Cenotaph was originally compiled by the Sarnia Memorial Committee, and was first published in the *Sarnia Canadian Observer* under the heading “Names of Dead Servicemen”, in the August 26, 1946 issue.

- Not long afterwards, plans for the memorial were aborted, apparently for “several reasons”.<sup>N</sup> One committee

member pointed out that veterans of the First World War had been given \$103 by the city on their return from battle (the Soldier's Civic Gratuity Fund), yet the city had given no recognition to World War II veterans.

- In April of 1950, Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent had visited Sarnia and was surprised that Sarnia had no cenotaph dedicated to Second World War fallen soldiers. In October 1950, Mayor W.C. Nelson, Aldermen Paul Blundy and Iven Walker and representatives of local veterans' organizations in the city (Canadian Corps Association, Canadian Legion and Sarnia Wing 403 Air Force Association) formed a committee to plan for some type of Sarnia Second World War memorial.

- Suggestions for a Sarnia WWII memorial included an annual bursary to further the education of some son or daughter of a Second World War veteran and a park or playground of some form for children. In November of 1950, the committee approved a plan to erect a memorial in the form of a Lambton County Museum and a small chapel, which would be added to the Sarnia Public Library in Victoria Park. Nothing ever came of this project and the committee ceased to operate.

- In October of 1952, led by the Sarnia Sappers' Club Association (the second largest veterans' organization in the city), pressure was put on city council and the veterans' organizations to restart their plans to erect a suitable memorial for Sarnia's Second World War dead. In January of 1953, the Sarnia Canadian Legion and Sarnia Sappers' Association combined their efforts to find ways and means of building a better war memorial.

- The Memorial Committee was credited with working to make the "new" cenotaph a reality. Its members included former Aldermen Alex Rapson, Alderman Harry Turnbull and representatives of the Canadian Legion Branch 62, the Sarnia Garrison, the Sappers' Association, the Royal Canadian Air Forces, the Canadian Corps and the Naval Veterans. In November 1954, the Sarnia Memorial Committee, chaired by J.T. Owen, was continuing to seek missing data from the community on those who paid the supreme sacrifice in the Second World War for the new Memorial plaque.

- The "new" renovated Sarnia cenotaph in Victoria Park, (which is the one that currently exists in what is now called Veteran's Park) was re-dedicated on November 11, 1955, ten years after the conclusion of World War II. The renovated grey marble monument had been enlarged by the addition of two new wings, on which were inscribed the names of Sarnia's fallen soldiers from World War I, World War II and the Korea War. The prior existing bronze tablets were removed and are now located on the outside west wall of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 62 on Front Street.

- The November 11th, 1955 re-dedication ceremony was preceded by a parade consisting of civic, military and veteran units marching from city hall to Victoria Park. Places of business in town were closed from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. so employees could attend the ceremony. During a Friday morning drizzling rain, the cenotaph was unveiled by Lieutenant-Colonel J.H. Coleman, M.B.E.Ed, Commanding Officer of the Sarnia Garrison, followed by a dedication ceremony by Rev. G.G. Stone. The first wreath laid upon the cenotaph was by Captain and Mrs. Augustus R. Mendizabal on behalf of all the next of kin. The Mendizabal's had lost their only son, Flying Officer-Pilot Rodolfo, in August of 1943. Practically every service club, business and professional organization, Legion branch, civic body as well as next-of-kin of fallen laid wreaths at the foot of the monument to the accompaniment of soft music played by the Sarnia Citizens and Sarnia Veterans' bands. The customary firing of the salute was followed by the trumpeter sounding the "Last Post". Then all bowed their heads to observe two minutes of silence in recognition of the men who did not return. Following this were the sounding of "Reveille", the reading of the memorial prayer, and the playing of the National Anthem. A benediction closed the solemn but colourful ceremony.

- In 1959, work on a new Sarnia public library began, its location moved slightly to the corner of Christina and Wellington streets. The "old" Carnegie Library was demolished. Renovations were made to Victoria Park, including the moving of the various monuments to new locations, such as the old cannon to Canatara Park. By 1961, Victoria Park was approximately one acre in size and the cost of maintenance was shared equally by the Parks Board and the Sarnia Library Board.<sup>n</sup>

- In its history, the park has been a marshaling ground for troops, a gathering place to send troops off to war, and a place to honour those who fought and those who lost their lives in war. In October of 1998, following a proposal by Mayor Mike Bradley, Sarnia City Council passed a motion endorsing that Victoria Park would be renamed

“Veterans Park”, to reflect the history of the park and as a way to honour those who served. On Remembrance Day 1998, the park was officially known as Veterans Park.

- In June of 2013, the Royal Canadian Legion Sarnia Branch 62, with financial assistance from the Federal Government, Veteran’s Affairs, completed a restoration project on the Sarnia cenotaph. The restoration cost was approximately \$10,000 and included removing and replacing damaged monument joints, cleaning the monument and remounting plaques.

### *Aftermath*

*With Desolation and the Stars  
I lonely vigil keep,  
Over the garner’d fields of Mars,  
Watching the dead men sleep –  
Huddled together, so silent there.  
With bloodless faces and clotted hair,  
Wrapped in their long, long sleep*

*By uptorn trees and craters rims  
Along the Ridge they lie,  
Sprawled in the mud, with out-spread limbs,  
Wide staring at the sky.  
Why to the sky do they always stare,  
Questioning heaven in dumb despair?  
Why don’t they moan, or sigh?*

*Why do I rave, ‘neath the callous stars,  
At their upturned faces white?  
I, surely I, with my crimson scars  
Slumber with them this night!  
Death, with shadowy finger bare,  
Beckons me on to – I know not where;  
But, huddled together, and freed from care  
We’ll watch till the dawn of Light*

*By Frank Walker*

*A Working Party*

*Three hours ago he blundered up the trench,  
Sliding and poising, groping with his boots;  
Sometimes he tripped and lurched against the walls  
With hands that pawed the sodden bags of chalk.  
He couldn't see the man who walked in front;  
Only he heard the drum and rattle of feet  
Stepping along barred trench boards, often splashing  
Wretchedly where the sludge was ankle-deep.*

*Voices would grunt "Keep to your right—make way!"  
When squeezing past some men from the front-line:  
White faces peered, puffing a point of red;  
Candles and braziers glinted through the chinks  
And curtain-flaps of dug-outs; then the gloom  
Swallowed his sense of sight; he stooped and swore  
Because a sagging wire had caught his neck.*

*A flare went up; the shining whiteness spread  
And flickered upward, showing nimble rats  
And mounds of glimmering sand-bags, bleached with rain;  
Then the slow silver moment died in dark.  
The wind came posting by with chilly gusts  
And buffeting at corners, piping thin.  
And dreary through the crannies; rifle-shots  
Wood split and crack and sing along the night,  
And shells came calmly through the drizzling air  
To burst with hollow bang below the hill.*

*Three hours ago he stumbled up the trench;  
Now he will never walk that road again:  
He must be carried back, a jolting lump  
Beyond all need of tenderness and care.*

*He was a young man with a meagre wife  
And two small children in a Midland town;  
He showed their photographs to all his mates,  
And they considered him a decent chap  
Who did his work and hadn't much to say,  
And always laughed at other people's jokes  
Because he hadn't any of his own.*

*That night when he was busy at his job  
Of piling bags along the parapet,  
He thought how slow time went, stamping his feet  
And blowing on his fingers, pinched with cold.  
He thought of getting back by half-past twelve,  
And tot of rum to send him warm to sleep  
In draughty dug-out frowsty with the fumes  
Of coke, and full of snoring weary men.*

*He pushed another bag along the top,  
Craning his body outward; then a flare  
Gave one white glimpse of No Man's Land and wire;  
And as he dropped his head the instant split  
His startled life with lead, and all went out.*

*By Siegfried Sassoon*

## SARNIA AND CANADA WAR HISTORY NOTES

### **Early Beginnings**

- In the years prior to Canada's Confederation (1867), the defense of the colony of Upper Canada was primarily the responsibility of local voluntary militia, formed to repel any potential threat, either actual (Fenian Raids) or potential (from the United States). One of the earliest records of any military organization in Lambton is from the mid-1800s. Colonel Faithorne had left behind a roll in his Lake Shore residence. It was a service roll of the militia of Sarnia Township of 1855. In that year, Canada had passed a Militia Act in an effort to create military units made up of volunteer, part-time soldiers. It was in response to the threat of the Fenian Brotherhood. In 1855, a Sarnia Township unit, the 27th St. Clair Borderers, was loosely formed and, like most militia units outside the larger cities, they were unarmed and undrilled, seldom if ever assembling for training. The officers were recruited mainly from retired British Army soldiers. Civilians given commissions qualified for rank by undergoing examinations at the Imperial Army station in London, Ontario, where a large garrison was maintained up to the time of Confederation. The 27th St. Clair Borderer members mustered at some convenient centre once a year, signed the service roll and received a King's shilling each to celebrate the event and the end of the year's campaign.
- The Fenian Brotherhood, largely composed of Irish-American veterans, sought to achieve Ireland's independence from Britain by capturing Canada as a hostage. Between 1866 and 1871, the Fenians raided parts of Canadian territory from New Brunswick to Manitoba. At the start of the threat, potential invading points included Fort Gratiot or Port Huron. In 1866 and 1867, troops from all over eastern Canada, numbering up to 4,000, were quartered in Sarnia at various times. With troops such as the York Rifles, Caledonia Rifles, Brantford Rifles and others from Ottawa, Owen Sound and other Ontario communities, Sarnia took on the appearance of a military camp. Troops were brought to Point Edward by train and marched to their quarters in the Alexander House or Hall's Hotel. No Fenian attack ever occurred in this area though a close watch was kept along the St. Clair River. The majority of Fenian raids in Canada ended in failure, and the movement collapsed after 1871.
- It was in September of 1866 that the first Lambton Regiment in Sarnia was organized, the 27th Lambton Battalion of Infantry, commanded by Lt.-Col. Davis, a former county judge. It was composed of companies from Sarnia, Petrolia, Forest, Widder, Warwick, Watford and Wallaceburg. A company of Garrison Artillery was also formed at Sarnia (around 1885, it would be absorbed into the 27th Battalion). The company was well equipped with everything but artillery. Occasionally they were taken for a trip on the old gunboat *Prince Alfred* for gunnery practice. The ship was armed with two Armstrong cannons (manufactured in Newcastle, England) and four brass howitzer cannons. In the early 1870's, the *Prince Alfred* participated in drill training of volunteers for "landsmen to work the heavy guns."
- Sarnia's Veterans Park was originally known as Wellington Square in 1888 and three years later the park was renamed Victoria Park. One of the features in the park back then was an old cannon, a British "68-pounder", nicknamed "Big Tom". The cannon in the park was built in England during the Crimean War (1853-1856). Whether the cannon was actually used against the Russians in that war is unknown. The cannon came over from England to Canada to help refit a colonial gunboat and ended up on a boat constructed in Sarnia in 1859. "Built as the tug Michigan", the gunboat went into duty patrolling the Great Lakes. The ship went aground in Lake Huron somewhere near Point Edward in 1874, and one of its cannons was stored in the Military Reserve base in Point Edward until 1879. In that year, the cannon was purchased and taken to Sarnia where it was placed in front of the old Carnegie library in the west end of Victoria Park. In the 1940s, the federal government suggested that the "Big Tom" cannon should be smelted down for the war effort. Local residents fought back, saying the cannon didn't belong to Ottawa because it had been in Port Edward prior to Confederation. Sometime between 1959 and 1961, when a new Sarnia public library was being built, the cannon "Big Tom" was moved again, this time to the north end of Canatara Park in Sarnia where it rests today.<sup>N, 9</sup>
- The Lambton battalion was first armed with muzzle-loading Enfields (aka. Brown Bess). They were later replaced by the breech-loading Snyder-Enfields. Following the Boer War, the Lee-Enfield, a magazine rifle, was adopted. In the early days, the regiment wore uniforms of heavy wool which featured buttons and badges of white metal. The greatcoat was of grey frieze and had a cape while the tunic was scarlet with blue woolen serge. The trousers had red stripes down the side, and in the early 1880s, blue cloth helmets with white metal spikes were issued.
- In March of 1872, the Lambton Regiment would be redesignated as the 27th Lambton Battalion of Infantry St.



Clair Borderers. In May of 1900, it became the 27th Lambton Regiment, St. Clair Borderers. During the Boer War (1899-1902), Sarnia and Lambton County had men volunteer to serve in this war, but was never really called upon to send men away in large numbers. With the outbreak of World War I, that all changed.

## **Those Who Served**

- The Canadian military has historically comprised mostly volunteers. In the two World Wars, these individuals came from larger centers like Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver; however, the majority came from small towns that still represented a larger part of Canada's population. They came from mining towns, fishing villages, forestry towns, farming communities and semi-industrialized towns like Sarnia. It is estimated that more than 1100 Sarnia men and women answered the call in First World War, and approximately 3000 Sarnia men and women served in the Second World War.<sup>N</sup>
- For young men in their late teens or early twenties, enlistment for overseas service was likely the first momentous decision of their lives. The men and women who went overseas were prepared to, at minimum, accept long, indefinite absences from their homes and families, and to interrupt the course of their own lives for a cause which they, in differing degrees and for varying reasons, saw as right.
- Canada's military and those who served from Sarnia comprised people of every class, with a wide variety of educational backgrounds, professions and ages. Sarnia's youngest fallen soldier was 15; its oldest fallen soldier, 54. The young and old joined the military; they were farmers, teachers, railway employees, Imperial oil workers, students, lawyers, store clerks, doctors, firemen, bankers, cooks, journalists, sailors, mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, salesmen, butchers, pipefitters, truck drivers, machinists, bakers, grocers, miners, machine operators, barbers, painters, architects, bricklayers and labourers to name a few. The majority of the Canadian soldiers had one thing in common: they were ordinary citizens, not professionally trained soldiers, like the members of some other countries' military.
- Several religious affiliations and ethnic origins were also represented in Canada's military: among others, English, French, First Nations, Jewish, Italian, Portugese, Dutch, Polish, Danish, Irish, Scottish, Ukranian and Greek. Many soldiers had direct or close ties to Europe, being only first or second generation Canadians. All came together, in their united fight to defeat tyranny.
- For the men and women who went to war, they fought beside their friends and sometimes their family members, people with whom they had joined, trained, and lived for a length of time within their regiments. They developed a bond and loyalty to one another, an understanding that nobody was going to let the other guy down in battle.
- During wartime, in Sarnia and across the country, multiple members of a family would often join the military. Families contributed two members, three members, four members, and in one case, eight boys in one Canadian family joined the Canadian Forces. Mr. Manning and four of his sons from Point Edward, for example, served in the Great War; therefore, it was not uncommon for families to lose more than one son and it was no different locally. The Sarnia Cenotaph includes eleven sets of brothers who lost their lives in war. Inscribed also are the names of two fathers and sons who lost their lives in war.
- The names covered in the content of this project are a record of the men from Sarnia-Lambton who made the supreme sacrifice in war, a permanent record long overdue. Every name represents a young man, a son, a grandson, a brother, a father, an uncle, a neighbor, a best friend – each one sacrificed his life for us. Reading the stories and looking at the photographs of the faces of these soldiers, one cannot but be inspired and humbled by their youth and innocence, their self-sacrifice, their sparkling eyes and bright smiles looking back at the camera. So many were very young; they had their whole lives ahead of them. Future careers, wives, children and grandchildren were never to come to fruition.

## **War and Immigration**

- War had a major impact on immigration and played a significant role in the shaping of our country and our city. Prior to World War I, especially between 1906-1913, a huge wave of immigrants, mostly from continental Europe, came to Canada. Many of these pre-World War I immigrants, such as Ukranain and Polish immigrants, settled in western Canada and developed a thriving agricultural sector. During World War I, under the auspices of national

security, the government imposed greater restrictions on immigration and limited the number of immigrants allowed into Canada; in fact, the War Measures Act of 1914 gave the Canadian government the power to arrest, to deport or even to intern “enemy aliens” already living in Canada. The tighter immigration policies continued after the war; the entry of nationalities who had fought against Canada and Britain in the War was prohibited. It was not until 1923 that Canada began to open its doors again to immigrants. In 1928, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Pier 21 officially opened, becoming the site where over 1.5 million new immigrants would enter the country to begin their Canadian dream.

- During World War II, immigration into the country was again limited; however, after World War II, this all changed. In post-World War II, the Canadian economy experienced unprecedented growth, thus creating a huge demand for exporting raw materials, food and manufactured goods to war-ravaged Europe. The days of rationing, forced savings and limited consumption were over, so consumer spending on appliances, homes, automobiles, leisure and travel exploded. Canada was faced with a shortage of workers, especially in core sectors such as agriculture, mining, forestry, rail, construction and industry. So post-war Canada gradually opened its immigration doors, though selectively in 1947, allowing entry from northern and western Europe initially—for example, Britain, France, Ireland, Norway and Finland—followed by countries such as Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal from eastern and southern Europe. One of the main groups to be accepted were the Dutch who, having lost so much farmland during the later stages of the war, were faced with overcrowding and food shortages. Canada opened its doors to another group known as “Displaced Persons”. These were people who after the war found themselves in foreign countries with no way or desire to return to their homeland, or people with nowhere to return. This group included, for example, Ukrainian, Jewish, German, Slavonians and citizens of the Baltic States.<sup>3D</sup> One of the first “displaced persons” immigrant groups to be accepted to Canada were 4000 former Polish soldiers who had fought with the English and Canadian troops on the western front.

- Certainly one of the ethnic groups greatly affecting Sarnia was the Polish community; in fact, in post-WW II, Sarnia had one of the largest Polish communities in Canada. Polish soldiers had been part of many battles during the war, including the Warsaw Uprising, the Normandy Campaign and the Battle of Monte Cassino. Immigrating to Canada after the war, local Polish community members worked to build the city and to raise their families here. Members of the Polish community erected the “Polish Combatants Memorial” in 1999 in Our Lady of Mercy cemetery. Inscribed on it are the words; *In memory of the Polish men and women who died fighting for the freedom of Poland – World War I, Polish-Bolshevik War, World War II – Lest We Forget.*

### **Aboriginal Contributions**

- Aboriginal Canadians have demonstrated great service and sacrifice to Canada’s military during times of conflict. In World War I, more than 4,000 members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were First Nations volunteers, representing nearly one-third of all Aboriginal-Canadian men eligible to serve. This was an astonishing number given the limited civil rights First Nations were accorded. Two of the more famous First Nations soldiers to serve in WWI were Tom Longboat, an Onondaga from Six Nations Grand River, and Francis Pegahmagabow, an Ojibwa from the Parry Island Band. Tom Longboat was a legendary long-distance runner who won the 1907 Boston Marathon and competed for Canada at the 1908 Olympics. He became a dispatch carrier with the 107th Pioneer Battalion during the war, delivering messages between units on the front lines. He was wounded twice during the war – once so badly he was officially declared dead – but survived and returned to Canada. Francis Pegahmagabow was one of the original members of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion. He was an outstanding sniper and a superior scout, becoming the most highly decorated Canadian Native soldier to serve in the Great War. He was awarded the Military Medal plus two bars for bravery in Belgium and France. He fought at the battles of Ypres, the Somme and Passchendaele and was lauded for his “disregard for danger and faithfulness to duty.” Records for kills weren’t kept, but some estimates said he had as many as 378, plus another 300 captures. He would serve for the entire war and return to Canada. During this time, status First Nations did not have full rights of Canadian citizenship. Rather, they were wards of the state. As wards, they did not have the right to vote; they couldn’t own land; and residential schools were taking away their culture. Their reasons for joining were not unlike others: the call to adventure; the attraction of regular pay; the desire to follow friends and family; and an opportunity to show patriotism and to elevate their status within their communities.<sup>D, 3R</sup>

- During World War II, more than 3,000 First Nations from every region in Canada, including 72 women enlisted in the armed forces. Not only did these soldiers face racial prejudice and cultural challenges, but also a military

hierarchy that worked almost exclusively in English, a language that many of the recruits did not speak. Despite these obstacles, First Nations soldiers left a remarkable record of wartime accomplishment, serving in all branches of the service and in every rank and fighting in every major battle and campaign. Several were commissioned as officers, and many served as battle-hardened platoon leaders and combat instructors. At least 70 were decorated for their bravery performing daring and heroic acts on the battlefield in the two World Wars. Many acquired near-legendary status as “code-talkers”, reconnaissance scouts and snipers, drawing on pre-war hunting skills and wilderness experience. One of the most famous First Nations soldiers to serve in WWII was Tommy Prince, a descendant of Peguis, from the Brokenhead Band of Ojibwa in Scantbury, Manitoba. He began with the Royal Canadian Engineers, became a sergeant with the Canadian Parachute Battalion and later became a member of the 1st Canadian Special Service Force. It trained with an American unit, forming a specialized assault team, the 1st Special Service Force, known to the German soldiers as the *Devil’s Brigade*. Tommy Prince’s exploits during the war earned him the Military Medal for courage and inspiration and the Silver Star with ribbon for gallantry in action. He was decorated with both awards by King George VI, one of only three Canadians to win both medals in World War II. He would become Canada’s most decorated Aboriginal war veteran, having been awarded eleven medals in the Second World War and the Korean War. One Aboriginal Veterans group estimates that 12,000 Natives, including Inuit and Metis, participated in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. It is estimated that approximately 300 lost their lives in World War I and 200 lost their lives in World War II.<sup>D, 2N, 3G, 3Q</sup> Men from Sarnia Aamjiwnaang First Nations, nearby Kettle Point and Stony Point, and Walpole Island served in both World Wars, Korea and as Canadian Peacekeepers. Some would make the supreme sacrifice.

- In mid-June of 1945, one month after VE Day, an Honour Roll was unveiled with appropriate ceremonies on Walpole Island. The names of sixty-eight men and women of Walpole Island who served in World War II appeared on the honour roll. The roll was formally unveiled following a special service in St. John’s Anglican Church, conducted by Rev. A. Marshall, formerly of Wyoming, with assistance from former Chief Harrison B. Williams. Rev. Marshall, who previously served as a missionary among Cree First Nations in the northwest and James Bay area, said the large number of First Nations, whose names appeared on the honour roll, indicated the loyalty and love they had for their country. Following the church ceremony, a parade, headed by a colour party from the Canadian Legion and First Nations ex-soldiers, led the congregation to the Walpole cenotaph. After brief addresses by ex-Mayor Alan P. Brander of Wallaceburg and Chief Charles R. Jacobs of the First Nations council, two First Nations soldiers who had fought in World War II unveiled the honour roll. Included in the list of sixty-eight names on the Honour Roll were four who made the supreme sacrifice: Pte. Edwin Wright, Pte. Willard Shipman, Pte. Roslyn Sands and Pte. Charles Altman.
- In Sarnia, the Aamjiwnaang First Nations cenotaph comprises three vertical stone columns resting on a stone base. The central column is inscribed, “To our glorious veterans who have served our nation and its allies for peace and freedom – Lest We Forget.” Along the base of the cenotaph is inscribed: “Pontiac’s War; War of 1812; Korea; Vietnam; and Peacekeeping”. One side column is inscribed, “World War I – In memory of the young men from this nation who served King and country throughout the world 1914-1919 – Fred Doxstater”. The other side column is inscribed, “World War II – In memory of the young men and women who loyally served throughout the world 1939-1945 – Harley Williams”. Both Fred Doxstater and Harley Williams are included in this project.
- St. Clair United Church is located on the Sarnia Aamjiwnaang First Nations Reserve. Three honour rolls located within the church pay tribute to local First Nations who served during the two World Wars. One honours those who served in World War I and the other two (one of which was completed before the end of the war) honour those who served in World War II. All three Honour Rolls are in this project.
- In early February of 1944, an honour roll in the St. Clair United Church on the Sarnia First Nations Reserve was unveiled. It paid tribute to the Sarnia First Nations men and women who were serving in World War II. Since the roll was completed before the end of the war, the dates for the beginning and end of the war read “1939 to 194\_”. It was unveiled under two flags for First Nations people serving in the Canadian and United States militaries. Edwin Maness, the oldest veteran of World War I on the Reserve, unveiled and read the roll. Twenty-five names are inscribed on the honour roll.

## The Sarnia Home Front

- In both World War I and World War II, many of the loved ones back home in Sarnia – parents and wives, received only a short telegram at their homes from Ottawa (Ministry of National Defence – Director of Records) informing them that their son or husband was “*listed as missing in action*”, and that more information would follow later. Often it wasn’t until many weeks or even months later that they received another simple telegram that contained very little information other than, “*We regret to inform you that your son has been officially declared killed in action*”. Usually, very few or no other details were included. Families were left to wonder where and how their sons died.
- A local example is the Adair family. Originally from London, Ontario, Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Dorothy Adair would move to Windsor before residing in the early part of 1945 at 302 Confederation Street, Sarnia. Frank Adair was a C.N.R. employee here in the city. In early January of 1945, Frank and Dorothy would receive official notification from national defence headquarters at Ottawa informing them that their son had been killed in action. The telegram informed them that Private Kenneth Adair, aged 21, had been killed in action in Italy during December of 1944. This was Mr. and Mrs. Frank Adair’s third son killed in World War II. They had previously lost Corporal Robert James Adair--killed in action in Italy in May of 1944--and Sergeant Charles Franklin Adair of the R.C.A.F.--killed by enemy gunfire in September of 1944 as he parachuted from a bombing plane over enemy territory in France. Their fourth son, Private Fred W. Adair who was serving in Italy, was returned to Canada (Windsor) on compassionate leave. Father Frank Adair expressed to the local *Sarnia Observer* reporter, that he hoped that his son Fred would not have to return to the fighting front. Sarnia city council sent a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Adair on Confederation Street, expressing their sympathy in the death overseas of three of their four sons, and also expressing good wishes for their only remaining son.<sup>N</sup>
- For many of the men who fell, their time overseas was short. In many cases, they were killed within a year of arriving overseas.
- Back in Sarnia, many parents, wives and families eventually realized their loved one was likely killed in a violent, untimely manner in a faraway land. Their sons’ bodies were often buried in graves on the other side of the world, or their names were inscribed on some makeshift memorial. Many families never had the chance to visit the final resting places of their sons. They were not given the opportunity to say good-bye to their loved ones or to give them a proper funeral.
- Sarnia’s fallen sons and fathers are buried thousands of miles from their homes in countries throughout the world, such as, South Africa, France, Belgium, England, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, China, Sicily, Algeria, Sri Lanka, India, Egypt, Iceland, Azores, and Korea. Others have no known graves, their bodies having never been recovered. Their names, however, are inscribed on war memorials throughout the world: Vimy and Arras in France; Menin Gate in Belgium; Sai Wan in Hong Kong; Runnymede in the United Kingdom; Malta in Floriana; Alamein in Egypt; Singapore in Malaya; Busan Commonwealth in South Korea; and the Halifax and Ottawa Memorials in Canada. Approximately 90 of Sarnia’s 306 fallen soldiers covered in this project have no known grave. For these soldiers and their families, the fortunes of war denied them a known and honoured grave.
- For many veterans who returned to Sarnia, their lives were never the same. They suffered either physical wounds and/or mental trauma. A number of them died not long after returning home. Though not listed as official “fallen” soldiers, their deaths were without a doubt the result of the effects of war, and their families felt the same loss.
- Upon returning home from war, many veterans simply wished to forget their experiences. Others saw no point in reliving the horrors that they had witnessed. Others learned that the civilian population had no understanding of, or little interest in, the hardships they had endured. Suppressing memories of the traumatic realities they experienced, and suffering in silence, was their way of coping. Thus, the fallen soldiers, as well as many of the veterans, literally took their stories to the grave.

## Women’s Contributions

- On the home front during both World Wars, Sarnia families like all Canadian families had to make sacrifices in doing what was necessary to help win the war. With their sons and husbands overseas, women did their fair share and much more on the home front. Many Sarnia women worked tirelessly in the home, combining that with war-related

volunteer work with women's organizations. The Canadian government carefully managed the flow of information to the press and families, and they imposed strict wage and price controls. During World War I, families were urged to cut back on beef, bacon and wheat flour and to focus instead on fish, potatoes, oatmeal and cornmeal. Families were encouraged to adopt "Meatless Fridays" and newspapers published daily War Menus which set out meal plans and recipes that were heavy on vegetables and whole grains. In both wars, Sarnia residents experienced shortages of many kinds of foods and commodities including meat, sugar, coffee, tea, potatoes, fruit, gasoline, rubber, textiles and even beer. These items were either rationed or available in limited quantity. Families dealt with food shortages in numerous ways, such as growing "Victory Gardens" in their yards, inventing new recipes with fewer ingredients and eating fish instead of beef or pork at least once a week. Like Canadians across the country, Sarnians donated blood and participated in salvage campaigns; made "ditty bags" for the soldiers overseas; knitted socks, sweaters and scarves for the soldiers; and collected everything from scrap metal, used shaving cream cans, toothpaste tubes, and tinfoil to excess fat from cooking, rags and newsprint. In addition to working in the local industries, in agriculture planting and in harvesting crops or in caring for livestock, millions of Canadians, including thousands of Sarnia citizens, contributed to the war effort by volunteering for various organizations. Volunteers invested countless hours and dollars in the Sarnia Red Cross, YMCA, Salvation Army, Canadian Legion, Knights of Columbus, YWCA, Sarnia Kinsmen Club, the I.O.D.E. (Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire), Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, and several church groups. Local children raised money at their schools by, for instance, making and selling crafts and running lemonade stands to aid the effort. Sarnians contributed and invested in war saving certificates and Victory Bonds. Throughout the two World Wars, Sarnia citizens read almost daily the official casualty reports listed in the *Sarnia Canadian Observer* and worried about the fate of their friends and loved ones overseas.

- Two examples reflect the unceasing effort by local citizens. In September of 1941, Mrs. Alex Forbes, 76, of 127 Crawford Street, had in two years knitted 189 pairs of men's socks for the soldiers, and numerous other pairs of socks, sweaters and mittens for refugees. Mrs. Forbes donated all of her knitted articles to the Salvation Army. In December of 1941, Mrs. L.W. Sandercock, 77, of Lakeshore Road, knitting an average of eight hours a day for six days a week, completed her 103rd pair of wool army socks in a little more than a year. Mrs. Sandercock donated all her knitted socks to the Red Cross.
- Canadian women, including women from Sarnia, have played an important role in the country's military efforts over the years. In the Boer War, twelve Canadian nurses volunteered and served in South Africa, helping the sick and wounded. They were called "Nursing Sisters" because they were originally drawn from the ranks of religious orders. It marked the first time Canadian women served with the military overseas. During World War I, approximately 3 100 Canadian women volunteered their services in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, with 2 500 serving overseas in military hospitals and casualty clearing stations. Canadian military nurses, whose average age was 24 and whose marital status was mostly single, were trained nurses before the war. These nursing sisters were often situated close to the front lines of Europe and within range of enemy attack. Nicknamed the "bluebirds" because of their blue dresses and white veils, they were exposed to the same horrors as soldiers--hospital ship attacks, air raids, shell fire, primitive working conditions, gas attacks, exposure to disease, rats and fleas and climatic extremes. They were greatly respected because of their compassion and courage. Approximately 45 of these brave women died during the Great War. Canadian women were not permitted to serve in other military roles during the First World War. <sup>D, 21 and 2N</sup>

The following are portions of three letters, each one written by a wounded Sarnia boy during World War I:

*- I got mine at the Somme. Am now back in a field hospital just back of the line. This place is wonderfully complete. One could not have better care in the most perfectly equipped hospital in Canada. The nurses are simply magnificent, always bright, and cheery and tender and watchful. I simply lie here and watch them move from cot to cot and ask myself how can they do it, day by day, week in week out, deprived as they must be of money, conveniences and comforts they were accustomed to back home. Don't worry, I'll be all right.*

*- Yes, I got a pretty dirty hit, it sure was a close one, but you see I am all O.K. now....It was worth while just to get back to Blighty and to be in this beautiful ward in this splendid Canadian hospital....Our day nurse is just coming in. She is a Toronto girl, a real girl, you bet. What would we fellows do if these Red Cross Sisters had not crossed the pond to take care of us. They have saved tens of thousands of lives and have made Blighty a place to be longed for by tens of thousands of men... I am going to be all right, thanks to the doctors and nurses of this Red Cross hospital.*

MY HEART IS FULL OF PAIN. IT WOULD BE HEAVEN, MY SON, TO HEAR YOUR VOICE AGAIN.

MOTHER AND SISTER

*I am in a hospital in London lying between clean white sheets and feeling for the first time in months clean all over. Up and down the ward with swift precision, the nurses move softly. Two faces loom out in memory. One is the surgeon's. I think of him as a Christ in khaki. The other face is of a girl. She has an ivory white complexion and spends all her days tending to any soldier with loving service. Her eyes are weary, only her lips hold a touch of colour. They have a childish trick of trembling when anyone's wound is hurting too much. I wonder what she did before she went to war, for she's went to war as much as any one of us.*

- During World War II, Canadian women continued to serve the crucial role of “Angels of Mercy” as they did in World War I, saving lives by assisting with medical operations and caring for convalescing soldiers. Approximately 4 500 women served as nursing sisters in all three branches of Canada’s military, with more than two-thirds of them serving overseas. These nursing sisters wore a military uniform with a traditional white veil. They were commissioned officers and were respectfully addressed as “Sister” or “Ma’am.” In fact, Canada’s military nurses were the first in any Allied country to have officer status.<sup>D</sup>

- During World War II, Canadian women would also serve in other military roles, with some 50,000 eventually enlisted in the air force, army and navy. Young women from Sarnia served in all three of the following;

- Royal Canadian Air Force – Women’s Division (RCAF-WD): Was created July 2, 1941 and grew to approximately 17,000 members by war’s end. Initially trained for clerical, administrative and support roles, but as the war continued, women would also work in other positions like parachute riggers, laboratory assistants, intelligence officers, wireless operators and in the electrical and mechanical trades. Many members were sent to Great Britain to serve with Canadian squadrons and headquarters there.

- Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC): Was established August 13, 1941 and grew to approximately 21,000 members by war’s end. Initially, members’ duties were traditional and they worked as cooks, cleaners, tailors and medical assistants. These duties would expand to include driving trucks and ambulances, and working as mechanics and radar operators. While most CWACs served in Canada, three companies of female soldiers were posted overseas in 1943.

- Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Services (WRCNS): Also known as “Wrens” after the nickname of their British Royal Navy counterparts. Was established July 31, 1942 and grew to approximately 7,000 by war’s end. Initially performed clerical and administrative tasks, would expand on these roles to do things like being on-shore radar operators and coding technicians.<sup>D, 2I, and 2N</sup>

- Since the onset of the Cold War followed by the Korean War, and missions of Canadian Peacekeeping such as Afghanistan, Canadian women including women from Sarnia have volunteered to serve in all capacities of the military and been deployed on missions around the world and sacrificed in the cause of peace and freedom.

## **The Contributions of the Canadian Red Cross and Other Organizations**

- The Canadian Red Cross Society was one of the leading wartime humanitarian organizations. After being founded in 1896, when Canadian soldiers went overseas to fight in the Boer War in 1899, it began its work to help the sick and wounded in that war. They collected donations of money and goods, providing a wide range of medical supplies and invalid foods. From the outset of World War I, the number of Canadian Red Cross branches and auxiliaries (church groups, clubs, etc.) exploded. Women were especially active in their support; knitting socks, scarves, sweaters, etc.; producing medical supplies by the millions; packing food parcels for Prisoners of War; producing jam and other canned foods for invalid soldiers overseas; donating countless hours of voluntary labour and large sums of money for relief work. They also set up bases in Britain and France to work with sick, wounded and captured soldiers; the tracking of missing soldiers; and corresponding with family members of the soldiers back at home. The vital humanitarian role of the Canadian Red Cross Society in World War II continued, and even expanded to include aid to civilian victims of the war (particularly bombed out British civilians during the Battle of Britain); development of a trained, uniformed Corps of women volunteers that served overseas and escorted war brides across the Atlantic; and for the first time, the development of the blood program, where civilian blood was collected for use in the new life-saving procedure of blood transfusion.<sup>2Y</sup>

- During World War II for the Sarnia Red Cross Society on Queen Street, the tracing of wounded or missing men, and the tracing of refugees was one of the biggest tasks taken on by the organization. For parents that received the

terse cable, "Regret to inform you that your son is reported missing in action," the Red Cross would be the first place to turn to. If the missing soldier was found to be a prisoner-of-war, the Red Cross became his "angel of mercy". For local European-born families whose relatives had been unreported since the Nazi armies swept through much of Europe, the Red Cross would again be the organization to turn to. With its world-wide information network, based out of the International Red Cross committee in Geneva, Switzerland, the Sarnia Red Cross could probe for details and gradually construct the fragments into a full story, joyful or sad, for the parents and families.

- The following are several examples of the willingness of Sarnians to support the victory efforts through the Red Cross:

- In October 1915, the British Red Cross Society asked Ontario cities to contribute funds to their organization. In a one-day whirlwind blitz conducted by over two hundred collectors throughout the city, over \$10,000 was contributed by Sarnia citizens. The Red Cross collectors reported, "The willingness and readiness of the people of Sarnia to contribute was the outstanding feature of the day. Everybody was ready, everybody enthusiastic and everybody wished it was twice or ten times as much."

- In mid-November 1939, the Sarnia Red Cross Society began an initial campaign to raise funds for war work, setting an objective of \$18,000. Canvassers volunteered their time spreading throughout the city going house to house in search of subscriptions. By the end of November 1939, Sarnia citizens had contributed over \$22,000 to the Red Cross War Fund. The more than one thousand employees at Imperial Oil Limited alone contributed just over \$8,000.

- In June 1940, the National Red Cross made an urgent appeal for assistance in France for the wounded and for five million refugees. Within three days, the Sarnia branch of the Red Cross was able to collect donations and dispatch a huge supply of dressings, gauze, bandages, compresses, pyjamas, surgical gowns, bed pads, surgical towels, knitted clothes, hospital gowns, socks, scarves, sweaters, helmets and blankets. At the same time, the Sarnia Red Cross was collecting waste materials across the city that would be sold for money for the war effort. Households were contributing papers, magazines, scrap iron, aluminum pans, automobile tires and tubes.

- The Sarnia Red Cross Society established a blood donors' clinic in 1942, beginning with 20 clinics in Sarnia that year. In 1943, that increased to 71 clinics; fifty in Sarnia, seven in Petrolia, five in Wyoming, four in Oil Springs, three in Brigden and two in Sombra. During the two years that the clinic operated, a total of over 7,300 contributions of blood were given. The donated blood was sent overseas for the servicemen.

- In September 1940, a letter was received at Canadian National Red Cross headquarters and then sent on to the Sarnia branch. The letter from Mr. B.E. Astbury, who was chairman of London's organized relief forces, was directed to the patriotic women workers who had given so much time in making garments and supplies for those in bomb-stricken areas of London, England. The following is a portion of that letter;

*I cannot think of even interrupted rest without asking the Canadian Red Cross to send to the people of Canada an expression of our heartfelt gratitude for the goods which they sent through their Red Cross to hundreds rendered homeless by barbarous and wicked attacks on civilians. Before the raids began you had already supplied several thousand blankets, which we had distributed to our offices in district centres, a blessing so great that the people of Canada can never realize its importance when we were able to supply those families rendered homeless in the first raids. With conditions steadily growing worse, government shelters, stocked only with bully beef and bread, could not supply blankets, clothing or food to the hundreds besieging relief centres. I turned to the Canadian Red Cross in this country.*

*I want the people of Canada to know that within two hours of our appeal, you had started delivering lorry loads of food, clothing and blankets, and these were unloaded during the most terrific air raids. For two days we worked like dock laborers and the Canadian soldiers who delivered your goods worked alongside us, refusing to take cover or cease work as German planes zoomed overhead. I wish the women of Canada could have seen the incidents which alone would convey to all Canadians the greatness of your gifts and the necessity for them. A father whose home had been destroyed, and who left his wife and children, to seek warm covering for them, stooped and kissed the bundle of four blankets given him. One of the children, at another centre, clad only in night attire, clutched her bundle of warm garments and wiped her tears as she cried; "Look mummy, they're new."*

- In August of 1944, according to J.O. Laird, organizer of the national salvage campaign with the Department of

National War Services, Sarnia had a record of the highest collection of salvage per capita of any place in Canada. This was a significant compliment to the people of Sarnia who saved their salvage and to the Red Cross-I.O.D.E. Conservation Committee that collected it.

- During World War II, two other organizations that Sarnians supported were the Canadian Russia Fund and the Queen's Canadian Fund for Air Raid Victims. During a ten-day Russia Fund drive in February of 1945 in Sarnia, more than 1,000 pounds of clothing was received by the local headquarters of the Canadian Aid to Russia Fund located in the basement of the Western Fur Company at 135 North Front Street. Cash donations and thousands of articles, including a variety of children's, men's and women's garments, were collected from local citizens, students and businesses and shipped to Russia. Sarnians also donated to the Queen's Canadian Fund, which gave aid to British bomb victims. One of the numerous reports of a victim aided by the Queen's Fund, was that of a 73-year old man who lived with his wife in England. After their home had been struck by a V-bomb, they went away while first aid repairs were made to their house. When they returned to it, they were overwhelmed to receive aid from Canada. In April of 1945, the Sarnia and Lambton County portion of the Queen's Canadian Fund donated by local citizens was approximately \$13,000.

### **Animals in War**

- Animals have demonstrated an enduring partnership with humans during times of war, serving with unwavering loyalty and dedication. Horses, dogs and pigeons have served as a means of transportation and protection, as beasts of burden, and as messengers while others served for companionship and morale as pets and mascots. The most famous Canadian mascot was a black bear cub named *Winnipeg*. "Winnie", an orphaned bear cub that had been purchased for \$20 in White River, Ontario by Canadian soldier Harry Colebourn and named after his hometown, would eventually travel overseas from Canada during World War One. Winnie became the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade's mascot and their beloved pet in Salisbury Plains, England. When Colebourn was deployed to France in 1914, he decided to place Winnie in the London Zoo, rather than subject him to the rigours of the front. Winnie became a popular attraction there and delighted thousands of visitors, including that of author A.A. Milne and his son, Christopher Robin. Winnie was so tame and trustworthy that children, including Christopher Robin, would play with her, ride on her back and allow them to feed her by hand. A.A. Milne went on to publish *Winnie-the Pooh* in 1926.<sup>3X</sup>

- An example of a mascot that became a hero was the Royal Rifles of Canada Regiment mascot Gander, during World War II. Gander was a massive Newfoundland dog acquired by the Royal Rifles battalion while they were stationed at the Gander airport. In the fall of 1941, the Winnipeg Grenadiers, along with the Royal Rifles Regiment, including "Sergeant" Gander, were sent to Hong Kong to defend it from enemy invasion. Not only was Gander a mascot, but he had a job to perform--he would bark and snap at the legs of the enemy and scare them away. He was also a smart dog; he knew what a grenade was and how it could hurt people.

On one December night in 1941, Gander saw a grenade tossed by an attacking Japanese soldier near a group of wounded Canadian soldiers. He ran to it, took it, and rushed away with it. The grenade exploded and Gander was killed. But he had saved the lives of the seven soldiers. In 2000, Gander was posthumously awarded the Dickin Medal, often referred to as the "Animals' Victoria Cross", for his conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. On the Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Wall, unveiled in Ottawa in 2009, Gander's comrades made sure his name was etched in stone alongside the 1,978 Canadians who fought defending against the Japanese forces that invaded Hong Kong. In November of 2012, the "Animals in War Memorial" was unveiled in Confederation Park, Ottawa.<sup>D, E, 2E, 2I, 3Y</sup>

- In December of 1939, the 26th Lambton Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery was moved to Guelph for the winter. Their mascot, a goat named "Cordite", disappeared mysteriously the night before the Sarnia battery moved to Guelph. Feeling a deep loss in the lack of a mascot, some of the Sarnia boys who had been home on leave for a weekend, turned up with a new mascot for the unit, a Shetland pony. The pony was an immediate success with the men. He was about five months old, a little larger than a dog, his long coat giving him a striking appearance, and he had an unusual characteristic. The pony liked to ride in automobiles. One member of the battery said that he curled up on the back seat of a car like a dog, and resented it keenly when he was required to move out.<sup>N</sup>

LONELY, DREARY ARE THE DAYS SINCE ONE WE LOVE WENT AWAY.  
LOVINGLY REMEMBERED BY HIS GRANDMOTHER.



## Notes on the Boer War

The following is a brief description of some of the historical events and major battles of the Boer War (South African War).

- Sarnia and Lambton had sixteen men participate in the Second Boer War, one of whom would make the ultimate sacrifice.
- The word “Boer”, comes from the Dutch word for farmer. The first European settlers in South Africa were Dutch immigrants from the Netherlands in 1652. By 1806, the British Empire had seized control of the Cape territory. By 1836, many of the Boers, descendants of the region’s first Dutch immigrants, had left the Cape and established two independent republics: the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic.
- The discovery of diamonds (1867) and gold (1886, in Transvaal) brought about rising tensions which led to war between the British Empire and the two independent Boer republics in 1880 and again in 1899.
- The First Boer War had been fought from December 16, 1880 to March 23, 1881. The Second Boer War (South African War) was fought between October 11, 1899 and May 31, 1902.
- Participation in the War by Canadian soldiers was a very divisive issue in this country. Pro-Empire Canadians urged the government to help, while most French Canadians and many recent immigrants were opposed to sending troops overseas.
- Prime Minister Laurier found a compromise to the split opinion in Canada by offering to send soldiers who volunteered, to send military equipment, as well as to arrange for transportation to South Africa. In turn, the British would pay the Canadian soldiers’ wages and arrange for their return home upon completion of their service.
- Sarnia citizens learned the details in the mid-October, 1899 *Sarnia Observer* (a weekly paper then), with the headline reading, “The Orders Issued – Mobilization of the Canadian Force Proceeding – 1,000 Volunteers to be Taken.” Some of the local details provided in the *Observer* that day included;
  - the Canadian contingent would mobilize at Quebec and sail from there.
  - the volunteers would be organized into eight companies of Infantry for active service in South Africa.
  - one thousand volunteers would be accepted.
  - rations, clothing and equipment would be provided free.
  - enrolment centers were in Victoria, Vancouver, Winnipeg, London, Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec, St. John, N.B., Charlottetown and Halifax.
  - volunteers had to have minimum height of 5 feet 4 inches, age between 18 and 45 years, and be able to pass certain physical requirements.
- The recruiting of soldiers from south western Ontario was conducted by the Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry out of Wolseley Barracks in London, Ontario. The companies of this Regiment were designated the 2nd (Special Service) Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry. Most of the Sarnia-Lambton County volunteers enlisted within a few weeks of the outbreak of the Boer War.
- Shortly after the information became known that several local boys had enlisted, a number of Sarnia citizens formed themselves into a committee and drafted the following letter:

*Sarnia, Oct. 23rd, 1899*

*Capt. Gorman, Wolseley Barracks, London*

*Dear Capt. Gorman,*

*Your fellow townsmen who admire the spirit and pluck which have impelled you, Kenneth Johnston and Dan McMillan of No. 7 Company, to volunteer for active service in the Transvaal, wish to show by a slight token, their regard for you and their appreciation of your courage. Will you accept the enclosed cheque and apply the money for the purchase of something for each of your trio, which will remind you of home and the friends here who will watch your course with pride. Wishing you health, safety and a happy return.*

*It was first intended to purchase some memento for the brave Sarnia boys, but owing to the time being so short it was decided to send the subscription direct to them at Wolseley Barracks at London, with the request to use it as best they see fit. To make the offering a public one subscription lists have been opened at the office of the Traders’ Bank and*

*the office of the Huron and Lambton Loan Company, where subscriptions can be handed in by all citizens who desire to do so, and thereby show their appreciation of the courage displayed by the boys from the Tunnel Town. All subscriptions received up to 10 o'clock tomorrow morning will be wired direct to Wolseley Barracks, London, and all subscriptions received after that hour will be sent direct to South Africa. Is it necessary for us to state that the gifts from Sarnians should be liberal? We think not.*

- As with the soldiers of later wars, the Boer War volunteers left Sarnia amid speeches, a parade and general fanfare. However, uniquely, these soldiers left Lambton County with money in their pockets – “testimonials” collected from the grateful citizens. Further financial security was provided from two sources: the Patriotic Fund, for soldiers and their dependants as established nationwide with Sarnia as a contributing chapter and employers’ guarantee of employment upon the soldiers return home.
- The first volunteers to leave Sarnia, Kenneth Johnston, Dan McMillan and Fred Gorman, would first travel to London, Ontario in late October 1899, to be sworn in. While there, the three young soldiers were each presented with a twenty dollar gold piece on behalf of friends in Sarnia. Four prominent Sarnia citizens came to London to say farewell to the three Sarnia volunteer soldiers: Lieut. Col. Ellis, of the 27th Battalion; Dr. Thomas Johnston, M.P. of Sarnia (father of Kenneth); Mr. Henry Gorman, of the *Observer* (father of Fred); and Mr. Mackenzie. Sir Wilfred Laurier, on his way to Sarnia, had stayed in London prior to the troops leaving. At the Tecumseh House, the Sarnia delegation and three soldier volunteers were presented to and had the opportunity to speak with Sir Wilfred Laurier.
- In late October 1899, the citizens of Western Ontario, including Sarnia, bid farewell to the members of B Company, Canadian Contingent as they left the city of London, Ontario. The streets were decorated with flags, bunting and streamers of red, white and blue and were dense with people, traffic at a standstill. Before leaving Wolseley Barracks, the officers in command, including Sergeant Fred Gorman of Sarnia, were presented with wrist watches by Alderman Graham, acting for the citizens committee. To the rank and file, including Sarnians Kenneth Johnston and Dan McMillan, Alderman Graham presented hunting knives and pipes. The men then marched from Wolseley Barracks to Victoria Park and then to the train station. During the entire march, Dr. T.G. Johnston, M.P. of Sarnia, accompanied by his youngest son Jeff, marched in the procession with his son Kenneth Johnston, and the other Sarnia boys, Sergt. Fred Gorman and Dan McMillan, and never left them until the last moment. The enthusiasm of the crowd was described as having no bounds; nevertheless, there were tears as well as cheers when the time for saying good bye to fathers and brothers and friends arrived. Archdeacon Davis of London, came into the train car with the three Sarnia boys, shook hands with all three heartily and bid them goodbye, Godspeed and wished them a safe return. As the train pulled out amid deafening cheers, the band played “Auld Lang Syne,” and the boys were off.
- A thousand men were quickly recruited from across Canada to form the First Contingent that sailed from Québec City on October 30, 1899, including those local Sarnia men who had volunteered. The Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry would be re-designated as the Royal Canadian Regiment in November of 1901.
- The British suffered serious setbacks in the opening battles of the war, and made urgent requests for Canada to supply more troops. In response, more Canadian troops would follow including horse-mounted troops, artillery batteries and even a field hospital. Not all Canadian soldiers saw action. Some performed garrison duty in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- The 1899-1902 Boer War was the first time Canada dispatched troops overseas to fight in war. Over the 2 ½ years, more than 7 400 Canadian volunteers, including twelve nurses, would serve in South Africa.
- The Battle of Paardeberg, February 18-27, 1900 was the first major Canadian action of the South African War. Canadians distinguished themselves in this first significant British victory of the war; however the cost was high, as 18 Canadians were killed and 68 wounded on the first day of the battle – the country’s bloodiest single day of fighting in the war.
- Canadians would fight in key battles such as Paardeberg, Israel’s Poort, Zand River, Mafeking, Doornkop, Leliefontein and Harts River. As the war progressed and the Boers refused to surrender, they turned to a guerrilla war of ambush and retreat. Grueling mounted patrols sought to bring the enemy to battle, and harsh conditions ensured that all soldiers struggled against disease and sniper’s bullets.
- The war finally ended with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902. The Boers surrendered their

independence in exchange for aid to those affected by the fighting and eventual self-government, among other terms. On June 2, 1902, Sarnia citizens read the details of the declared peace in the *Sarnia Observer*. On June 1, Lieutenant-General Lord Kitchener cabled the Canadian War Office that the terms of surrender had been signed by all the Boer delegates, announcing it to the world. An official message of congratulations was forwarded to England on behalf of the Dominion Government. News of the signing of the terms of peace was received with general rejoicing throughout the Dominion, with ministers referring to the subject from the pulpits and public demonstrations in numerous places.

- The Canadian soldiers returned home, although some chose to remain there, serving as members of the paramilitary South African Constabulary. Five Canadian soldiers earned the Victoria Cross during the war, the highest award for military valour. Approximately 270 Canadians lost their lives during the Boer War, about half of them were victims of disease, principally enteric fever.
- When the Sarnia and Lambton men returned home from war at Christmas of 1900, they were treated as heroes. They were met at the Cromwell Street train station by members of the City Reception Committee and local citizens. A procession made up of committee members, military officials, social organizations, local dignitaries, the fire department, city and county citizens and the Sarnia Band paraded them up Front Street which was decked in flags and streamers, to George St., Vidal St., and Davis St., to Victoria Square. Then there were speeches and presentations of gold watches. The next evening, a celebration in a packed Boys Brigade Hall was held with more speeches, short reminiscences and music from solo artists through to choirs. Appropriately, the Boys Brigade sang, "Praise God, From Whom all Blessings Flow".
- The Boer War was noteworthy for other prominent reasons: the British exercised a scorched earth policy and introduced "concentration camps"; the Boers waged guerilla warfare tactics of ambush and retreat; Canadian author John McCrae, author of "In Flanders Fields", started his military service as an artillery officer; approximately half the Canadian mortalities were due to disease; Sam Steele, a famous member of the North-West Mounted Police during the Yukon Gold Rush, served as a commanding officer of the Strathcona's Horse mounted infantry unit in the Boer War; Winston Churchill, working as a war correspondent, was captured, held prisoner and later escaped to join the British army; and Robert Baden-Powell, a lieutenant-general in the British Army, wrote "Aids to Scouting" for soldiers, which led to the structure and founding of the Boy Scouts movement worldwide based on his military experiences.
- The Boer War Memorial Fountain in Sarnia was erected in Victoria Park in 1908 (located outside and on the south side of Sarnia Library). Engraved on it are the names of sixteen men from Sarnia and Lambton County who participated in the Boer War, along with the South African locations where they served. Of the sixteen names on the Boer War memorial, only one man, Daniel Crone, died while serving.

## Notes on World War I (The Great War)

The following is a brief description of some of the historical events and major battles of World War I. Sarnia and Lambton's sons participated in all of the major battles, and many would lose their lives while fighting in them.

- Only three months before the start of World War I, there was a significant day in the history of Sarnia. It was on May 7th, 1914 that the town of Sarnia, having reached a population of 10,000 residents, was officially declared a city. On May 7th, 1914, the Royal Highness Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn visited the municipality from Ottawa accompanied by his youngest daughter, the Royal Highness Princess Patricia of Connaught. The Duke of Connaught, Prince Arthur William Patrick Albert, was the first member of the Royal Family to become the Governor-General of Canada. He was the third son of Queen Victoria, and his daughter Princess Patricia was a granddaughter of Queen Victoria. The royal father and daughter arrived in Sarnia by train at the Grand Trunk station at the foot of Ferry Dock Hill in the afternoon, greeted by enthusiastic, cheering crowds and the honour guard of the 27th Regiment with a regimental band. A procession with the Duke and his daughter in a horse-drawn carriage was then led up Front Street, to Christina and Davis Streets on its way to Victoria Park. There, for several hours during the afternoon, hundreds of people participated in the ceremonies while bands played and children waved flags. The guard of honour from the 27th Regiment, in scarlet tunics, white helmets and gleaming accoutrements, the school cadets in bright new uniforms, members of the local First Nations, a corps of khaki clad Boy Scouts and thousands of school children in white, made an effective background for the royal guests. Among the dignitaries were Colonels R. MacKenzie, Colonel R.I. Towers, Sarnia Mayor Joseph B. Dagan and Maude Hanna

who was hostess at a reception in Princess Patricia's honour (Maude Hanna would lose her stepson in WWI – see Neil William Hanna). At one point during the impressive ceremony Prince Arthur, Governor General of Canada, thanked the citizens of Sarnia for the warm welcome extended to his party and then officially proclaimed Sarnia as a city. While at the park, the Duke planted a ceremonial maple tree, using a small nickel-plated spade. City of Sarnia mayor Joseph Dagan then said, "In testimony of our loyalty to the King and your Highness as his representative in Canada, and in the public expression of our affection and regard for all the members of your illustrious family, we have taken the liberty of selecting as a synonym for Sarnia the title of the Imperial City, thus linking the title of the reigning house of the Empire with our young city's name." Mayor Dagan then watched his granddaughter, Margaret Diver, present a bouquet of flowers to Princess Patricia. After the ceremony, the Duke and Princess visited the Sarnia Collegiate Institute on London Road, and Sarnia General Hospital where tea was served. They were then taken on a tour of other interesting places in the city, including the Sarnia Reserve. They then returned to the Grand Trunk railway station where hundreds of people again cheered as the train pulled away. Less than three months after the Duke's visit and Sarnia being proclaimed a city, families in the new city of Sarnia learned that their country was going to war.

- An interesting sidenote is that at the outbreak of World War I, Captain Andrew Hamilton Gault offered the Canadian government \$100,000 to help recruit, finance and equip an infantry battalion for immediate overseas duty. One of Captain Gault's enthusiastic supporters was Lt.-Col. Francis Farquhar, who was the military secretary of Canada's Governor-General, the Duke of Connaught, Prince Arthur. Colonel Farquhar was able to gain the Duke's permission to name this new regiment raised by Captain Andrew Gault, after the Duke's youngest daughter, Princess Patricia of Connaught, who had endeared herself to Canadians, and who had visited Sarnia only months earlier in May of 1914. So on August 10th, 1914, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry was established in Ottawa. Only eight days later, the newly formed regiment had a full complement of volunteers, approximately 1,100 men, the majority of whom were veterans of the Boer War. In September 1914, the Battalion left for France, becoming the first Canadian unit to serve in the Great War. Commonly referred to as the "Princess Pat's" or "PPCLI", they have become one of the most well-known and fabled fighting regiments in Canada and around the world, having participated in every major operation undertaken by Canada in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and Peacekeeping Missions including Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup> Throughout the Princess Patricia's history, members of the Sarnia community have served in the unit, some making the supreme sacrifice.

- World War I was triggered on June 28, 1914 by the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo. Europe was already a tense powder keg, and that incident set off a chain of events that led to the start of war. War officially began on July 28, 1914, when Austria-Hungary (allied with Germany) declared war on Serbia (allied with Russia, France and Britain). In early August 1914, Germany declared war on Russia, then war on France and Belgium. The front page headlines of the August 3, 1914 *London Evening Free Press* newspaper read, "Germany, France and Russia at War Britain Thus Far Out of Struggle – Germany Has Invaded Luxemburg and Crossed Border into France; Fighting Goes On Along Frontier". At midnight August 4, 1914, the United Kingdom, including Canada and Newfoundland declared war on Germany. The front page headlines of the August 4, 1914 *London Evening Free Press* newspaper read, "BRITISH ULTIMATUM TO GERMANY – London, August 4--- Great Britain to-day sent practically an ultimatum to Germany demanding a satisfactory reply by midnight on subject of Belgian neutrality". Other headlines included on the front page of the newspaper were "France Formally Declares War – Commander-in-chief of French left for Frontier to-day – Nurses for British Army are being Sought in this city," and "Belgium Refuses Germany's Ultimatum – War is declared on Belgium by Germany; Who is going the Limit."

- World War I is also referred to as "The Great War" and "The War That Will End War". It altered the nature of warfare and changed the landscape of the modern world. It employed new technologies, including poison gas, flamethrowers, warplanes, tanks, and submarines, which demonstrated an unimaginable capacity for death and destruction.<sup>2K</sup> Over the course of the Great War, over 10 million soldiers were killed, 20 million soldiers were wounded and 8 million civilians died. For our country, it was the bloodiest conflict in Canadian history. More Canadian soldiers died in World War I, than Canadians died in all the other wars combined. However through the great achievements of Canadian soldiers on the battlefields, the world witnessed "the birth of a nation", Canada.

- In World War I, from 1914 until 1917, the *Canadian Expeditionary Force* was composed of men who had volunteered to fight. At enlistment, volunteers for the Canadian Expeditionary Force completed two-sided *Attestation*

*papers* that included the recruit's name and address, next-of-kin, date and place of birth, occupation, previous military service, and distinguishing physical characteristics. Recruits were asked to sign their Attestation papers, indicating their willingness to serve overseas, and to undergo a brief medical examination to determine physical well-being. By contrast, men who were *drafted* into the CEF under the provisions of the Military Service Act (1917) completed a far simpler one-sided form that included their name, date of recruitment, and compliance with requirements for registration. Military Service Act recruits were selected based in the order of unmarried men or widowers with no children first, married men with no children second, and finally married men or widowers with children. Officers completed a one-sided form called the *Officers' Declaration Paper*. Applicants were selected from, in order: single men, then married men without families, then married men with families (initially with wife's written consent). When the war started, it had more volunteers than it could take. As the war progressed, it became tougher, as stories from the Front came home. The army began loosening restrictions, lowering the minimum height and chest measurements, dropping dental and eyesight standards, and no longer requiring men to get their wives' permission to enlist.

- It is estimated that between 15,000 and 20,000 underage Canadian youths, some as young as ten, volunteered to serve in the First World War.<sup>21</sup> They either evaded or went with the blessing of their parents, or they fooled recruiters. The reasons for joining varied, such as wanting to be part of this “great adventure”, wanting an opportunity to travel and earn money, wanting to escape a difficult home life, or wanting to be with their fathers who were also serving. There were a variety of reasons why underage youths (under the age of 18, later changed to 19) could “get away with” joining the Canadian military. These include: no requirement necessary to prove one's age with a birth certificate at enlistment; a sheer lack of eligible men; a large number of unemployed youth seeking a financial means; and regimental recruiters filling quotas. Single men were the first applicants selected; as enlistments waned, the Militia lowered its recruiting standards and policies; if rejected by one recruiter, the youth would approach a different recruiter; and, even though they had lied about their age on their attestation papers, it was considered a “legally-binding” document. While some of the very young were siphoned off for special training units in England - including the largest, called the Young Soldiers Battalion - thousands of underage boys served in the trenches alongside their elders, and fought in all the major battles. For some, once it was discovered that they were underage, they were assigned non-combat roles such as “runners”, delivering food, water, and ammunition to the soldiers on the Front lines, or as buglers, in the trenches ready to sound the alarm in case of a gas attack. By the Great War's end, an estimated 2,300 underage soldiers were killed in action.<sup>21</sup> In both World War I and World War II, a number of Sarnia's young men that enlisted for service were underage. Some of these boys made the supreme sacrifice. For example, in September 1915, fourteen-year old Robert Batey of Sarnia, signed up to serve in the Great War. One year later, at the age of fifteen, Robert Batey would lose his life during fighting in Somme, France.

- At the start of the war, men from all classes, occupations and ages rushed to enlist at armories and militia bases across the country. For these first volunteers, there were strong feelings of patriotism – many were British born, along with the attraction of travel and adventure, the benefit of regular pay, and a desire to follow friends and family in what was thought was going to be a short war, likely over by Christmas. Colonel Sam Hughes, the Minister of Militia and Defence decided to organize volunteers into newly consecutively-numbered infantry battalions. Hughes, a powerful and controversial figure (advocate for the Ross Rifle), was also the man behind the creation of the primary training base for the First Contingent in 1914 at Valcartier, Quebec. After enlisting, all volunteers travelled to Valcartier for equipment, training and preparation for war. Originally a small piece of farmland in the area was bought and expropriated to increase the size of the base. One month after war broke out, over 32,000 volunteers arrived at the hastily prepared primary training base camp at Valcartier. They shared the camp with 8,000 horses.<sup>21, 3R</sup>

- After leaving the Port of Quebec on October 3rd, the 1st Contingent of the Canadian Expeditionary Force arrived in England on October 14, 1914 in some 30 ships. Nearly 800 of the soldiers who sailed in the First Contingent were American born, though the United States didn't enter the war until April 1917. By December 1914, the first Canadian troops were in France, comprised of the 1st to the 17th Infantry Battalions, plus the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

- In the long, harsh winter of 1914, the First Contingent of Canadian troops underwent rigorous training on Salisbury Plain, England. The miserable winter they experienced in the mud, cold and rain was one of the wettest on record. It was so miserable that the Australians and New Zealanders decided to train in Egypt. The Canadians trained with route marches, musketry lessons, drills and trench digging. In February 1915, the 1st Canadian Division embarked

for the trenches in France.<sup>D, 3R</sup>

- Following his inspection of the Canadian First Contingent, on February 4, 1915 on Salisbury Plain, His Majesty King George issued a farewell to the troops, to be read to all units on board ship, after their embarkation for France, on their way to the Front. Here is the text of the farewell:

*Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men:*

*At the beginning of November I had the pleasure of welcoming to the mother country this fine contingent from the Dominion of Canada, and now, after three months of training, I bid you godspeed on your way to assist my army in the field. I am well aware of the discomforts that you have experienced from the inclement weather, and abnormal rain, and I admire the cheerful spirit displayed by all ranks in facing and overcoming all difficulties.*

*From all I have heard and from what I have been able to see at today's inspection and march-past, I am satisfied that you have made good use of the time spent on Salisbury Plain. By your willing and prompt rally to our common flag you have already earned the gratitude of the mother land. By your deeds and achievements on the field of battle I am confident that you will emulate the example of your countrymen in the South African war, and thus help to secure the triumph of our arms. I shall follow with pride and interest all your movements, and I pray that God may bless you and watch over you.*

- Shortly after the First Contingent left for England, recruiting for a second contingent began. The Second Contingent sailed for England in the spring of 1915, in separate transports, and was comprised of the 18th through the 32nd Infantry Battalions. As the war progressed and casualties began to mount, it became necessary to replace losses in the field. New Battalions were now being trained and sent to England as fast as possible. Upon arrival, most of the new Battalions were absorbed into reserve Battalions. From there, troops were sent to where they were needed, either as reinforcements for the 1st and 2nd Divisions or to the 3rd and 4th Divisions as they were being formed in England. The 3rd and 4th Contingents were comprised of the 33rd through the 260th Infantry Battalions. Sarnia fathers and sons were a part of each Contingent.<sup>21</sup>

- When the First World War began in 1914, there was widespread suspicion in Canada that immigrants from enemy countries – Germany, Austria-Hungary (Ukrainians, Czechs, Slovaks), and later Turkey and Bulgaria– might be disloyal. Labelling them “enemy aliens,” the federal government (War Measures Act) passed regulations which allowed it to monitor and even intern some of these immigrants. The fear was that these “enemy aliens” could go home to fight for their armies against Canada or sabotage the country from within. On October 28, 1914, all enemy aliens were ordered to register at a local office. During the course of the war, approximately 80,000 enemy aliens registered in Canada. Of those, by the end of the war, approximately 8,600 men would be interned at 24 camps and stations across Canada. They endured hunger and forced labour, including helping to build landmarks such as Banff National Park. A few hundred women and children were also interned. In Ontario, camps were located in Kapuskasing, Sault Ste. Marie, Niagara Falls, Toronto, Kingston and Petawawa.<sup>21, 2N, 3R, 3T</sup>

- When the First World War broke out, it was thought that the best way to recruit soldiers was to create units based on a specific geographic region or ethnic origin. In Sarnia and Lambton County, many of the men that enlisted did so with the First Contingent, and later in infantry battalions such as the 18th Battalion (Western Ontario), the 34th Battalion, the 70th Battalion and the Lambton 149th Battalion. Once the Canadian Expeditionary Force was shipped overseas, these “feeder” units would be disbanded and the soldiers integrated into regular British army units. A number of Sarnia/Lambton men also joined other units such as the Canadian Mounted Rifles, the Canadian Field Artillery, the Canadian Army Medical Corps, the Canadian Machine Gun Corps, the pioneers, foresters, railway ordnance and service formations of the 1st Contingent (enlisted by Major Bentley) and the 2nd Contingent.

- The 18th Battalion (Western Ontario), CEF recruited and was mobilized in London, Ontario. It was authorized on November 7, 1914, and embarked for England on April 18, 1915. The Battalion would arrive in France on September 15, 1915, where it fought as part of the 4th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Canadian Division. The 18th Battalion fought in until the end of the war, including in battles at Mount Sorrel, Somme, Arras, Vimy, Hill 70, Ypres, Passchendaele, and Cambrai.

- The 34th Battalion was authorized on November 7, 1914, recruiting and mobilized in Guelph, Ontario. The 34th left for England on October 23, 1915. It provided reinforcements to the Canadian Corps in the field until November 27, 1916, when it was reorganized as the 34th Boys Battalion, CEF. The battalion was disbanded on July 17, 1917.

- In September 1915, the following recruitment advertisement was carried in the Observer newspaper for a time:

*YOUNG MEN ARE WANTED!*

*Recruiting is now open for the 70th Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force.*

*Recruiting Stations for Lambton County are located in Sarnia, Petrolea, Alvinston, Watford, Forest and Thedford.*

1. *Recruits to be of good character and physically fit for service.*
2. *Age from 18 to 45 years: minimum height, 5 feet 2 inches.*
3. *Transportation will be furnished to Recruit from Recruiting Station to Camp in London.*
4. *Pay \$1.10 per day for Privates, and board, lodging and uniform supplied. Separation allowance for dependents of Privates \$20.00 a month.*

*Dependents include only:*

- a) *Wives.*
- b) *Children of a widow if in care of a guardian.*
- c) *Widowed mother, if the son is unmarried and her only support.*

*The Patriotic Fund supplements these amounts for soldiers having dependents.*

*Consent of wives, parents or guardians is no longer necessary.*

*The foregoing is a copy of a circular issued by the officers in command of the 70th.*

*Seven of the thirty-three officers to complete the 70th Battalion are Lambton men.*

*Five of the seven fill the higher commands, including the colonel, two majors and two captains.*

*They look to Lambton to rally to the colors and furnish a quota for which the county will have reason to be proud.*

*WILL YOU BE ONE?*

- The 70th Battalion was authorized on August 15, 1915 and was based out of London, Ontario, recruiting in Essex, Kent, Middlesex and Lambton counties. In October 1915, the Observer reported that, “nearly all members of the 70th Battalion were Sarnia lads.” The 70th Battalion left for England on April 25, 1916, where it provided reinforcements to the Canadian Corps in the field until July 7, 1916. The 70th Battalion’s commanding officer was Lt. Col. R.I. Towers from April 15, 1915 until July 6, 1916. Lieut.-Col. R.I. Towers, who was a Sarnia barrister, vigorously objected to the dismemberment of his unit, but the plan was carried out. Its personnel was absorbed into the 39th Battalion, C.E.F., about half initially remained in England and half were sent to the firing line in reinforcement drafts.

- In April 1916, the 70th Battalion departed for overseas from London, Ontario. Hundreds of Sarnia citizens travelled to London to bid farewell, as its commander (R.I. Towers) and many of its members were from Sarnia, as well as Point Edward and Lambton County. The London Free Press reported that for its citizens, “half of the city must have turned out to honor them on their departure from her borders.” Troops marched to entrain through the downtown streets lined with crowds scores deep, to the station platform, surrounded by throngs of immense crowds. Following is a portion of the report on the battalion’s departure:

*The Gallant 70th Departs*

*.... On either side of the street, the crowd awaited, and for blocks away one could tell by the nearing cheers of the crowds, as well as by the classic strains from the band, the approach of the gallant battalion leaving London... Guests thronged to hotel windows and waved a hearty god-speed to the heroic hearts in khaki marching past.... Friends and relatives of the 70th men were admitted through the lines and directed to the coaches allotted to the platoons and companies of which those dear to them were members. There were touching scenes of farewell and tears that broke from quivering eyelids, brave though they tried to be. There were little children weeping and would not be comforted by assurances that “daddy was going to Toronto to buy baby a teddy bear.” There were mothers and sisters, wives and sweethearts, whose hearts anguished near to breaking, and fathers and brothers, who found it difficult to remember that though women may weep, far sterner tasks wait for the men to shoulder....*

*Little interesting touches deep fraught with human interest were to be observed on all sides. Away back from the lines deep in the crowd, an aged man in khaki was playing an euphonium, “Auld Lang Syne,” “O Canada,” and “Keep the Home Fires Burning.” While the battalion was marching to the station, one of the popular lieutenants observed on the sidewalk a Chinese laundryman who had once done the lieutenant’s washing. For a moment, the*

lieutenant stepped out of the line. "Hello, Wong Ling," he said, "surely you were not going to let me go away without saying good-bye." The almond eyes of the laundryman brightened to a pathetic brilliance as he warmly clasped the young officer's hand....

- The Lambton 149th Battalion, the only unit raised exclusively in Lambton County, was based out of Watford, Ontario and began recruiting in on November 26, 1915. They set a goal to recruit 1000 Lambton able-bodied young men of military age who were physically fit for war service. As part of their recruitment effort and training, in mid-January 1916, the Sarnia company of the Lambton 149th Battalion, over 120 young men, went on a three day march south of Sarnia. Leaving the Sarnia armories, marching along the river, they travelled through Corunna, Courtright to Sombra. In each village, the young men were welcomed by cheering citizens; there were patriotic speeches, dinners served and an evening of entertainment. On the third day, the company marched from Sombra back to Sarnia. Just over three months later, in early March 1916, the 149th already had close to 800 volunteers signed up to fight. Recruits trained at Camp Borden. The 149th commanding officers were Dr. Lt. Col. R.G.C. Kelly (from Nov. 26/15 until he died of stroke on Dec. 12/15); then Dr. Lt. Col. Thomas P. Bradley (gave up command to go to the Army Medical Corps on Dec. 26/16); then Lt. Col William Wallace MacVicar (until the unit was disbanded in England).
- In late May 1916, the Lambton 149th prepared for their journey overseas. Two days before leaving, on May 26, 1916, the 800-man battalion paraded through the streets of Petrolia, where they were cheered by a crowd of thousands and a reception was held in their honour. The next day, Saturday May 27, the battalion marched through the downtown streets of Sarnia, part of a "Grand Mobilization" weekend of events. Front and Cromwell Streets were so densely packed with people that it was difficult for police to clear a passageway for the troops to move along. The following is a portion of the report on the parade:

*Sarnia Entertains the Boys of the 149*

... As the battalion proceeded along the streets it was followed by a surging mass of humanity – men, women and children, automobiles, carriages and in fact every kind of vehicle that could be pressed into service. Front Street had been gaily decorated with flags and bunting for the occasion and presented a pleasing sight to the eye. The decorations and the multitude of people all going to show that Sarnia citizens were indeed proud of Lambton's 149.... In the march past, the battalion, nearly 800 strong, presented a soldierly appearance that was most creditable. The steady swing and even tread of the troops to the inspiring strains of the band was a pleasure to behold and each company as they passed along the streets was greeted by cheers and hand clapping from the friends who had gathered to do the boys honor....

- On the Sunday morning of May 28, the battalion paraded to Victoria Park for a special church service. In the early morning hours of Monday, May 29th, 1916, the force of 800 volunteers of the Lambton 149th Battalion left Sarnia for training camp at Carling's Heights near London, Ontario to train for the front. They paraded from City Hall to Front Street, to the Cromwell train station. The following is a portion of the report on the battalion's departure:

*Bands Play, Women Weep, 149th Gone  
Farewell*

*Here's luck to the boys from Lambton  
That heard their country's call  
Shouldered a gun to fight the Hun  
Offered their life, their all*

*We're proud of our border county  
That mustered the one-four-nine  
May the deeds they do live history through,  
And their valor ever shine.*

... The band played "We'll Never Let the Old Flag Fall," and many of the soldier boys joined in the refrain, while mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts did their best to keep back the tears. The Battalion swung smartly along the street, the steady tramp, tramp, being drowned by the cheers of assembled hundreds. But there was no glitter of gold or brass, no tinkle of accouterment, for these men were on their way to war, and Sarnia was saying goodbye to Lambton's 149.



*Lean, brown young men were in the majority of those in the khaki clad columns of fours, though here and there was a head marked with gray – veterans going forth for their country again. And all along the streets were young and old, all assembled with the one object in view – to honor the soldier boys and bid them farewell and God speed....*

*While the men were boarding the special train, the band played “Auld Lang Syne,” “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” and “The Red, White and Blue.” There were many tear-stained faces among the crowd but it was not all sadness. The 149 is not a conscript legion being driven into strife but is composed of free men who have heard and answered the call of their country. Other soldiers have left Sarnia but the 149 is distinctively a Lambton product made up almost entirely of men from Lambton and Sarnia. So with the tears and cheers, was mingled patriotism and though the sacrifice was great – the greatest that could be made – many a woman covered her heart break with a smile....*

*... And when the last section drew away from the Cromwell Street depot as the clock in the Post Office building tolled seven, there was much cheering, and then a great silence.*

On their way to London, the 149th Battalion stopped over in Watford, where they paraded down the main street, and lunch was provided for all of the men by the people of Watford.

• In June 1916, Corporal Sinclair Battley of the Canadian Army Medical Corps wrote to the Sarnia Observer providing information on the disposition of Sarnia boys at the Front. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Editor of Sarnia Observer, Dear Sir,*

*I am writing you a short account of the disposition of the Sarnia boys at the front, as far as my knowledge goes, thinking that their friends might be interested in getting information concerning them. Those who left to join the first contingent have been scattered to many units and along with the men who came later, give Sarnia a representation over practically every part of the war area. As to the first battalion men I have little knowledge, except that with the exception of those who returned – they are still at the front.... I met in France a number of the Sarnia boys from No. 3 Stationary Hospital after their return from Lemnos. A tougher and more healthy crowd of fellows it would be hard to find. The work on the island evidently having agreed with them, although of a far more strenuous and exhausting nature than we ever had to endure in France....*

*While passing through Shorncliffe I met most of the Sarnia officers and men of the 70th Battalion. They are working hard and preparing to take their places in the firing line. Everyone is bronzed like an Indian and in the best of health. I did not see the Sarnia artillery men in Shorncliffe as they have a special camp. There are many well known Sarnia boys in the artillery and other branches at the front and in England....*

*Sarnia may well feel proud of her sons, for they are ably representing her in this time of national peril in every branch of the service and on every portion of the British military areas. Little did we think when we left Sarnia on that memorable August morning in 1914 that we were to be amongst the pioneers of Canada in the greatest struggle the world has known and we are all proud that we were privileged to be amongst those first representatives, not only of Canada but also of Sarnia.*

*Sinclair Battley*

• On July 8, 1916, the Lambton 149th Battalion along with seven other units; the 118th, 135th, 142nd, 153rd, 161st, 168th and 186th, left for Camp Borden for further military training. The men remained there until March 1917. During this time frame, many of the men were posted to other units to fill them out. These other units went overseas before the 149th. Upon completion of training in late March, the Battalion returned to London, were billeted at Queen’s Park, and had time to visit their parents, wives and children. The 149th then boarded a troop train to Halifax, arriving there to march directly onto the waiting troop ship, the *SS Lapland*, setting sail for England on March 29th, 1917. An uneventful trip overseas followed until, as the *Lapland* began its entry into Liverpool, twelve miles from its dock, the ship struck a mine off the Mersey Bar Lightship. The front portion of the vessel began filling with water, yet it made it to its dock, and all the troops disembarked with no casualties. Once in England, the 149th was split up and its members were then absorbed into the 4th and 25th Reserve Battalions on April 8, 1917.

• Sarnia’s mayor in 1915 was William R. Paul. With more than 1000 of the City’s 10 000 residents heading to war, he did something quite unique and progressive. Mayor Paul decided something had to be done to protect the economical security of the loved ones left behind. He decided the municipality should buy life insurance for every Sarnia soldier. Council went along with the proposal, and a deal was struck with the State Life Insurance Company of Indianapolis. With more than 100 of the city’s young men losing their lives while serving over the course of the war, many local families needed help with the day-to-day costs of running a household. Council granted an

allowance of \$10 per month to the wives or mothers of enlisted men. Families received \$2 per month for each child of a soldier. In 1915, this was a significant amount of cash. The City was under no obligation to provide such assistance. Mayor Paul did not seek re-election in 1916.<sup>8</sup>

- In early May 1915, there was a public meeting held in Sarnia, presided over by Mayor William R. Paul. At that meeting, in a unanimous vote, it was decided that Sarnia would purchase a motor ambulance for use by the Canadian contingent, something that a number of other cities had also done. It was decided a committee would canvas the city for subscriptions to provide the necessary funds. By the end of the month, over \$3,100 had been collected for the purchase of a motor ambulance – a Sarnia Ambulance, which would be sent to France.
- The \$3100+ raised by the citizens of Sarnia was donated to the Canadian Red Cross Society for the purchase of a motor ambulance and supplies which would be sent overseas. A motor ambulance was purchased from the McLaughlin Buick Firm in Oshawa. The fully equipped ambulance was sent to the Red Cross in England in September 1915. Along with the ambulance, also delivered were cans of tobacco, pails of jam, socks and beds for hospitals. The ambulance was used for a time in England, and then sent on to the Front in France.
- Dr. W.A. Henderson was a Sarnia doctor who served for over a year with the British Army Medical Corps, in England, Egypt, Gallipoli and France. Dr. Henderson was originally from Scotland; he had six brothers and two sisters, and his family would reside in Sarnia. He would serve in the city council for several years, and was elected mayor of Sarnia in 1911. As mayor, he was the driving force behind the creation of Sarnia Harbour by the Federal Government, and he led the way in getting the city to move from wooded sidewalks to concrete ones. During WWI, while serving in various hospitals and clearing stations throughout Europe, he wrote letters home and to the Observer describing his experiences. In May 1916, he sent the following letter, from “Somewhere in France” after he saw a little piece of Sarnia there:

*The Sarnia Ambulance “Somewhere in France”*

*The reference in The Observer to the Sarnia Ambulance from time to time caused me to have a glance at all such craft in my travels. At all the unloading places in England, Scotland and Wales, I looked in vain. When I came to France a month ago I resumed my search and after 20,000 miles travel was rewarded by seeing “Sarnia, Canada” much to my surprise, on the ambulance into which was being placed two of my patients. It was at Etaples, pronounced “A-Top,” some miles south of Boulogne, where is situated many hospitals. The driver, Russel Parsons by name told me while I went for a ride to the hospital with him, that it has done splendid work and is on the road daily. From inspection I could see it is still undamaged, has been in no smashes and in fact is in perfect condition. The engine is running very smoothly and strong and the driver likes it very much. On the side in large block letters is “SARNIA, CANADA,” and on a nickel plate in front are the words, “Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.” The army number is 815. At other places in France I had seen one marked from the “Women and Girls, Peel County, Ontario,” and one donated by Bracebridge, so I was pleased to see also the one donated by the citizens of Sarnia.*

*Yours sincerely, W.A. Henderson*

- In another May 1916 letter sent home, from Rouen, France, Dr. W.A. Henderson described his months of work on an ambulance train, trains that transported wounded soldiers that had returned by ship from France or the Mediterranean to the English coast, where they were brought to various British hospitals. He described it as,  
*...just imagine, if you will, a hospital complete in every detail, with twice the accommodation of the Sarnia general, and it all on wheels...Like a city hospital, too, it must be amply supplied with food (a wounded Tommy has a twenty-four hour appetite), water, lit, kept scrupulously clean, with sanitation carefully carried out, and the patients all nursed and medically treated as required... On the train, he ...rendered such surgical and medical aid as is required, such as dressings, dealing with secondary hemorrhages, comforting diseased patients, dispersing medications, tending to fracture cases and the badly wounded so they suffer as little as possible. Dr. W.A. Anderson also described some of the conversations he had with the wounded:*

*As you go about you get much information first hand, of what is going on at the front, and what life is like in the trenches. You get also many interesting stories of close calls and deeds of valour done. One Scotch lad told he was in a trench with other men when the Huns exploded a mine under them. He was blown clear out of his trench into the German trench 12 yards away. The Germans thinking their own trench might be injured in the explosion had evacuated it for the moment. All the lad felt was a sore arm, and realizing where he was, he got up, climbed out and put his back to his own lines. Many bullets whistled about but only one hit him, and that through the fleshy part of the*

hip. When I asked him what he did when the bullet hit him, he said: "I clapped my hand over the sore spot and ran all that harder." He got safely back to the dressing station, where it was found his arm was broken, but the bullet wound, was a nice clean thing, the bullet having gone clear through. He said as soon as his arm was better he wanted to go back.

*We got many such stories... then, too, you often get much food for thought. This for instance; in passing through the train one day I saw a man looking very down hearted and thinking to cheer him up a bit, I sat down beside him. He had reason to be down-hearted for he had lost both legs. We tried to talk to him of his having done his bit, and of his service to his country and such like, but he said, "Yes that's fine now, but a few years after the South African war I knew a man, in the same plight as I am now, who had to beg from door to door and was often refused a slice of bread, and was frequently spoken to harshly, and in a year or two it will be the same way with me, for men soon forget." It was a hard argument to combat, but surely as long as we live, we will never refuse to help the brave fellows who have been maimed in our defence or fail to help the widows and children of those who bled and died.*

Dr. W.A. Anderson would return to Sarnia in August of 1916. He gave a number of lectures in Sarnia and Lambton County telling of his first hand experiences. Only two months after his return to Sarnia, he died suddenly at the age of 45. He left behind a wife and two children.

- On April 7th 1916, Mrs. Margaret McCrae who was in Newcastle-on-Tyne, England wrote a letter to the Sarnia Observer. Mrs. McCrae was a Sarnian working in England. One of the things she was doing while there was sending supplies to Canadian soldiers who were prisoners of war. The following is a portion of her letter:

*To the Editor, Sarnia Observer,*

*As I have received considerable money from Sarnia people for my work in connection with Canadian prisoners of war, I am sure they will be interested to have a report from me, showing how the work is progressing. I still send parcels of food to the same twelve Canadians, not having added to the list, as this is all I can undertake to look after properly with the subscriptions I have received, and in any case, this, with my other war works, keeps me fairly busy. Since I started this work I have received donations amounting to \$150 and have sent 118 parcels weighing 11 pounds each (which, by the way, is well over a half ton of food).... I received the names of these prisoners from the Canadian Red Cross in London, and I am under obligation to send parcels to these men, and no one else is given these names...*

*So many people at home seem to think the prisoners do not receive parcels sent. This is quite a mistaken idea, as everything I have sent has arrived and I hear constantly from these men, as each parcel is acknowledged by date and these letters are genuine, without a doubt. Since the U.S. intervened, there is much improvement in camps and delivery of parcels. Most of my men have sent me snap shots of themselves, and some views of camps, which appear very dreary, bare places. Thanks to the Canadian Red Cross, all Canadian prisoners are now well supplied with clothing of all kinds. One thing I never fail to send is the best beef dripping, as there is absolutely no fat of any kind at the camps, and they all like this....*

*I am now the official Canadian Red Cross visitor to the military hospital here, and on my first visit last week, saw twenty-six Canadians in various stages of recovery, had a thoroughly interesting time with them. They were so glad to have a real Canadian as visitor, as up to this, it had been an English lady, and we discussed everything pertaining to Canada and Canadians. One man who had arrived the previous day was very "down." He nearly wept when I told him I came from Sarnia. He helped build the tunnel and felt a decided proprietorship in it. Another man from St. Marys, had worked on the telephone in Sarnia, and asked me if I knew several people, of course I did...*

*I am still making munitions on Saturdays, along with about one hundred other ladies, from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., and hope every shell we turn out will accomplish its purpose. It is very dirty but interesting work and there is considerable satisfaction in it. This has been a bad week for zeppelin raids, as these unwelcome visitors have come to this locality four nights in succession. Fortunately the bombs were dropped some distance from us but the noise is terrific and thousands of windows were smashed, blocks away from where the bombs fell. We had a flying visit of 24 hours from Dr. Henderson this week which we all enjoyed very much. He had the zeppelin experience to a certain extent, and saw the damage next day. In one raid 20 were killed and over 100 injured. It is decidedly nerve racking when all lights are turned out, trains and trams stopped and we sit in darkness, wondering if the zeppelin has designs on our house and the next bomb dropped will be dropped here. There is little chance for anyone near them when dropped.*

HE HAS GIVEN HIS LIFE TO BRING BACK PEACE AND MAINTAIN OUR LIBERTIES.  
EVER REMEMBERED BY MOTHER.

*We all feel sure things are coming out right for the allies, though there is certainly no immediate prospect of the finish... I hope I have not wearied your readers with this lengthy letter, and assure all those who are assisting me in feeding these brave Canadians, that they are receiving my grateful thanks, and also thanks of the men in German camps. Thanking you for your kindness in publishing the above, I remain, yours sincerely.*

*Margaret McCrae*

- The Great War was concentrated along the “Western Front” (through Belgium and France) and the “Eastern Front” (through Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary). However there was also fighting at sea, in Turkey, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Mesopotamia and Palestine, and the Italian front.
- During World War I in France and Belgium, on the “Western Front”, the forces of France, Britain, Canada and their allies fought the Germans. Trenches stretched hundreds of miles throughout northern Europe. From their opposing complex series of trenches, they faced one another across a deadly “No Man’s Land” of barbed wire, exploding artillery shells, grenades, sniper fire, poison gas attacks, buried land mines and machine-gun fire. Frontal attacks against enemy trenches led to terrible losses. Adding to the hardships were poor weather such as incessant heavy rains, wind, bone-chilling winters and hellishly hot summers, the smells of rotting corpses, stagnant mud and human waste, along with rat infestations, lice and diseases such as typhoid, dysentery, trench foot, gangrene, meningitis, influenza, tuberculosis and pneumonia. Complicating things for Canadians soldiers, many were issued the Canadian-made Ross Rifle Mk. III, which turned out to be unsuitable for the conditions of trench warfare. On the western front, one Canadian in seven who served was killed.<sup>F, 21, 3S</sup>
- Trenches were dug in a zigzag or stepped pattern so that if an enemy jumped in, he couldn’t fire all the way down the line. At first, the trenches were little more than glorified ditches, but as the fighting continued they became more elaborate. The front-line trench, or firing trench, was topped with barbed wire to slow down attacking enemies and sandbags to provide cover. It was backed up by support trenches and reserve trenches running between them. Each dawn, the usual time for an enemy attack, soldiers woke to climb up on the first step and “stand-to,” guarding their front line trenches. Following that, the day involved a number of chores such as cleaning equipment, filling sandbags and repairing duckboards. With the onset of dusk, the morning ritual of “stand-to” was repeated. At nighttime, under the cover of darkness, soldiers often climbed out of the trenches and moved into No Man’s Land, to repair barbed wire, dig new trenches or gather intelligence. Outside of formal battles, snipers and shells regularly killed soldiers in the trenches, a phenomenon known as “wastage.”<sup>F, 21, 3S</sup>
- Many factors helped persuade soldiers to fight - the bonds of friendship, loyalty, and community, based on shared experience and common dangers were principal among them. The military understood many of the challenges to morale and the discomfort caused by life in the trenches. It tried to provide soldiers with the comforts necessary to sustain morale. Letters and periodic care packages with food, cigarettes, magazines and clothes from home were an important link to loved ones. Soldiers’ letters – though censored by their officers or commands behind the lines, allowed them to tell of their lives in the trenches. Bully beef (tinned corned beef) and “hardtack” biscuits were a staple of the soldier’s diet. Army-issued rum became a beloved part of trench life. When rum was available, soldiers received their daily ration consisting of a “tot,” about two ounces, morning and night. Rum was a reward, a medicine, and a combat motivator. It helped soldiers to stay warm in their dank trenches, to sleep after the day’s horrors, and to quell their nerves ahead of battle.<sup>21, 3R</sup>
- World War I was known as a “trench war” with most battles waged by the infantry. Battles tended to be prolonged, futile affairs, bogged down by attacks and counter-attacks, a static war of attrition, often ending in stalemates, with losses and gains sometimes measured by only a few hundred meters. The number of wounded and fatalities in this type of warfare tended to be quite high on both sides. The following are a few stories and letters of several Sarnia/Lambton boys who fought in the trenches, which provide a glimpse of the horrors that they witnessed and experienced:

- Private John Carolan was born in Ireland, and spent some time in Sarnia working as a fireman on the Great Lakes. On April 23rd, 1915 at Ypres, fierce pounding by the German artillery had smashed a gap in the British defence lines. John was with his unit of the 1st Battalion that had rushed to fill the gap. John had just passed the position from where his late commander was cheering on his force, when John was wounded in the head. Here is a portion of his John’s description of his former commander who fell in the battle, and his description of the experience:

*Colonel Becher was the bravest man in the unit. His troops would have followed him anywhere, or even into hell itself, and surely those engagements that we came through were as bad as the infernal regions. There was nothing the men wouldn't do for him, and there was nothing he would ask a soldier to do that was not a matter of plain duty. He wouldn't send a man where he would not go himself. No wonder the men worshipped him.*

*An accurate and realistic description of the fierce engagements at Langemarck, Ypres and Hill 60 is almost impossible. The terrible crash of artillery, the ceaseless rattle of fire arms and machine guns and the deep reverberating boom of the "Jack Johnson," the men falling all around in a veritable hail of lead, the sudden "Up and at them!" that carried all before it, the dogged retreat when every foot of ground gained was held tenaciously and given only at a tremendous cost to both sides – all these were terrible phases of the conflict that were indescribable.*

John Carolan would return to Canada after recovering from his wound.

- William "Harry" Jennings was born in Forest, Ontario in 1883. He enlisted in August 1914, and served overseas in France, with the Canadian Infantry, a member of the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry. On a night in February 1915, he and three others were carrying ammunition into the trenches when they were hit by German machine gun fire. One man was killed; Harry and another man were wounded. Harry was hit in the head, fracturing his skull, causing temporary paralysis. The other wounded man dragged Harry through 50 yards of knee-high mud to safety. Harry was eventually brought to a hospital, operated on and given time to recover. The following is a portion of a letter written by Harry to his mother while he was recovering in a hospital in England:

*My Dear Mother,*

*... Now just a word to the war. It is absolutely worse than the people ever imagine. The weather is not as cold as Canada of course but it rains or sleet every day nearly. Raw and miserable and the trenches are a terror. Actually water over the knees have I stood in for 2 days and nights and kept my back humped up and my head down below the trenches all the time. And then when we come out had to cut my boots off my feet. They were so swollen. This is what the papers don't tell and are not allowed to tell, so don't show this letter around. And Belgium, village after village, and they are only a matter of a few miles apart here absolutely blown to pieces. And the people where they are, goodness only knows. And France isn't much better a country of old, young and cripples If people only realized what a war such as this meant to the country, where it was waged it would mean that the world would turn to socialism in no time. Thank goodness you live in North America....<sup>PP</sup>*

Harry Jennings would return to the front and eventually return to Canada before the end of the war. He would die in May of 1925, of "influenzal brocho pneumonia, related to his service."

- Leonard Francis Allingham was born in Courtright, Ontario and raised in Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, he was employed with Imperial Oil Company in Sarnia. He enlisted in September 1914 with the Canadian Infantry, 7th Battalion and was later transferred to the Canadian Army Medical Corps, No. 14 Field Ambulance Corps. The following is a portion of a letter that he wrote in late April of 1915 from France, to his mother Mrs. John Allingham, of 402 Wellington Street, Sarnia:

*Dear Mother,*

*I received your letter yesterday and was glad to hear form you. Things are getting a little hotter around where we are now. Bullets and shells whizzing through the air everywhere. You can tell Clarence things are just as hot as they put in the papers, about the battles. I guess you will have the news of the battle (April 27) we are in. We were four days dressing the wounded without a wink of sleep and we are back for a rest. The boys that were left out of the battle turned around and volunteered to go back at the Germans, again, after being in battle for five days. I guess there isn't many left of the Sarnia boys (poor fellows). They wouldn't give in until there was hardly enough of them to make a company out of each battalion. There is a few killed and wounded out of our bunch. Some of them are from Sarnia also...*

*We were all separated into stretcher squads and sent out to collect the wounded that couldn't walk. If anybody wants to go through purgatory once they only want to be in a battle like this one which our boys went through.... Our bunch worked like heroes and there is some news that one or two of us are going to receive a Distinguished Conduct medal. They certainly deserve it. When they double across field under shell fire after wounded. Well mother dear, this is all the news I have to say for now. If I told you all the news it would take a newspaper to write it on....*

Leonard Allingham would be wounded in action on June 22, 1915. He would survive the war and return to Sarnia.

- Ulysses Theodore Mays was born in Bellefontaine, Ohio, but was residing in Sarnia at the time of his enlistment, in September 1914. He became a member of the Canadian Infantry, 1st Battalion. The following is a portion of a letter that he wrote in early May of 1915, to his wife Mrs. Mary Mays of 409 George Street, Sarnia:

*Dear Wife,*

*You have probably read the account of the great dash the Canadians made, but the half has never been told. I am thankful to say I am well and among the living. I have been in three countries now, England, France and Belgium, and hope to be in Germany. We are now in a rest camp and expect to be here two or three weeks. I am glad to get away from the roar of the guns. I have not seen Tod Fleming since. He was killed or wounded, I don't know which. We lost so many of our boys, but they died heroes. We charged the Germans in a regular hail of shot and shell. It did not seem as though anyone could possibly live under the fire, but a few of us are left to tell the tale, but for how long we don't know....*

Ulysses Mays would survive the war and return to Sarnia.

- Charles Marr Paul was born in Sarnia, the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Paul of 149 North Brock Street, Sarnia. He would enlist in September 1914, becoming a member of the Canadian Infantry, the 8th Battalion of the 90th Winnipeg Rifles, nicknamed the "Little Black Devils". The following are portions of two letters that he wrote to his mother in Sarnia, the first one in mid-April of 1915 and the second in late May of 1915:

*Dear Mother,*

*Well, mother, we have been over here two months now. We are getting well acquainted with the country.... Our company was in the reserve line and the rest in the front line, which was only 40 yards from the enemy at some points....we were open to fire on every side...We got to the position all right without mishap but it sure was dark and foggy as well. I was in a dug out with four other chaps and there was barely room for four, so we were just crowded enough to be uncomfortable. The shelling was by far the heaviest we have seen. They shelled the trenches steadily and dropped shells by dozens all over the show.... We lost several men in the trenches....The shrapnel was whizzing above our dugout at time in quite an unhealthy manner. We had to stay right in the dugout and we could not light fires so the cocoa we took with us and such could not be used. There was a grave just outside our dugout having two German helmets on it, and there were plenty of German rifles and bayonets, etc., lying about. There had been a good many buried altogether too near the surface, and well, everything seemed to stink of bodies. The hot weather was responsible. There was one of the biggest battles of the war fought there about Christmas time, and that accounts for bodies being improperly buried...*

*My Dear Mother,*

*I have not had a chance to write you for some time. We have been on the move a good deal and at the firing line and reserves quite a while and they would not take any mail, so of course, I could not write.... We are now back for a couple of days rest. We have had another bad cutting up, though some of the other battalions got it worse than us. It has been a very hard place we have. We were up against heavy guns and plenty of them. Big ones that when they burst make holes in the ground ten or twelve feet wide. They threw these shells right into our trenches. One day they kept up a steady bombardment all day and it was a wild old time we had believe me. While in the reserves we were on fatigue burying dead and fixing up trenches which were captured from the Germans. We got little rest. If we were not busy at work we were digging ourselves in the fields to keep out of shell fire....*

Charles Marr Paul would survive the war and return to Sarnia. During the war, he was credited with saving numerous lives. Early in the war, his Battalion held the line during a German poison gas attack at Ypres, Belgium. Charles Paul would receive the Military Medal for courage and gallantry under fire for his efforts at Ypres. Later he earned a Meritorious Service Medal for saving more lives during the Battle of the Somme in 1916. His unit would also participate in the Battle of Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele. He would return to Sarnia with his British bride Frances Paul (nee Williams) and raise eight children. He would work as a Senior Customs and Excise Examiner at the Ferry Docks in Sarnia. Charles Marr Paul is connected to another Sarnian, Michael Paithowski, a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve who is included in this project (World War II section).

- Garnet David Dawson was born in Sombra Township, the son of Mr. and Mrs. David Dawson of Sarnia. He enlisted in September 1914, becoming a member of the Canadian Infantry, 1st Battalion. In a letter home to his

parents, he described the marksmanship of the German soldiers, telling how he held a milk can up on the point of his bayonet and in five minutes the receptacle was pierced by 25 bullet holes. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Life in the trenches is not a pleasant one. We bury our dead and get food supplies into the trenches at night. I must say the Germans are good soldiers. At night the enemy opens fire at our trenches to test our strength, and the violence of fire we return aids them in deciding if they are able to make a successful night attack on us. We have not had our shoes off for 14 days, and we were three days without food. Our losses have been heavy, and out of our company of 250 there are 20 left. I hardly know how it is that I came through. You ought to see this country. It is hard to imagine its true condition. The cities of France are blown to pieces. We succeeded in taking this week three lines of German trenches, but lost them again in a bitter engagement. The fields that surround us are literally covered with the bodies of dead soldiers. We hope for the end, but we can not tell how long the war will last.*

- The following is a portion of a story from the *Sarnia Observer*, printed in late December of 1915, which explains to Sarnia citizens back home the process of "digging in."

*It is practically impossible for soldiers to remain in the open and live under modern artillery fire. When a column of soldiers advance until they can go no further they hold the ground they have gained by burrowing into the earth. Each soldier lies flat on the ground and, by means of trenching tools, or failing them his bayonet, makes a shallow trench at his side, carefully placing the loose earth in a pile at his head. This hole is sufficiently deep to safeguard him from stray bullets, and under cover he begins to dig another and deeper trench at his side. This is known as a "lying down" trench, and, being about 2 feet deep, hides the soldier's body from the enemy when he crawls into it.*

*In these roughly constructed shelters the troops lie until darkness sets in, when the engineers, with a formidable array of pick-axes, saws, and spades, set to work to enlarge the "lying down" holes until they are deep enough to shelter a standing soldier. The dirt taken from the trenches is carefully piled in front of the shelter to form a parapet which swallows up the force of bullets. A short distance behind the trenches, actually in the firing line, shelters are constructed for the troops to fall back in case of retreat. Barbed wire interlaced with branches cut from trees is placed in front of these shelters, and wooden beams piled with earth cover them to protect the troops below from shells bursting overhead.*

- In July 1916, Mrs. Thomas Weston, of 257 Tecumseh Street, Sarnia would receive a letter from her husband Thomas. He was recovering in hospital after having five pieces of German shell taken out of his head, received in a charge into enemy trenches during the Battle of Hill 60 in Flanders, south of Ypres. He described for her how they knew the day before they were to charge, and of the heavy artillery shelling the night before, "the noise something awful", into German trenches only 50 yards away from them. Here is a portion of his letter:

*I remember getting hit, shrapnel and machine gun fire was flying all around us and Alf bandaged my head up and that was the last I remember. When I was just going unconscious I heard him crying and telling me to cheer up, for he thought I was dying, but when I woke up again I was lying in a dugout in the captured German trenches with German prisoners that were captured. I only knew that I had an awful headache and the Germans were shelling us to beat the band as they were going to try and get the trenches back. It was then I heard the order and again to stand to, for they thought the Germans were going to make a charge, and I knew that if they did my chance was gone, for the trench would be blown up and I knew I would go up with it and the German prisoners. It was then I thought of you, I saw you as plain as if you had been near by with me and for once I said a prayer. I thought I was going to die and then I fell unconscious again for I was bleeding and was very weak through the loss of blood, and the shelling was so hot and heavy that no Red Cross could get up to me. Then I found myself being wakened up by having some rum forced into my mouth.*

*When I was being pulled out of the trench I saw some dreadful sights. The dead half filled the trench. I was pulled over them as we had to crawl so as the Germans would not see us and my face knocked against the dead. After I got out of the trenches I was put on a stretcher and put into a motor ambulance and with three others taken to the hospital. I saw them putting dead comrades in shell holes, burying them, 30 in a shell hole. My God, nobody that has not seen or been there does not know and cannot imagine the terrible scenes. There were 30 come through without a scratch out of 150 in our*

*company and as I was being taken to the dressing hospital there were hundreds lying along the road dead.*

A HAPPY HOME WE ONCE ENJOYED, HOW SWEET THE MEMORY STILL.  
DEATH HAS LEFT A LONELINESS THE WORLD CAN NEVER FILL.

- In April 1916, Arthur Crawford wrote a letter from France to his mother, Mrs. George Crawford, of 153 Christina Street, Sarnia. He described his role in repairing communication lines on the front lines. The following are portions of his letter:

*Dear Mother and All,*

*It is some time since I have written more than a note so will try to give you some idea of what I have been doing lately. After four weeks rest in France we returned to our position on the firing line. I was again assigned to the dugout for advance linemen. We felt quite at home in the familiar old place and counted ourselves lucky to get back. However Fritz decided that he had been too gentle on our previous visit and tried to liven up things a bit. Every day we had a shower of whiz-bangs and small shrapnel. One fine morning I was peeling spuds in the door of the dugout when suddenly two small shells burst just overhead and I had to fish out several small pieces from the potato pot...*

He went on to describe being moved with an advance party to take over new lines up front:

*No sooner had we started out to locate the buried lines than Fritz welcomed us with a heavy shower of shrapnel. I thought my time had come, but managed to reach a shelter of a good dugout and stuck there till the things had quieted down a bit. But Fritz seemed to have an unending supply of ammunition and I couldn't wait all day so during a lull I "beat it" for our new linemen's dugout. Arrived just in time to join a man going out to repair a line. I donned a shrapnel helmet and we set out. We found two breaks in a buried armored cable and while repairing these were told that another line was out. Before returning to our dugout we repaired no less than eight breaks, had several narrow escapes from flying shrapnel, got covered with mud and I decided that I was in for a lively time.... I was on the job night and day. We lived on cold rations and tea and ate whenever we got the chance... I spent the busiest week of my soldiering career up there and am not anxious to do it again.*

*But my experience is as nothing compared to what some of our infantry went through. I helped out men who had been under almost continuous heavy fire for forty-eight hours standing in water with practically nothing to eat and absolutely no sleep. Some were almost insane, others all crippled with rheumatism, others dazed and few were normal. It must have been "hell." I saw mangled bodies and ghastly wounds, ruined trenches and caved in dugouts but these men lived through the actual making of this awful devastation. Truly they have seen "Hell."*

- Many young men from Sarnia and Lambton served with cavalry units during the Great War. Some made the supreme sacrifice; for example, five of Sarnia's fallen were from Mounted Rifle Battalions. Canadian Cavalry Brigades included the Royal Canadian Dragoons, Lord Strathcona's Horse and the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. Faced with trench complexes, machine guns, mechanized artillery and barbed wire, there were few cavalry charges on the Western Front, as horse-mounted troop regiments became an outdated mode of warfare. Still, horses and mules were essential components to the army in their ability to wage war successfully. On all fronts and theatres, a staggering 1 million plus horses and mules were listed in service with British and Commonwealth forces. Captain Sidney Galtrey, author of *The Horse and the War* stated in the autumn of 1918, *I believe that every soldier who has anything to do with horse or mule has come to love them for what they are and the grand work they have done and are doing in and out of the death zones.* Canada sent about 130,000 horses overseas during the First World War, representing well over 10 per cent of the horses used on the Western Front. Eight thousand horses went overseas with the first contingent of Canadians in the fall of 1914. Horses and mules served at the Front, in no-man's land, in the rear and in the support lines. In the mud, rain, snow, cold, gas attacks and terror, they supplied the soldiers with food, water, and ammunition, and pulled soldiers, guns, large artillery weapons and ambulances. Hundreds of thousands of horses on all sides on the Western front would die from exhaustion, starvation, disease, poison gas, exposure, drowning in mud and water, falling in shell holes, or by being shot and blown up. Estimates vary, but at least 25 per cent of the Canadian horses were thought to have died in the war. After the war, those that survived were sold by the Canadian government to Belgium instead of bringing them home. Only officers' mounts would get to come back to Canada.<sup>E, 5L, 3M, 3N and 3R</sup>

- The Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium, April 22 - May 25, 1915: This was Canada's first series of major battles in the First World War. Ypres was the last portion of Belgium that was not in enemy hands after the initial German advance of 1914 and, as a result, held great symbolic meaning to the Allies. On the first day, April 22, 1915, the raw and outnumbered 1st Canadian Division faced the first use of chlorine gas. As eyewitness George Nasmith described it, "Looking towards the French line we saw this yellowish green cloud rising on a front of at least three miles and drifting at a height of perhaps a hundred feet toward us. The gas rose in great clouds as if it had been poured from



nozzles, expanding as it ascended.” Later in the day, on seeing victims of the attack at a Canadian field ambulance, he described, “Lying on the floors were scores of soldiers with faces blue or ghastly green in colour, choking, vomiting and gasping for air, in their struggles with death, while a faint odour of chlorine hung above this place.”<sup>D, 21,</sup>  
<sup>3R</sup> In the first 48 hours at Ypres, one Canadian in every three became casualties of whom more than 2,000 died.<sup>D</sup> In just over one month, one third of the Canadian force, over 6,000 soldiers were killed, wounded or captured at Ypres, but the Canadians kept the Germans from breaking through.

- In August 1915, Sergeant John Adda MacDonald, with the Canadian Army Medical Corps in Le Touquet, France, mailed a letter to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A.E. MacDonald of South Brock Street, Sarnia. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Friends,*

*No doubt you will be somewhat surprised when you receive this letter from me but I wish to thank you for the papers which you have been good enough to send from time to time. As soon as Capt. Bentley receives them, he distributes them among the Sarnia boys who with faces wreathed in smiles, retire to a secluded place where they devour its contents free from disturbance of any kind, and in this way we are able to keep pace with current events in the far away home town, Sarnia....*

*Last April we worked day and night for days, especially during the last week of April, when our brave Canadians did such remarkable work at Ypres. At that time our capacity was five hundred and sixty beds, but I have seen seven hundred patients here at one time. More than a thousand patients passed through here in a week at that time. In fact, they were being admitted and discharged at the same time during the rush. If I remember correctly it was during that week that I saw the first wounded Sarnia man, who was Private McLellan, shot in both arms and the head. Some of the patients are brought in, having ghastly wounds and mangled and shattered almost beyond recognition. In spite of this it is very seldom even a murmur is heard.*

- Major John McCrae was the field-surgeon and second in command of the First Brigade Canadian Field Artillery in April of 1915. He would be in the trenches during the Second Battle of Ypres. There, he tended to hundreds of wounded soldiers every day and was surrounded by the dead and dying. In a letter to his mother, he wrote of the Battle of Ypres:

*The general impression in my mind is of a nightmare. We have been in the most bitter of fights. For seventeen days and seventeen nights none of us have had our clothes off, nor our boots even, except occasionally. In all that time while I was awake, gunfire and rifle fire never ceased for sixty seconds ..... And behind it all was the constant background of the sights of the dead, the wounded, the maimed, and a terrible anxiety lest the line should give way.*

On May 2, one of John McCrae’s closest friends and fellow Canadian, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, was killed when he left his dugout and was struck by a German shell. His body parts were later gathered and buried that day in a makeshift grave with a plain wooded cross. In the absence of a chaplain, Major McCrae conducted a simple service at the graveside. Wild poppies were already beginning to bloom between the crosses marking the many graves, a fact not lost on John despite his grief. The next day, May 3, while sitting on the back of an ambulance waiting for more wounded to arrive, and looking at his friend’s grave among the many others, John McCrae was inspired to write a few lines of verse which would become the iconic poem ‘In Flanders Fields’.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw*

*The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

John McCrae would later be transferred to a Canadian General Hospital in France and become a lieutenant-colonel. Here the wounded were brought from the Battle of the Somme, the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the third Battle of Ypres and from Arras and Passchendaele. John McCrae was deeply affected by the fighting and losses in France, so much so that in John Prescott's book *In Flanders Fields: The Story of John McCrae*, the author wrote of John: "After the battle of Ypres he was never again the optimistic man with the infectious smile". On January 28, 1918, after an illness of five days, he died of pneumonia and meningitis. The day he fell ill, Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae learned that he had been appointed consulting physician to the First British Army, the first Canadian so honoured. John McCrae was buried with full military honours in Wimereux Cemetery, France, not far from the fields of Flanders.<sup>D, 4C</sup>

- Unveiled in July 1927, the Ypres, Menin Gate War Memorial in Belgium, is located on a site chosen because of the hundreds of thousands of Commonwealth soldiers who passed through this spot on their way to the battlefields. It bears the inscribed names of 54,389 Commonwealth Force soldiers who fell in the Ypres Salient before August 16, 1917 and whose bodies have never been identified or found. Since 1928, every night at 8:00 p.m., four buglers from the local fire brigade play the Last Post. Of those are the names of 6,994 Canadian soldiers who were listed as "missing, presumed dead". At least three young men from Sarnia lost their lives in the Second Battle of Ypres, and at least seven young men from Sarnia have their names inscribed on the (Ypres) Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium.
- The Battle of Mont Sorrel, Belgium, June 2 – 13, 1916: In the summer of 1916, Mont Sorrel was the last remaining high ground in the Ypres salient still in British hands. On June 2, the Germans attacked the Canadian lines (3rd Division of the Canadian Corps) with a crushing bombardment, killing hundreds and capturing Mont Sorrel and two surrounding hills (Hill 61 and Hill 62). A Canadian counter attack failed, and on June 6th, the Germans exploded mines under the Canadian positions and captured the village of Hooge. On June 13, after a heavy artillery bombardment, the Canadians drove back the Germans and recaptured much of the lost ground. Over the two weeks of battle, the Canadian victory came at a cost of 8,000+ killed or wounded. At least one young man from Sarnia lost his life in the Battle of Mont Sorrel.
- The Battle of the Somme, France. July 1 –November 18, 1916: Thousands of British, Canadian and French troops hammered German defence lines north of the Somme River in one of the most futile and bloody battles in history. On the first day, July 1, 1916, the Allies made a shoulder-to-shoulder advance across No Man's Land in broad daylight toward the well-trained and well-entrenched German positions to open the Battle of the Somme. The result would be slaughter—more than 57,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers were killed, wounded or missing—the heaviest combat losses ever suffered by the British Army in a single day. Part of the opening phase on that first day, July 1st, involved the 1st Newfoundland Regiment at the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel. The Newfoundlanders were expected to traverse more than 200 metres of open ground in full view of the waiting enemy, and then a further 500 metres downslope of No Man's Land through barbed wire. Through the hail of machine gun and artillery fire, the 1st Newfoundland Regiment was virtually wiped out, 700+ casualties, a casualty rate of approximately 90%, all in less than half an hour. For five brutal months the Battle of the Somme continued. By the time it was all over, the Allies would have more than 620,000 soldiers killed, wounded, missing or taken prisoner. Of those, more than 24,000 Canadians lost their lives. At least twenty young men from Sarnia lost their lives in the Battle of the Somme. For this incredible cost, or as one Army official referred to it as "mass butchery", the Allies moved the front line forward about 10 kilometres.
- One of Sarnia-Lambton's heroes of the Battle of the Somme was George Hunter Stirrett. George Stirrett, the son of Robert Stirrett, was born in Forest, Ontario on March 2, 1891, raised in Petrolia, and lived his adult life in Sarnia. At the age of 23, when he enlisted for service on January 13, 1915 in London, Ontario, he was single and listed his occupation as merchant. He had prior military experience with the 27th Infantry and would train in London, Ontario with future fighter pilot Billy Bishop who became a close friend. William "Billy" Bishop would go on to be the top Canadian and Imperial flying ace in WWI, credited with 72 victories and a recipient of 16 medals including the Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross and Victoria Cross. In June of 1915, George Stirrett would proceed

overseas as part of the Second Canadian Division. It was during training at Dibgate Plains in England that George witnessed the birth of one of Canada's greatest flying aces. As George Stirrett recalled:

*Training was continued at an accelerated pace. However, the area was very heavy clay and after every rain the horse lines became almost impossible. One day when the mud was very bad, two Royal Air Force planes went over. While Billy Bishop, who hated to be dirty, and I stood in the mud watching them, only a few hundred feet high, Bishop turned to me and said, "It's clean up there George. And if you were killed, at least you would be clean. Imagine being killed in this mix of mud and horse manure." Lieutenant Billy Bishop joined the Air Force that afternoon... Lt. Bishop hadn't told anyone in the Hussars where he was going or what he was going to do so we didn't know where he was for about two weeks.*<sup>3U</sup>

- George Stirrett was initially a member of the First Hussars, 7th Canadian Mounted Rifles, later the Canadian Light Horse rising in the ranks from Corporal to Major. During the Battle of the Somme, George described September 26, 1916 as the day that made the greatest change in his life. On that day, George Stirrett was in command of a sixty-man stretcher party assigned to the 8th Battalion, "Little Black Devils". The following is part of George Stirrett's account of what he witnessed that day as German soldiers came out of the trenches to meet Canadian attackers:

*It looked like two teams coming from both ends of a rugby field and meeting in the middle. As they met, all machine gun fire stopped. It was impossible to tell friends from enemies with 1000 Germans fighting 1000 Canadians you just couldn't shoot so they used knives at each other. Until this time I never had any idea of what the infantry had to go through. I didn't know if I'd go crazy or not... The Canadians forced the Germans back and took the German trenches. Our job now was to clear the field of wounded. As we started, about 9:00 A.M., I wondered as to my sanity. In one shell hole I saw a young man with his lips moving so I knew he was still alive. I reached down and put my hand behind his head and realized my hand was in his brain as the back of his head was missing. I started to go on about 100 yards to locate some more of our parties. I was going from shell hole to shell hole which, at the Somme, almost interlocked. In a shell hole ahead I spotted a boy from Saskatchewan lying wounded. He looked like my younger brother Jack who was with the artillery. I touched the boy and he opened his eyes and asked me not to touch him again. I asked him what I could do for him. "Sergeant Major." he said "Do you believe in God?" I wasn't particularly a religious person but my answer was Yes. "Sergeant Major" he said, "will you pray to God for me? I'm going to be with him in a few minutes." You could not fool with this request. Then he told me to go and help others but I was to come back later and empty his pockets and answer the letters which I would find there. He wanted to be alone." "What happened to me then I don't know but all fear was gone, in a trance you might call it. I walked and went any place I wished to that day and night without fear. I came back in about an hour and emptied his pockets. We worked that day, that night, and the next day as stretcher bearers under continuous fire.*

George Stirrett led his stretcher crew to successfully bring in hundreds of injured men to safety on that day, but the cost was high. Years later George reflected, "By the next day, I had only 18 of our 60 men who were able to come home to our own lines". George was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) in mid-October of 1916 for his heroic actions. The official citation to his DCM award stated, "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He tended the wounded under heavy fire, displaying great courage and determination. He set a fine example to his men".

- During the final two months of the war, the Germans were retreating and were leaving machine gun crews behind to cover their retreat. It was the cavalry's mission to find their positions, each day conducting hazardous reconnaissance, suffering heavy casualties. George Stirrett led near-suicidal forays in search of these German machine gun nests. It was for his actions in late September and again in early October 1918 that George Stirrett would be awarded a second medal, the Military Cross (MC). The official citation notes that he carried out mounted patrols to gather accurate information on enemy positions "with great dash and coolness, locating the exact position of the enemy...carried out under heavy fire".

- After the war, George Stirrett would marry Vera Mary (nee Spurr) in October 1919, and move to Front Street, Sarnia in 1922. He became a Sarnia City Councilor in the 1930's, was a member of Central United Church and was a president of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 62. He would die in mid-February 1982 just short of his 91st birthday at the Vision Nursing Home. He was survived by his wife Vera, son Frank, and daughters Mary and Georgina, and 13 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was buried with full military honours by members of the 1st Hussars of Sarnia and London, the same unit that he had distinguished himself with so many years earlier, in Hillside Cemetery, Petrolia. Sarnia's armoury on Confederation Street is named in his honour.<sup>F, J, N, 2G, 3K, 3U, g</sup>

- The First World War was much longer and more expensive than anyone had expected. The effort required to sustain its' massive armies required huge amounts of capital. To help pay for the war, the federal government issued a series of bonds – essentially loans from Canadians to their government that could be redeemed after five, ten or twenty years, with interest rates up to 5.5 per cent. Victory Bonds were a tremendous success, raising in excess of \$2 billion. Another means to pay for the war was a 'temporary' wartime measure, a tax on personal incomes, introduced in 1917 under the Income War Tax Act. It remains today as income tax.<sup>F, 2I, 3R</sup>
- WWI Conscription Crisis: After the great number of casualties at Battle of the Somme, Canada was in desperate need to replenish its supply of soldiers; however, there were very few volunteers signing up to replace them. On August 29, 1917, the Military Service Act was passed, allowing the government to conscript men across the country if the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) felt it was necessary. There was much opposition against the Act, by conscientious objectors, by unwilling soldiers and by many French-Canadians. Exemption from conscription was allowed if a man could prove he was needed in his job, had "exceptional" financial or family obligations, was in poor health, was in school or belonged to a religious denomination that forbade combat service. To solidify support for conscription in the 1917 election, PM Borden brought in the Military Voters Act, (allowing overseas soldiers and women serving as nurses the right to vote), and the Wartime Elections Act (allowing wives, widows, mothers and sisters of soldiers overseas the right to vote - the first time women in Canada were allowed to vote). Conscription was a very divisive issue that brought about a political crisis in the country, polarizing provinces and ethnic groups, and many sought exemption from service. It wasn't until January 1918 that conscription was brought into force, and ultimately, only about 125 000 men were ever conscripted into the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and only 48 000 were sent overseas, with only about 24 000 of these serving in France. There were a number of Sarnia's fallen soldiers who were conscripted into service.
- The Battle of Vimy Ridge, France, April 9 - 12, 1917: Vimy Ridge is located in northern France, a long hill that dominates the landscape. Germany captured Vimy Ridge early in the war and transformed it into a strong defensive position, virtually impregnable, with a complex system of tunnels and trenches manned by highly-trained soldiers with machine guns and artillery pieces. Previous Allied assaults on the Ridge in 1914 and 1915 had cost the British and French hundreds of thousands of casualties and had been largely unsuccessful. In the spring of 1917, the Canadians would be tasked with capturing Vimy Ridge. It would be the very first time that all four divisions of the Canadian Corps, with soldiers from every region in the country, worked together as one formation.
- The Canadian planning and preparations for the attack of Vimy Ridge were extensive: strengthening the lines; training on a full-scale replica; tunneling beneath the German lines and filling them with explosives; digging deep subway systems to lay mines or shelter troops; stockpiling supplies and arms; followed by a massive and prolonged artillery barrage for over a week prior to the attack. At 5:30 a.m. on Easter Monday, April 9, 1917, preceded by a "rolling barrage" of artillery fire, the first wave of 20,000 Canadian soldiers "went over the top", through a wind-driven snow and sleet into the face of enemy fire. By the fourth day, Canadians had captured the highest features on the ridge – "Hill 145" and "The Pimple". Of the 100,000 Canadians who fought there, approximately 7,000 were wounded and 3,600 would lose their lives. At least four young men from Sarnia lost their lives in the Battle of Vimy Ridge.
- The victory at Vimy Ridge was the pinnacle of Canadian military achievement in the war, igniting a sense of national pride and a confidence that Canada could stand on its own. In June of 1922, France granted Canada 100 hectares of land surrounding Vimy Ridge for a memorial. Canadian sculptor Walter Allwards' design was chosen from 160 entries in a national war memorial design competition. Living in Toronto during the war, he experienced first-hand the fear and grief felt by Canadians who had sent their sons and neighbours into battle, some never to return. Below Allward describes the dream that inspired the Vimy monument:

*When things were at their blackest in France, I went to sleep one night after dwelling on all the muck and misery over there, my spirit was like a thing tormented...I dreamed I was in a great battlefield. I saw our men going in by the thousands and being mowed down by the sickles of death...Suffering beyond endurance at the sight, I turned my eyes and found myself looking down an avenue of poplars. Suddenly through the avenue I saw thousands marching to aid our armies. They were the dead. They rose in masses, filed silently by and entered the fight to aid the living. So vivid was this impression, that when I awoke it stayed with me for months. Without the dead we were helpless. So I have tried to show this in this monument to Canada's fallen, what we owed them and we will forever owe them.*<sup>D, 2I, 2J and 3R</sup>

It took 2.5 years to clear the fields surrounding the monument of unexploded bombs, artillery shells and grenades. It took 14 years to create the monument, from design to completion. It was unveiled by King Edward VIII in July of 1936 before a crowd of more than 100,000 spectators. The Canadian National Vimy Memorial sits atop Hill 145, the main height on the Ridge, on land granted to Canada for all time by a grateful France. It stands as a tribute to all who served Canada in battle and risked or gave their lives in the Great War. On it are inscribed the names of 11,285 Canadian soldiers killed in France whose final resting place is unknown, who were listed as “missing, presumed dead”. At least twenty-eight young men from Sarnia have their names inscribed on the Vimy Memorial in France.

- The Attack on Hill 70, France, August 15- 25, 1917: The storming of Hill 70, a strategic position overlooking Lens, was the first major action fought by the Canadian Corps under the first Canadian-appointed commander of the Canadian Corps, Sir Arthur Currie. Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie, born in Strathroy, Ontario, is believed by many historians to be one of the best military commanders Canada has ever produced. During the Second Battle of Ypres, Currie’s brigade played a pivotal role in holding the Allied position. He rose to command the 1st Canadian Division in September of 1915 and led it effectively for the next two years, including Vimy Ridge. He was appointed the first Canadian commander of the Canadian Corps in June 1917 and led it to hard-fought victories at Hill 70, Passchendaele and during the Hundred Days Campaign, until its disbandment in late 1919. Hill 70 also marked the first time mustard gas was used against Canadians. It blistered the skin and made the lungs bleed. The objective of the assault was to inflict casualties and draw German troops away from the 3rd Battle of Ypres. This high ground overlooking the city of Lens, France was captured by the Canadian Corps, and held despite no less than 21 German counter attacks over four days. The victory of Hill 70 cost more than 9,000 Canadian lives. At least three young men from Sarnia lost their lives in the Attack on Hill 70.

- The Battle of Passchendaele, October 26 – November 10, 1917: This region in Belgium was largely made up of flat, low land that was kept dry only with a series of dykes and drainage ditches. Three years of heavy fighting had destroyed the drainage systems. The ground, churned up by millions of artillery shells, turned to sticky mud when wet. Hundreds of wounded soldiers, along with pack animals, were trapped in the quagmire and drowned as the rain filled their shell holes. In 1917, the autumn rains came early and turned the battlefield into a sea of mud. In early October, the Canadians were sent in to relieve battered Australian and New Zealand forces. Overcoming the challenges of horrific fighting conditions, heavy enemy resistance and counter-attacks, the Canadian forces captured their objective, a victory few thought possible. Almost 12,000 Canadians were wounded and more than 4,000 Canadians died at Passchendaele, all for ground that served no tactical purpose. At least four young men from Sarnia lost their lives in the Battle of Passchendaele.

- In December of 1917, a group of citizens from the towns of Lambton County raised money and sent it along with a shipment of socks with notes from home in the toes, to one company of the former 149th Battalion, now attached to the 161st Battalion. Here are some excerpts of the letters sent home by the soldiers after receiving their gifts of socks:

*- I am now employed in the quartermaster’s stores. The boys have all arrived from Lambton County and I am to have the pleasure of opening, unpacking and actually issuing the contents to the men. I can assure you that every Lambton boy will receive his share. I hardly suppose all the notes in the toes will be answered, but every pair found a Lambton man. Indeed we did have a good Christmas, thanks to the people of Lambton.*

*- Yesterday was the day on which the Lambton supplies were given out to the men, and thought you might be interested to hear of the distribution. All the 149th men were to parade to Quartermaster’s Stores after dinner, and each fellow was presented with a pair of socks, and a package of smokes. You may be sure that the fellows appreciated what was done for them, and as you know, a pair of good home knit socks are just about the handiest things in sight.... Nearly every pair of socks had a note or card enclosed, which is a grand idea. I think it makes it seem more like a gift – the personal touch.... We had quite a time comparing the different cards, etc., as they came from all over the county.*

*- I only hope that our work in France will be good enough to deserve the hard work you have all done for us. I know I feel myself the same as all the other fellows that no hardship is too big to put up with for the people of Lambton. You have done wonders for us and for the time being all we can send is a heartfelt thanks.*

The money was a donation for a Christmas dinner for the boys of the 161st Battalion, 212 of them former 149th men. In a letter of appreciation from Quartermaster Captain W.B. Allen of the Battalion, he reported that:

... the men enjoyed the best Christmas dinner, and the men enjoyed themselves better than any other unit in the 5th division. In fact, more money was raised than expected, allowing the men to get a few extras in the New Years dinner. At the Christmas dinner, the mess hall was decorated with holly, mistletoe and flags, the 161st Battalion orchestra played, the officers and sergeants did the serving and dishwashing, and everyone ate until they could eat no more, from a menu that included soup, roast turkey, potatoes, vegetables, mince pies, plum pudding, Christmas cakes, apples, oranges, grapes, nuts and tea. The boys will have the satisfaction of knowing that they enjoyed a sumptuous feast, even while their thoughts were all of the folks back home and their Christmas.

Now about the socks: The system was that each man is issued two suits of underwear and two pairs of socks when they get to France. When they go into the trenches, one suit of underwear and one pair of socks were turned over to the field laundry. The men are then in the trenches for a week or longer. The trenches may have anywhere from six inches to two feet of water, and when a man does his four hours watch, his boots and socks are wet. If he has an extra pair when relieved he can go in his dugout and change, which is a great comfort... it means a lot to be dry.

- On the night of June 27th, 1918, the Canadian Hospital ship *HMHS Llandoverly Castle* was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine. It would be one of the most controversial events during the war, the most significant Canadian naval disaster of WWI, and it would become the rallying cry for the Canadian troops during the Last 100 Days offensive. In total, two hundred and thirty-four persons lost their lives in the sinking of the *Llandoverly Castle* Hospital Ship, including fourteen Nursing Sisters. Sarnia's twenty-five year old Private David Smuck also lost his life in the attack. More detailed information on the *Llandoverly Castle* attack is in the David Smuck section of this project.

- Canada's Hundred Days, August 8 – November 11, 1918: In this final three-month period, marking the "beginning of the end" of the Great War, Canadians played a critical role in a series of battles beginning with the Battle of Amiens. The Battle of Amiens began in dense fog on August 8, 1918, spearheaded by Canadians, who advanced over 10 kilometres on the first day, shattering three entire German divisions. At least two young men from Sarnia lost their lives on that first day at the Battle of Amiens. That one day battle was followed by a series of victories and advances including at Arras, Cambrai, Valenciennes, and Mons, repeatedly driving the Germans back, culminating in German surrender. Some 105,000 Canadians advanced 130 kilometres, but it came at a high price. In the final three months of war, approximately 39,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders were wounded and more than 6,800 lost their lives, representing approximately 20 per cent of Canada's total wartime casualties. It was during this offensive that the highest number of men from Sarnia would lose their lives. At least thirty-two young men from Sarnia lost their lives during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign.

- A war story from the Sarnia Observer, November 1918:

*French City Thanks Sarnian*

*An interesting souvenir of the recent advance in France has reached Sarnia in the form of a letter under the seal of the French City Valenciennes, addressed to Capt. Johnston MacAdams, conveying the thanks of the municipality in connection with an incident which took place when the city fell into the hands of the Canadians.*

*A large part of the fine civic collection of art had been left behind by the Germans, and was found to be exposed to the elements through the damage done by shell fire to the civic building. The Sarnia officer took prompt action, and with the assistance of a party of soldiers, work on the roof was commenced and rapidly completed, and other prompt steps taken to preserve the treasures of art from further damage.*

*The letter was accompanied by a memento from the city which will doubtless be held in permanent regard by Capt. MacAdams as a remembrance. The letter was signed;*

*F. Billiete, L'Adjoint Faisant Fonctions de Maire de Valenciennes, Valenciennes, France*

- As the Great War dragged on, the effort needed by the Canadian government to sustain its massive armies in the field required huge amounts of capital. So Ottawa, opposing the raising of taxes, borrowed money from ordinary Canadians, through the sale of war bonds (called Victory Loans). Publicity campaigns (eg. use of posters) were directed to people's sense of patriotism, linking buying bonds to the direct support and welfare of soldiers overseas. Canadians' willingness to loan money to their government by buying bonds was an overwhelming success. In November of 1918, the *Observer* reported that Lambton residents contributed over \$4.2 million in the Victory Loan campaign, which was nearly a million dollars over what was asked for. Sarnia led the way in the county with \$2 million alone, along with that raised by residents in Plympton, Enniskillen, Brooke, Bosanquet, Warwick, Moore,

Sombra, Dawn and Euphemia. The success of the “victory bond” campaign would be repeated during the Second World War. Today’s Canada Savings Bonds are the direct descendants of these wartime efforts.<sup>N and 21</sup>

- It was during the Great World War that the term “shell shock” first came into being, appearing in a British medical journal in February 1915, only six months after the outbreak of the war. Poorly understood at the time and for many years afterward, shell shock meant its victims experienced a myriad of unpleasant symptoms: crying; fear; mutism; nightmares; spasms; uncontrollable trembling; paralysis; and insanity due to the prolonged exposure to the stresses and horror of combat. Military authorities often saw its symptoms as expressions of cowardice or lack of moral character. Like those who were physically wounded, shell shock victims were often treated quickly, with treatments that included shaming, physical therapy, Freudian psychotherapy and crude electroshock therapy. In most cases, the goal of treatment was to return the soldiers to the Front lines as soon as possible to replace the depleting ranks. Doctors would diagnose almost 10,000 Canadians with shellshock during the First World War. For those who survived the war, doctors knew little of what is now known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), so there were few treatment programs after the war for returned veterans who suffered from it.<sup>21, 3P</sup>

- Many of the men who died in war left behind a wives and children. The following poem by Edgar Guest (Detroit Free Press) was printed in the *Sarnia Observer* in March of 1915, expressing the emotion of a wife’s grief:

*The Soldiers’ Widow*  
*The babies ask: Where’s papa gone?*  
*And when’s he coming back?*  
*And oh, it hurts to look upon*  
*His little Joe and Jack,*  
*And oh, it hurts so much at night*  
*When all the lights are low!*  
*I wonder was it wrong or right*  
*For me to let him go.*

*They need so much his gentle care,*  
*They look for him each day;*  
*‘Twas I that sent him marching there*  
*And brushed the tears away.*  
*‘Twas I that heard his country call*  
*Nor asked him not to go;*  
*Alone I could have borne it all,*  
*But there are Jack and Joe*

*They look for him both night and day,*  
*So good and kind was he,*  
*They want him now to share their play,*  
*And when they question me*  
*I have to turn away to hide,*  
*The bitter, scalding tear,*  
*It hurts to think that had I tried*  
*I might have kept him here*

*I know his country needed him,*  
*But oh, my heart is sore,*  
*For through the future, dark and grim,*  
*His babies need him more.*  
*And when they ask: “Where’s papa gone?”*  
*‘Tis then it hurts me so,*  
*To think I strapped his knapsack on*  
*And said he ought to go.*

- The weapons used in the Great War expanded killing to an industrial scale with the goal of each side being to kill as many as possible, as fast as possible. The First World War was primarily a land war. Trench weapons included

rifles and bayonets, grenades, and rifle grenades. For Canadian soldiers, the unreliable Canadian-made Ross rifle was replaced with the British Lee-Enfield rifle, designed to fire 15 rounds per minute. Machine guns, capable of firing several hundred rounds per minute, were devastating weapons. Flame throwers were used in the trenches. Artillery had the most devastating effect in the war; mortars and field guns fired high explosive shells, shrapnel shells, as well as smoke, incendiary and gas shells. As the war progressed the artillery pieces became larger and more accurate in their fire. Soldiers and miners dug tunnels under enemy trenches and planted explosive charges. Tanks, first used at the Battle of the Somme, improved over the course of the war. The first large-scale use of poison gas was used by the Germans at Ypres. Chlorine gas caused a burning sensation in the throat and chest pains, leading to suffocation. Other gases such as phosgene and mustard gas were used, the latter causing blistering skin, vomiting, blinded eyes, internal and external bleeding, and death in days. In the air, planes were used for the first time, initially for spying and dropping bombs. Planes evolved into fighter aircraft, with machine guns and sometimes cannons. In the water, submarines and torpedos, sea mines and depth charges were added to the navies.<sup>E and 2I</sup>

- A number of medical innovations and improvements were made during the First World War, brought on by the havoc created by the new lethal weapons of war. More than 3,600 Canadian soldiers returned home missing an arm or a leg – and sometimes more than one. The Military Hospitals Commission, responsible for restoring wounded veterans to health and productivity, promised free artificial limbs for soldiers who lost them in the war. They promised to produce the best arms and legs devised anywhere in the world, as well as orthopedic apparatuses such as splints, braces and orthopedic shoes. Early in the war, Canadian Dr. Lawrence Bruce Robertson was credited with performing the first blood transfusions in a British hospital. By war's end, the prompt transfusion of blood in wounded soldiers saved thousands of lives. Countless veterans returned from war with burns, gaping facial wounds in their faces, missing noses and chins and holes in their cheeks. Innovations in skin grafts and facial reconstruction revolutionized plastic surgery. Advances in X-rays, including mobile X-ray machines that could be brought to surgical stations at the Front, helped to locate bullets, shrapnel, shell and grenade fragments, as well as broken bones. Certain diseases like typhoid could be controlled by the use of vaccinations and treatments for dysentery and tetanus improved. Antibiotics such as penicillin had not yet been discovered, so many soldiers died of infections of their wounds. The most damaging epidemic disease – for Canada and the world – appeared in the latter stages of the war. The Spanish Flu that swept the globe in the spring of 1918 through to the winter of 1919 was undoubtedly given a boost by the war. Soldiers living in close quarters; transatlantic troop crossings; soldiers returning home; refugee populations; malnourishment; and unsanitary conditions all contributed to the spread of the disease. The Spanish Flu killed an estimated 20-40 million people worldwide, including approximately 50,000 Canadians.<sup>2I, 2N, 3R</sup>
- Canada's population at the start of World War I was approximately 7.8 million. Yet approximately 620 000 men and women served in the Canadian Forces. Very few Canadians had previously been professional soldiers. Canada's army was largely an army of citizen-soldiers, from every corner of the nation and every walk of life. Of the Canadian men and women that served, over 3,800 became prisoners of war, and over 172,000 were wounded and over 61 000 gave their lives. Of those, 16,000 have no known grave. More than one of every ten Canadians who fought in the war did not return. Between 1919 and 1921, some 6,000 additional Canadian veterans died as a result of the injuries of war.<sup>D, E, 2I and 2Q</sup>
- The majority of Canadians who served in the Great War, served in the Army. This included some 2,500 Nursing Sisters who served overseas, attending to the many wounded soldiers on all fronts.
- Prior to 1910, the Canadian government had little interest in naval affairs. However, on May 4, 1910, with conflict brewing in Europe, the Canadian Parliament, under the authority of the Naval Services Act, established the Canadian Navy. One year later, on August 29, 1911, by command of the King George V, it was designated the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). In the beginning, it consisted of 350 sailors and two second-hand British cruisers, *HMCS Niobe* and *HMCS Rainbow*, with bases divided between Halifax, Nova Scotia and Esquimalt, British Columbia. In May of 1914, the Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve (RNCVR) came into being (in 1923, it would be renamed the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve - RCNVR). The protection of Canada's coasts was entrusted to the RCN. With the threat of enemy attack, British Columbia's premier even purchased two submarines (CC-1 and CC-2) to help patrol the coasts; new ships were built and a number of patriotic citizens loaned or gave their personal yachts to aid in naval defence. By 1918, the navy had grown to over 100 war vessels, with 5,500 Canadians serving in the Royal Canadian Navy, and another 3,000 Canadians serving in Britain's Royal Navy. Over 150 Canadian sailors lost their lives during the war.<sup>2I</sup>



- Canada's first attempt at an air force was the Canadian Aviation Corps, formed in September of 1914. It consisted of two officers and a mechanic and one biplane which was shipped to England with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The plane was trucked to Salisbury Plain where the Canadian troops were training, but never flew, as not one of the three members was a qualified pilot. So during the First World War, Canada did not have an air force. However, approximately 25,000 Canadians volunteered to fly in Britain's Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service, and another 13,000 were part of the air crews. They served at home and overseas as fighter and reconnaissance pilots, aerial observers, mechanics, and flight instructors. Canada produced its share of flying aces, including William Barker, Arthur Roy Brown, Raymond Collishaw and William A. "Billy" Bishop to name a few. Billy Bishop shot down 72 planes during the war, including four German planes during a solo mission in July of 1917, for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross. During the Great War, nearly one in four pilots who flew British planes were Canadian, and approximately 1,600 Canadian airmen died in combat while serving in the air force. In September of 1918, the Canadian government approved the formation of a Canadian Air Force, which was comprised of two squadrons. With the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, the government cut air force funding and it was disbanded in 1920. On April 1, 1924, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) was reorganized and established permanently. At its inception, it was heavily involved in civil air operations including forestry patrols, anti-smuggling, forest spraying, mail delivery and surveying. It was not until 1936 that the RCAF would be a purely military operation.<sup>2I, 2Q, 2S and 3R</sup>

- In 1916, William Alexander Fraser, a Toronto novelist, proposed a tribute in the form of a silver cross, to mothers who had lost sons. "The mothers are the heroines of the bitter home trenches. They suffer in silence with no reward but the sense that they have answered the call with their heart's blood – their sons." By December 1, 1919, such an award was approved, taken a step further by including the mothers *and* widows of Canadian soldiers who died on active duty or whose deaths were later determined to be attributable to their active duty. Officially, the award is called the Canadian Memorial Cross; unofficially it is referred to as the Silver Cross. Many people have termed it, "the medal no mother wants." The first Silver Cross was presented to Charlotte Susan Wood, of Winnipeg, who had lost five sons in the Great War. When Charlotte Wood met King Edward VIII at the inauguration of Canada's Vimy Memorial in France in July of 1936, Edward said to her, "I wish your sons were all here". As they gazed across the former killing fields subsequently planted with uncountable white crosses row on row, Charlotte replied, "I have just been looking at the trenches and I just can't figure out why our boys had to go through that".

- The following poem printed in the Sarnia Observer in late September of 1918 expresses the emotion of a mother's grief:

*My Son*

*Somewhere in France there lies my youngest son,  
It seems such little time since he was small.  
And now his life on earth so soon is done,  
His Master needed him. He heard the call,  
Within my sleep I dream of him each night,  
And wake to find he cannot come to me,  
For with the coming of the morning light,  
I seem to see his grave across the sea.  
I know the sorrow and the bitter loss,  
That Mary felt when on that day at noon,  
Her Son was nailed upon that cruel cross,  
While all the heavens turned to darkening gloom.  
Oh, may I help some mourning one,  
Who, like myself, has lost her much loved son.*

*Myrtle Corcoran Watts, September, 1918.*

- In November 1916, the British government announced it would create a keepsake for the families of soldiers who fell in the service of the king. They settled on a circular bronze plaque. Its design featured the figure of Britannia bowing her head and holding a laurel wreath above the name of the fallen soldier. It also included a lion (the symbol of England); two small dolphins (symbolic of British sea power); a smaller lion pouncing on an eagle (the symbol of Germany). Around the edge was written: "He died for freedom and honour." More than one million plaques were

sent out with a scroll and a letter from King George. It was called the Next of Kin Memorial Plaque, but its resemblance to a penny led to it being nicknamed the Dead Man's Penny, Death Penny or Widow's Penny.<sup>21, 3R</sup>

- On November 7, 1918, Sarnia like the rest of the world, would receive news that the war had ended. The *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer* large print headline on that day was, "PEACE DECLARED." The sub-heading was a report out of Washington, "Navy cable censors reported today that unofficial messages had come thru from abroad, announcing that the Germans had signed the Armistice terms delivered by Marshal Foch. No authority was given for the statement, and while it added to the air of expectancy everywhere, officials said nothing except an official dispatch could be believed. Neither the American government nor any of the Allies' embassies or war missions had been advised even that Marshall Foch actually had presented the Armistice terms. It was assumed however that the German envoys had been conducted through the French lines some time during the day." Another sub-heading was a report out of Toronto, "One of New York's news agencies carried the story today that an Armistice had been signed, to become effective at 2:30 today but there is nothing official or corroborative yet." A related headline stated, "Celebrations in all the large cities - Detroit has received official information that the armistice had been signed at 10 o'clock today, and the hostilities had ceased at 2:00 pm. Celebrations are being held in all the large cities of the United States and Canada this afternoon." This included a report out of Toronto where, "This city went into furious demonstrations of joy on the report today about 1:10 of unofficial news that an armistice had been signed on behalf of Germany. Whistles were blown continuously and bells rung all over the city. Business was suspended and the streets were crowded with celebrating thousands." As it would turn out, peace would not become official until four days later.

- The "War That Will End War" ended with the signing of the Armistice of Compiegne not far from Paris, on November 11th, 1918 at 5:00 a.m., though it would not take effect until 11:00 a.m. Officers on horseback then had six hours to inform their troops of the Armistice. After more than four years of fighting, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the guns fell silent. The *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer's* bold headline on that day was, "HUMANITY SAVED!" Two story headlines on the first page of the *Observer* read, "Ten Million Lives is the Terrible Toll of Most Bloody War in History" and "All Allied Prisoners, Soldiers and Civilians Alike Held in Germany Are To Be Released."

This story was on the front page of the *Observer* was:

*Our Gallant Canucks Capture Mons to Finish War Fittingly*

*London, Nov. 11 - The official statement today says: To Canadian troops fell the honor of capturing the last important town before the armistice put an end to hostilities. Mons, where the British made a brilliant stand at the beginning of the war, was retaken early this morning by the Canadians.*

Also in the *Observer* that day was this article:

*Citizens of Sarnia Go Wild On Receipt of News*

*The receipt of the joyous tidings that had been declared was heralded in this city early this morning, and the streets were crowded with an eager populace anxious to hear a confirmation of the report. Port Huron went wild and whistles on boats, factory, and every noisemaking device was unearthed and the racket kept up for hours. All morning the streets of the city were thronged with an enthusiastic crowd, autos were pressed into use, schools and stores closed, industries were shut down, and people went wild with joy when the news was confirmed that kaiserism and prussianism had been trampled to dust. Their joy knew no bounds, and thousands marched in procession armed with impromptu noise makers, consisting of old cans, drums, and anything from which they could produce a noise. Thousands of flags and firecrackers were purchased by the enthusiasts. Business was at a standstill. Hundreds crossed to Port Huron and engaged in the celebration of their American cousins, who in turn came over to Sarnia to share in the demonstration here. The employees of the Loughhead Machine Co. went over the river in full force. At 1:30 a monster parade was held, which was participated in by several thousand joy-madened citizens. This outburst, however, will have no effect on the demonstration that has been planned for the past several days, and which will be held tomorrow evening as originally intended. It will, no doubt, be the greatest in the history of the Imperial City; it will probably eclipse anything ever attempted in Canada. Hundreds of workmen are at work at the old golf grounds building platforms and making preparation for the big event. The committee in charge have everything in readiness, the fireworks and paraphernalia will arrive to-morrow morning and everything will be in readiness. Everybody turn out for to-morrow night.*

NO ONE KNOWS THE HEARTACHE OR THE GRIEF SILENTLY BORNE FOR THE ONE I LOVE SO WELL.  
REMEMBERED BY HIS WIFE.

The next day, the *Sarnia Observer* continued its report on the impromptu celebration held in the city on November 11th. The following is a portion of that report:

*The Great Throng Could Not Wait*

*The people of Sarnia were so overjoyed at the news of the Kaiser's downfall that Tuesday (Nov. 12) was too far away to give vent to their feelings, and an impromptu demonstration was held in which hundreds of autos, carriages and vehicles of all kinds participated, and to noise and music of all kinds marched up and down the streets proclaiming the glad tidings of victory. It was a hilarious and spontaneous affair by a people who had awaited for over four years for such a celebration...The fact that no previous arrangements had been made added to the spontaneity of the affair, and men, women and children, old and young, men in khaki, some on crutches and others maimed by German soldiery were out to add their quota to the enthusiasm of the joy maddened crowd. Others with saddened hearts, owing to the loss of their loved ones joined in The Day, and while thinking of their loved ones who would never return, they too, were overjoyed that the great struggle was over and that victory had rested with the armies in which their brave sons, fathers and brothers had given their lives.....*

The *Sarnia Observer* also outlined the details of the planned celebration for that evening. The headline read, "The Biggest Celebration in Sarnia's History Will Begin At Seven O'clock Tonight."

- One day after the Armistice was signed, on the evening of November 12, 1918, a tremendous peace celebration was held in Sarnia. Thousands of citizens from Sarnia and surrounding communities joined in the celebration, including hundreds of people from each of Corunna, Courtright, Forest, Petrolia and Walpole Island. Cheering crowds packed the darkened streets as a huge torchlight parade, thousands strong, made its way starting at the market square and moving through the downtown to the golf grounds. The noise was bewildering with the sounds of noisemakers of all kinds – such as tin cans, bells, clappers, clinkers, whistles, horns, cymbals, triangles, old saws and anything else that would make a noise. The bewildering noise combined with the music played by seven different bands, including those from Forest and Petrolia. Participating in the celebration were the Collegiate boys procession; the local and very boisterous Chinese community, who even imported a Chinese band from Toronto; Goodison's Hun Thrasher; the Imperial Oil Company's Tank float and every truck they had along with hundreds of its employees with torches; a mass of citizens from Port Huron who had come across on the late ferry to rejoice; a number of Spanish War Veterans; First Nations community members who were out in full war dress of feathers and paint; members of the Sarnia Bridge Works; members of the Great War Veteran's Association; and people in every conceivable sort of costume. The immense line of flaming torches stretching through the darkness was described as "a sight of magnificent grandeur" made even more unforgettable by the confetti and fireworks rocketing skyward in countless streaks of flame and falling in brilliantly multi-coloured showers. By the time the last of the parade arrived at the old golf grounds, an estimated twenty-five thousand people had gathered. A pile of boxes twenty-five feet high was ignited to create an enormous bonfire, warming the chilly night air. After more celebrating which included the burning of the Kaiser in effigy, the crowd began to disperse about eleven o'clock. Many then moved to Front Street where the merrymaking continued, with bands playing, cheering, singing and dancing. One reporter stated, "It was a once in a lifetime civic celebration."

The following day, the *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer* reported on the celebration. Following is a portion of that report:

*Thousands of People from All Over Lambton County Celebrated Last Night*

*Sarnia's peace celebration has come and gone, but it leaves in the memory of all who attended or took part a lasting impression that will remain as long as life itself... Four long years have the people been storing up their hilarity for that glad occasion when they could once more breathe freely and shout lustily for the new birth of freedom in seas of blood. Each and every unit in the immense crowd last night let his or her feelings give vent in loud, long cheering, in the manner that young boys cheer, unrestrainedly, without thought of deportment or age. Everybody was glad and the whole world looked rosier, even to they who had sent their loved ones overseas to fight the battles of the country, who would never tread their native soil again. They forgot the individual and looked at it in a broader, more comprehensive way that rose above mere self, and instead of being downcast at the thought of their heroic dead, they joined in the thanks giving of they who had given their lads and who would once more welcome them to their hearthsides. It was a noble, it was a Canadian spirit that prevailed and held that vast crowd in its grasp last night....*

- On a summer weekend in mid-July of 1919, Sarnians rendered homage to the fallen of the Great War of the city and Lambton County, by holding a peace celebration picnic and veterans parade with memorial service at Victoria Park. The following is a portion of the account of this event taken from the *Observer*:

*Sarnia Honors the Noble Dead who fell on the world's greatest Fields of Battle in Europe*

*With muffled drums and with standard borne high, over one hundred of Sarnia's war heroes, the majority khaki clad, with here and there a civilian, his war badges signifying service, paraded to Victoria Park on Sunday afternoon, to participate in the memorial services held in honor of those who fell in the conflict. There are many people in Sarnia who were unable to participate with unrestricted joy in the peace celebration on Saturday, those who had hoped to welcome their own beloved soldier sons, or husbands or sweethearts home from the war, but they never came and the sight of the marching veterans on Sunday made more acute their sense of loss and intensified their yearning for their "unreturning brave."*

*The mingled pride and grief which they felt in bidding those dear ones God speed when they went away to the war; the long days and nights – many sleepless nights – of suspense and anxiety after every report of a great battle in which the Canadians took part; the shock of the terrible news which brought lasting grief to them, and the numbing heart ache that succeeded and will not wear away, all were recalled and revived by the sight of the marching men, some minus an arm, and some with a limp, outward evidence of suffering.*

*Yet even for them there was a note of joy, of subdued and chastened joy, in the celebration of peace and as Rev. Newton stated in his memorial address, the lives of those fallen soldiers were not wasted. Every home that sent forth to war, a soldier who will never come back is a shrine dedicated to the honored memory of that soldier.*

*When the veterans had reached their allotted space near the bandstand in the park and the citizens who had lined the streets to witness the solemn parade had encircled the stand, the entire gathering stood with bowed heads for one minute, time being taken by the bugle to give a silent prayer of Thanksgiving for Peace and a prayer that those that mourn may be comforted....*

- Not long after the conclusion of the First World War, Sarnia mayor William Nisbet was instrumental in creating the "Soldiers' Civic Gratuity Fund." It provided a grant for Sarnia officers and men who had served overseas and who were residents of the city for six months prior to enlistment. The by-law, passed in late 1919, authorized the sale of \$70,000 worth of debentures to create the fund. Pro-rata allotments were given out based on the number of applicants, which turned out to be approximately \$103 per soldier.
- A number of Sarnia and Lambton men were rewarded with decorations for their bravery and gallantry during the Great War. The exact number of awards is not known, but in October of 1942, the Canadian (Sarnia) Observer tried to compile a list of local decorated World War I soldiers. Names included were: Major Bart Charlton (Distinguished Service Order and Croix de Guerre), Captain George Williams (Distinguished Conduct Medal – D.C.M.), Sergeant Leonard Francis Allingham (D.C.M.), Captain George Stirrett (D.C.M. and Military Cross – M.C.), Corporal A.R. Mendizabal (D.C.M.), Major N.L. LeSueur (M.C.), Flt.-Lieut. Jack Church (M.C.), Major Jack Newton (M.C.), Col. S.C. Stokes (M.C.), Capt. Dick Bolton (M.C.), Lieut. Niven MacKenzie (M.C. and Military Medal - M.M.), George Lucas (M.M.), Clarence Duncan (M.M.), Ernest Tilley (M.M.), Douglas K. MacDonald (M.M.), Sergt. Frank Baxter (M.M.), Sergt. Maxfield Harper (M.M.), and Thomas E. Wood (Mons Star and M.M.).
- In 1920, the grateful citizens of the city created the Sarnia Service Club for its returned soldiers. It was billed as "one of the finest in Canada, having ideal buildings and unsurpassed location with a view of the St. Clair River."<sup>N</sup> The Sarnia Service Club was located at 286 North Front Street, in the former home of Mrs. Frank Smith. The surrounding grounds were expansive, dotted with old trees. The property included a large barn that had been converted into a gymnasium, quarters for shower baths, a lawn tennis court, and a large clubhouse. The two-storey clubhouse was lavishly furnished, with large lounging rooms, a cozy office with fireplace, a canteen where refreshments were served, three fireplaces in the main lounge, a large billiard room, hardwood floors throughout, running water in several of the rooms, and wide outdoor verandas with a view of the river. For the veterans, membership cost 50 cents per month.
- With the end of the Great War, Canada and its government was for the first time ever, faced with the issue of the mass return of men from war. Formed during or shortly after the Great War, there were a number of Veteran groups and regimental associations existing to aid returning service men in Canada. In Sarnia, there were also a number of veterans' organizations that sprang up after the War. Founded in 1917, the "Great War Veterans Association" (GWVA) was the largest and most influential national organization. Sarnia had its branch of the GWVA that aided servicemen make the transition to civilian life. In June of 1925, at the urging of Field Marshal Earl Haig of the

British Empire Service League, an appeal for unity of the different organizations led to the formation of the “Dominion Veterans Alliance”. In November of 1925, the “Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League” was founded in Winnipeg, Manitoba, commonly known as the “Canadian Legion”, and it was incorporated by special Act of Parliament in 1926. In Sarnia, the last meeting of the Great War Veteran’s Association and the first meeting of the new branch of the Canadian Legion (Branch 62) were held at the Sarnia Soldiers Service Club in October of 1926.

- Initially, the principal objectives of the Canadian Legion were to provide a strong voice for World War I veterans and to advise the government on veterans’ issues. World War II brought new demands, and the Canadian Legion increased its efforts to help veterans, returned service members, and those serving abroad. In 1960, the Canadian Legion was granted royal patronage by Queen Elizabeth II, and it became the “Royal Canadian Legion”. The Royal Canadian Legion, a not for profit organization, is the largest veterans service organization in Canada. It has never faltered in its efforts to serve veterans, to serve military and RCMP members and their families, to promote remembrance and to serve the community and country.<sup>2Q</sup>
- Initial meetings of the Sarnia Legion Branch 62 were held in quarters opposite the city hall. As the branch became stronger, plans were made to secure a larger building. Patriotic moneys left when the armistice was declared had been placed in a war chest and these were used to purchase the building on Front Street, the Sarnia Soldiers’ Service Club. The Royal Canadian Legion in Sarnia, Branch 62, is located at 286 Front Street, the original address of the Sarnia Soldiers’ Service Club.
- In July 1987, there was a sod-turning ceremony to break ground for the construction of the Legion’s new \$1.2 million building, which would be double the size of the original building. The original “old white house” Legion building was located where the current Legion’s parking lot is. The “white house” Legion was demolished when the new building was constructed. The new hall, which included pillars similar in design to those of the original building, opened in late April of 1988, with its official opening in mid-September of 1988. The tank that sits outside the hall was donated to the City of Sarnia by the First Hussars and Sarnia Legion in 1970. The tank is model type M4A2(76 mm) HVSS Sherman tank. Nicknamed “Calamity”, its dedication plaque is inscribed: *To the Memory of Our Fallen Comrades. Dedicated by the 1st Hussars and Royal Canadian Legion Branch 62. 8 November, 1970. ‘Lest We Forget’*. In 1994, a second plaque was unveiled on the Sherman tank. This second plaque is inscribed: *1944-1994 This plaque is placed here to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Allied Invasion of Normandy on D-Day, 6th June 1944. It is dedicated to the soldiers of the First Hussars; to those who took part in the assault, to those who fought in the European Campaign, and to those who gave their lives to liberate France, Belgium, and Holland. “Hodie Non Cras”*.
- At the end of the Great War, the Imperial War Graves Commission (later the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) discussed and decided upon two pressing issues:  
First - the bringing into cemeteries of bodies buried in isolated graves on the battlefields.  
Second - the exhumation of bodies, whether in isolated graves or in cemeteries, in order to repatriate the bodies to their native countries.

On the first issue: “The Commission recognized the existence of a sentiment in favor of leaving the bodies of the dead where they fell, but, in view of the actual conditions, regarded it as impractical. Over 150,000 such scattered graves are known in France and Belgium. In certain districts notably those of Ypres and the Somme battlefields, they are thickly strewn over areas measuring several miles in length and breadth. These are, or will shortly be, restored to cultivation, or possibly be afforested, and the bodies cannot remain undisturbed. They must, therefore, be removed to cemeteries where they can be reverently cared for.”<sup>N</sup> The army arranged for this work to be done by volunteers from among the comrades of the fallen. The bodies would be placed into cemeteries as close as may be possible to the place where they lay.

On the second issue: “To allow removal by a few individuals of necessity only those who could afford the cost, would be contrary to the principle of equality of treatment; to empty some 400,000 identified graves would be colossal work and would be opposed to the spirit in which the Empire had gratefully accepted the offers made by the Governments of France, Belgium, Italy and Greece to provide land in perpetuity for our countries to adopt our dead. The Commission felt that a higher ideal than that of private burial at home is embodied in these war cemeteries in foreign lands, where those who fought and fell together, officers and men, lie together in their last resting place,

facing the line they gave their lives to maintain. They feel sure – and the evidence available to them confirmed the feeling – that the dead themselves, in whom the sense of comradeship was so strong, would have preferred to lie with their comrades. These British cemeteries in foreign lands would be the symbol for future generations to the common purpose, the common devotion, the common sacrifice of all ranks in a united Empire.”<sup>2N</sup>

- Also at the end of the Great War, the Imperial War Graves Commission requested submissions for an inscription that would be placed on the great war stones in the many British and Commonwealth military cemeteries located around the world. It was British author and poet Rudyard Kipling’s recommendation that was approved by the commission. Kipling himself had lost his only son John, who was eighteen years old when he was killed in battle during the Great War. John Kipling was burdened by abysmal vision and had no business in the army, but his well-connected father had managed to secure him a position in the Irish Guards. In September 1915, only one month after his unit arrived in France, they were engaged in what turned out to be a “near rout” according to one account. The Irish unit suffered heavy casualties and among the dead or missing was John Kipling, whose disappearance would haunt his parents for the rest of their lives. In Kipling’s submission to the War Graves Commission, he wrote, “It was necessary to find words of praise and honor which should be both simple and well known, comprehensible and of the same value in all tongues, and standing, as far as might be, outside the flux of men and things. After search and consultation with all ranks and many races in our armies and navies, as well as those who had given their sons, it seemed to me that no single phrase could better that which closes the tribute to ‘famous men’ in Ecclesiasticus 44:14: “Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore.” Kipling’s submission, “Their Name Liveth For Evermore” was inscribed on the memorial stones. Rudyard Kipling also suggested the words, “Known Unto God”, for an inscription to be placed on the foot of headstones marking the remains of unidentified British or Commonwealth soldiers.

- Of the thousands of Canadians who died in the Great War, less than three percent died in service with the air forces. A generation later, however, in World War II, technological advances changed the methods by which war was fought. In World War II, close to 45% of Canada’s dead lost their lives in service with the Royal Canadian Air Force or the Royal Air Force. Six out of every ten belonged to Bomber Command.<sup>2B</sup>

- Of the 116 names of Sarnia’s World War I fallen soldiers included in this project, approximately 40 of them have no known graves. Their names are included on memorials such as Vimy Ridge, Menin Gate (Ypres) and Arras. This was common in the Great War. Due to the nature of this war, bodies were frequently never recovered, or were vapourized, shredded, eviscerated or destroyed beyond recognition. It was one more sad reality of war, a tragic nightmare that family members back home had to cope with.

- Just over two months following the end of World War I, the victors organized the Paris Peace Conference to negotiate the peace treaties between the Allied victors and the defeated Central Powers. The conference took place over a period of six months between January and June of 1919 and involved diplomats from more than 32 countries. Among them were Canada’s Prime Minister Robert Borden and the “Big Four” – Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States; David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain; Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France; and Vittorio Orlando, Prime Minister of Italy. Major outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference included the creation of the League of Nations; the signing of five peace treaties including the Treaty of Versailles with defeated enemies; and the formation of new national boundaries. The remaking of the world map through the drawing of new boundaries and divisions of territory continues to impact the world today.<sup>2N, 3Q</sup>

- The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, exactly five years to the day after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, an event that triggered the start of World War I. The Treaty of Versailles ratified the terms of peace and was a formal recognition of the end of the Great War. The Treaty of Versailles broke up and redistributed the German Empire and imposed substantial reparations on Germany which would linger for years and play an important role in the lead up to World War II.<sup>2N, 3Q</sup>

- The Treaty of Versailles also included a plan to form a ‘League of Nations’. It was an international body with representatives from many countries whose purpose was to promote international co-operation and to achieve peace and security. Prime Minister Robert Borden managed to get Canada a separate seat on the League, independent of Britain. When the United States objected, the Canadian delegates pointed out that Canada, despite its small population, had lost more soldiers during the war than the Americans and had been in the war from the beginning, three years before the Americans. League membership brought Canada its first official contact with foreign

governments as an equal, helped establish its position as an independent nation and confronted it with both the opportunities and the dilemmas associated with problems of international co-operation and attempts to prevent war. Though flawed from the outset, the League of Nations over the course of its history did experience a number of successes as well as some failures. It ceased its activities after failing to prevent the Second World War and gave way to its successor, the United Nations, in 1945.<sup>2N, 3V, 3W</sup>

- Each year, the Sarnia Sting Major Junior A Hockey Club vies for an opportunity to challenge for the Memorial Cup. The Memorial Cup is the junior hockey club championship trophy awarded annually to the Canadian Hockey League champion. It is one of the oldest and most prestigious trophies in North American sport. The idea to present such a trophy was brought forward by Captain James T. Sutherland, who was the president of the Ontario Hockey Association and who served overseas during the First World War. “Many of the young men who headed overseas were more comfortable wielding a hockey stick than a rifle,” he was quoted as saying. Captain Sutherland spoke of the splendid work done by Canadian boys in France and suggested the creation of a suitable memorial to hockey players who had fallen. Sutherland was also sparked by the World War One deaths of Allan ‘Scotty’ Davidson and George Richardson, two former hockey greats whom he coached when they played for the Kingston Frontenacs. The trophy was originally known as the OHA Memorial Cup and was donated by the Ontario Hockey Association in March of 1919, in remembrance of the many men and women who paid the supreme sacrifice for Canada in the First World War. In 2010 the memorial Cup was rededicated to the memory of all fallen Canadian military personnel. The first Memorial Cup was awarded in 1919 to the University of Toronto team who defeated the Regina Patricia’s. What made that first championship game truly unforgettable was that it was delayed by nearly an hour-and-a-half. There were jubilant parades in Toronto the same day — for Canadian regiments just returning home from the First World War — and fans were late to their seats because of them. A more fitting start for the cup, named in honour of the Canadian soldiers who did not return, could not have been contrived.<sup>3B</sup>

- During the third week of July in 1925, the City of Sarnia held its “Old Home Week” celebrations. One of the events during the week long celebrations was a Drumhead Service held on a Sunday afternoon at Victoria Park in Sarnia. A notable part of this event was a military parade of soldiers and ex-servicemen. Ex-servicemen in the parade included a handful of grey-haired veterans of the Fenian Raids and North West Rebellion under Sarnia’s veteran magistrate Major Henry Gorman, as well as veterans of the South African War and the “youthful” heroes of the Great War.

The Fenian raid (1866) veterans were Henry Gorman, Don J. Finch, W.W. Finch, Rich Causley, W.S. Percival, J. Hoskins and Andrew Logan. Northwest rebellion (1882-5) veterans included Charles Finch, David W. Finch, James Spurway, and T.J. Walker. Following is a portion of the report from the *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer*:

*How they held up their heads as they marched with the younger men these loyal citizens of long ago and even men who faced the horrors of modern warfare in 1914-18 must have experienced a thrill of pride as this little band displaying medals with unfamiliar ribbons kept pace with them.*

Veterans of the South African war were under command of Major Fred Gorman; and veterans of the Great War included details of the 1st, 18th, 34th and 70th Battalions, under command of Major N.L. LeSueur; members of the 149th Lambton battalion under Lt.-Col. MacVicar; the 27th Lambton’s battalion under Lt.-Col. C.S. Woodrow; ex-imperial army and navy veterans under Col. A. Rowland Davies, D.S.O.; and No. 2 company 2nd Canadian machine gun battalion under Major George Lucas. The parade was under command of Col. Robert MacKenzie. The Windsor Salvation Army band led the march, and the machine gun pipe band was also in the parade. Hundreds of people attended the service in Victoria Park, which opened with the singing of “The Maple Leaf forever” and “Onward Christian Soldiers.” Rev. Canon D.W. Collins then read a psalm and prayers before addressing the gathering with a stirring address touching on companionship and spirit. In speaking about the soldiers and ex-soldiers, he said, “Their companionship, rich in its recollections of stirring events when they fought together and won or lost, was higher than a mere companionship. It was a companionship that should be and was cherished. I believe we have the greatest force for the preservation of peace in the world and also that we have the highest form of civilization in the world today.”

- Until 1931, Remembrance Day was known as Armistice Day. The first Armistice Day, declared by King George V to be a day to remember all those who had made the supreme sacrifice in service to their country, took place throughout the Commonwealth on November 11, 1919. In 1920, it was also held on November 11th. After that, the Canadian government decided that Armistice Day would be celebrated on the same day as Thanksgiving Day, which would take place on the Monday of the week in which November 11 fell. For many, having Thanksgiving Day, a day

of festivities and celebrating the “bountiful harvest”, and Remembrance Day, a time of commemoration, meditation and solemn ceremonies at cenotaphs, on the same day was not a popular decision. Following a decade of lobbying by veteran’s organizations, the government amended the Armistice Act, renaming Armistice Day to Remembrance Day in 1931. The Act also ensured that from that year on, it would always be on November 11, the anniversary of the day the First World War ended, when the guns fell silent, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

- The poppy has been widely recognized internationally as a symbol of Remembrance. The first person to use the poppy as a symbol of remembrance was an American teacher, Moina Michael, a member of the American overseas YMCA in the last year of the Great War. After reading John McCrae’s 1915 poem *In Flanders Fields*, she was so moved that she pledged to keep the faith and always wear a red poppy of Flanders Fields as a sign of remembrance of all who died. She led a successful campaign to have the American Legion recognize the poppy as the official symbol of remembrance in April 1920. At the same time, Madame Anne Guerin of France, who was also inspired by John McCrae’s poem, became a vigorous advocate of the poppy as the symbol of remembrance for war dead. Her own organization, the American and French Children’s League, sold cloth copies of the flower to help raise money for the children in war-devastated areas in Europe. In 1921, Madame Guerin travelled to Britain and Canada, and convinced both the recently formed British Legion and the Canadian Great War Veterans Association to adopt the poppy as their symbol of remembrance. Canada adopted the poppy as its national flower of Remembrance on July 5, 1921. In Canada, wounded veterans started making poppies in 1922. Other versions were made, but Canadians were urged to buy veteran-made ones as a “true memorial.” Britain and Australia would also adopt the poppy in 1921. New Zealand and the United States would adopt the poppy symbol in 1922.<sup>21</sup>
- The wearing of a poppy prior to and including Remembrance Day is a visual pledge to never forget those Canadians who have fallen in war and military operations. It is a way to demonstrate our gratitude to those who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy. Funds raised during the Poppy Campaign each year are used to provide immediate assistance to ex-servicemen and women in need. Funds are also used for educational bursaries, medical research and training, donations for disaster relief, and community medical appliances, to name a few.
- The two minutes of silence tribute was adopted after the First World War to commemorate those who fought and those who died in battle. It was adopted in 1919 when King George V issued a proclamation. It is still used on Remembrance Day to remember those who have given their lives in war.

## Notes on World War II

The following is a brief description of some of the historical events and major battles of World War II. As in the Great War, Sarnia and Lambton’s sons participated in all of these major battles, and many would lose their lives while fighting in them.

- Approximately twenty years after the end of World War I, the storm clouds of war were brewing again. In March of 1939, veteran organizations across Canada were asking ex-soldier personnel to voluntarily register in the Federal Veteran’s Survey, in order to get full data on war veterans in case the country needed them. The Sarnia branch of the Royal Canadian Legion asked all local veterans to enroll at the Soldier’s Service Club. Registering in the survey did not constitute enlistment; the men and women were just indicating their experience and willingness to serve Canada in some capacity should the need arise. In a portion of the manifesto issued by the Veteran’s Organizations, they stated, *“Today, world conditions are confused and disturbing. Our own will for peace does not, unfortunately, guarantee peace to us. The events of tomorrow are wholly unpredictable. We would be unfaithful to ourselves, to the memory of our comrades, and to our country if we remained indifferent in the face of that uncertainty.”*
- In mid-May 1939, less than four months before the start of World War II, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) embarked on a month long, cross-country tour by train of Canada and part of the United States. Their two princess daughters; thirteen-year old Elizabeth, who would later succeed her father becoming Queen Elizabeth II, and eight-year old daughter Margaret Rose remained in England during the tour. The Royal tour marked the first time a reigning monarch visited Canada. Canada’s Prime Minister MacKenzie King travelled with the royal visitors for their entire tour. The royal couple visited every Canadian province and Newfoundland, and the tour was an enormous success, attracting huge enthusiastic crowds everywhere they went. Early in the tour, on May 21, 1939, King George officially unveiled the National War Memorial in Confederation Square, Ottawa (also known as *The Response*), a symbol of the sacrifices made by Canada’s sons and daughters in the Great War.



- On a warm morning on June 7, 1939 the Royal train with King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Prime Minister MacKenzie King, as part of their 36 stops in Ontario, stopped in London, Ontario. With the planned exodus of local citizens to see the Royal couple in London, Sarnia's Mayor Norman Perry had decreed June 7th to be a civic holiday in Sarnia, and many offices and businesses closed for the day. While in London, the Royal procession passed more than 200,000 people through the downtown streets of London, including an estimated 60,000 school children cheering and waving flags. Thousands of Sarnia and Lambton County residents, including 3,600 school children, travelled to the city by automobile, bus and special trains to witness the historic occasion. Sarnia was officially recognized in that Mayor Norman Perry and his wife were presented to the Royal Majesties at a reception, along with other prominent citizens. Also taking part in the event were local militia, members of the Royal Canadian Legion, city constables, three Sarnia bands and members of the 26th Lambton Battery. In Europe, it was apparent that war was looming. Less than three months after the Royal visit in London, war was declared.
- With the situation in Europe growing more tense, Sarnia was already preparing for the possibility of war. In late August of 1939, Mayor Norman Perry, local authorities and industry representatives had plans to place armed guards on the St. Clair Tunnel, the Canadian approach of the Blue Water bridge, the Sarnia Waterworks, the hydro sub-station, Imperial Oil Refinery, Mueller Limited, Dominion Salt Company, Holmes Foundry, the wireless station at Point Edward, the Lambton Garrison armory, the grain elevator and other industrial plants. Unarmed guards were already at these locations, on 24-hour duty, on lookout for saboteurs and spies. One week after the start of the war, many of these guards were then armed. Immigration officers were increasing their screening of persons entering the country from the United States. The militia was prepared for mobilization, including the reorganized Lambton Regiment made up of three Sarnia military units: the 26th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery; the 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers; and the 1st Field Park Company, Royal Canadian Engineers. In Watford, there was the 48th Howitzer Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery. In the event of war, efforts would be made to immediately bring all of these units to war strength. By May of 1940, the Sarnia Legion was recruiting volunteers from this registry to form a Sarnia platoon of the Veterans' Home Guard, a uniformed and armed unit of men responsible for combating any "Fifth Column" or other subversive elements in Sarnia, Forest, Watford, Thedford, Petrolia, Moore Township and Point Edward. By June of 1940, close to 100 men had volunteered for the Home Guard platoon, and another 300 men had signed up for active duty in the Veterans' Auxillary Home Defence Force.
- The first Sarnians to go to war went two days before the outbreak of war. On August 29, 1939, five artillerymen from the 26th Field Battery, R.C.A. (Non-Permanent Active Militia) enlisted for active service to man coastal batteries in Eastern Canada. Bombardiers B. Baker and W. Torpe and Gunners J. Bennett, H. Tinkham and L. Abbott were the first men to leave Sarnia for service in World War II.<sup>N</sup>
- The Second World War began on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. On September 3, 1939, Britain and France declared war on Germany. Also on September 3, two days out of port, the passenger ship *SS Athenia*, which had left Glasgow, was heading for Montreal with 1,418 passengers and crew aboard. At approximately 7:30 p.m. that evening, German U-boat *U-30*, which had been tracking the *Athenia* for about three hours, surfaced and without warning, fired two torpedoes directly at the *Athenia*, and later a third. The first of the torpedoes struck the *Athenia* squarely and exploded, ripping open the bulkhead between the engine room and the boiler room (the second torpedo misfired). Though the *Athenia* remained afloat after being torpedoed, she would eventually sink beneath the waves approximately 14 hours later. A total of 117 were killed (19 crew and 98 passengers) in the unprovoked attack. A young Canadian girl was among the casualties, one of the first Canadians to die as a result of enemy action. Ten-year old Margaret Janet Hayworth, of Hamilton, Ontario suffered head injuries from the flying debris and would die several days later at sea aboard a rescue vessel in her mother Georgina's arms. Waiting at the pier for his wife Georgina to disembark from the rescue ship was her husband John Hayworth. Mrs. Hayworth met him, and sobbed, "Dear God, John, she's gone." A few weeks after the sinking, flags across Canada flew at half-mast in Margaret Hayworth's honour. A public funeral was held for her in Hamilton where over one thousand mourners attended. The British and Canadian governments used the sinking of the *Athenia* as a propaganda tool to rally support for war. On Sunday, September 10, 1939, King George VI announced that, by a decision of the Canadian Parliament, Canada was at war with Germany.
- The sinking of the *SS Athenia* had a local connection. News of the *Athenia* sinking was met with great anxiety for Dawson Clark of Petrolia, as he awaited news about his wife Mary Blair Clark and their eight-year old daughter Catherine who were passengers aboard the ill-fated ship sailing from Glasgow. Also anxious for news was Mary

Clark's sister, Mrs. Peter Barclay of Sarnia. Mary Blair Clark and her daughter Catherine were sailing home from a trip to her Scottish homeland, travelling third-class right next to the engine room. On September 6th, three days after the attack, husband Dawson Clark and his two children in Petrolia, would receive a cablegram informing him that his wife and daughter were rescued and now safe in Scotland. Following is Mary Clark's account of her harrowing experience on that fateful day:

*My little girl had been seasick. I was in the cabin with her and had just told her to be good, as I was going to the ship's church that night. This was at approximately 7:30 o'clock, ship's time. I was dressing for church when the awful noise of the explosion came. You can imagine my feelings as the lights went out and I groped in the darkness for my daughter. Then, to my horror, I felt water around my legs.*

*Praying to God I clasped Catherine and ran from the cabin. I placed her on my back, pulled her arms around my neck and her legs around my body. Before I had gone more than a few yards along the corridor, the water was up to my waist and before I could reach where the stairway was supposed to be it was up to my neck. I had to swim with Catherine on my back to where the stairs were to find they had been torn away by the explosion. It was impossible to walk. How I managed to get onto the upper deck, I shall never know. Perhaps if it had been only for my own life I was frightened, I would have been overcome, but I was battling for my daughter's life. Wreckage was under our feet and over our heads.*

*On deck we found that lifeboats were already being filled and lowered away. The only trouble was with foreign passengers, who pushed their way into the lifeboats even ahead of the women and children. Only after one of the sailors grabbed a hatchet and threatened violence were the foreigners held back. The rule of the sea is children first, then women, male passengers and last of all, members of the crew and the officers. Children were being taken out of their mother's arms and placed in lifeboats. The lifeboat I was in was the last to leave. There were 80 of us cramped into a boat which normally would hold 50 persons. The only reason I can give for our escape was that we were quartered on the starboard side while the torpedo hit the port side. Many on the port side were either killed by the concussion or drowned as the water rushed in.*

*We were torpedoed at 7:30 o'clock, Sunday evening, September 3, and drifted on the ocean in our lifeboat from 8 o'clock that night until 9 or 10 o'clock Monday morning when two British destroyers, Electra and Escourt reached us.... Drifting all night in the open lifeboat under ordinary conditions would have been terrible enough, but to be burdened with the fear that we might again be fire upon added to our distress. Indeed we did hear one more torpedo, but whether it was directed at the lifeboats we could not tell. Later in the evening it started to rain to add to our discomfort.*

*After being picked up by the Electra, we were taken to Greenock and later to Glasgow.... One pathetic incident which stands out clearly in my mind is that of a mother who was looking for her 10-months-old daughter. When the two destroyers met at Glasgow, she was anxiously scanning the passengers on the other boat and when she saw two 16-year-old girls holding up her daughter, she cried, "Thank God, my baby!"....*

When Mary Clarke climbed the railings of the remnants of the stairs in the dark and flooding ship during her escape, her legs were heavily lacerated as a result of rubbing against the twisted debris in the ship's hallways. When she and her daughter got on board the last lifeboat, they spotted an abandoned five-year old girl who was crying out for her mother. Mary Clarke helped to guide the young girl by the hand into the lifeboat, comforting the five-year old and her own daughter Catherine. They would spend all night in a crowded lifeboat during a dark and rainy night, and were rescued the next morning and brought back to Scotland. Aside from the damage to her legs, Mary Clarke also developed a bronchial infection as a result of her trials at sea. The five-year old girl who had been separated from her mother, and who would be re-united with her again, was Jacqueline Hayworth, the younger sister of ten-year old Margaret Hayworth, daughter of Georgina Hayworth.

Another Sarnia connection to the sinking of the *Athenia*: a few weeks after the sinking, (Sarnia) Collegiate Institute and Technical received a letter from Thomas Nelson and Sons publishers, informing the school that a shipment of text books destined for the Collegiate had gone down with the ship.

- Canada was unprepared for war. The regular army of 4500 men, augmented by 51,000 partly-trained reservists, possessed virtually no modern equipment. The air force had fewer than 20 modern combat aircraft and the navy had only six destroyers, the smallest class of ocean-going warships. Though war was declared on September 10th, 1939, in September alone, over 58,000 Canadian men and women volunteered to serve.<sup>D</sup> As in the Great War, the Germans

would come to both admire and fear Canadian soldiers for their resilience, tenacity, and courage.<sup>3Y</sup>

- For one local Sarnia family, there was both joy and sadness when the war began. John Koziol, the proprietor of New Service Shoe Repair on Christina Street, had arrived from his native Poland in 1928, leaving behind his family. On August 29, 1939, John's wife Nellie and their two sons, Fred, aged 18 and John aged 12, arrived in Sarnia from Poland. Three days later, Germany invaded Poland. The newly arrived Koziol's, who did not speak English, were glad to be reunited as a family in the safe haven of Sarnia, Canada, but were concerned about the family they had left behind. John's home town in Poland, where his brothers and sisters were residing, had been bombed by the Nazi's.
- One of the myths about the Second World War was that most Canadians enlisted to escape unemployment; in fact, eight out of ten who enlisted in the first three years of the war left jobs or occupations to sign up. The remainder included students, those who just finished school and those not yet ready to seek full employment.<sup>2B</sup>
- The qualifications posted in Sarnia for enlistment were: the individual had to be a British subject, between the ages of 18 and 45, of good character, and reported physically fit by a medical board.
- Following is a portion of a report from the September 11, 1939 *Sarnia Observer*, one day after Canada declared war on Germany:

*War Declaration Speeds Up Recruiting  
Applicants Rush To Join The Colors*

*Canada's declaration of war upon Germany today had the result of swamping the local recruiting depot with applicants for enlistment. Following a lull on Friday and Saturday, when Canada's position did not appear clear to the man in the street, the events of the weekend completely changed the situation at recruiting headquarters today. Interview officers of all three units were kept busy and the medical board was working at top speed. Swelling the ranks of local men anxious to join up were a large number of the 48th Howitzer Battery of Watford which is not under mobilization orders. There were also many from Chatham and Kent County arriving by bus, car or by hitch-hiking on trucks to sign up...*

*If American citizens are accepted as they may be shortly, there will be no dearth of applicants from Michigan anxious to join Canadian units. Recruiting officers said today there has been a steady stream of inquiries from Americans anxious to join. None of them, however, wants to serve in a unit which will not be sent overseas. "We want to fight Hitler and we want to get to it as soon as we can," most of them are reported as saying. The air force is mentioned in most inquiries. "We expect that the battery will be at its full strength of 168 men by the end of this week," Major W.E. Harris, O.C., of the 26th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery said.*

- In early September 1939, the military staffs at the armory on Christina Street and the recruiting station on Front Street were working at top speed enlisting men for service in the Canadian Active Service Force. Recruits were coming in from Inwood, Alvinston, Petrolia, Port Lambton, Wyoming, Forest, Camlachie, Walpole Island, Brigden and other surrounding communities such as Wallaceburg and a good many from Windsor. In one case, a young Irish orphan enlisted in Sarnia who had lost both his mother and father in the Great War when he was just a baby. He was jobless and his only relative was an aunt in Ireland, for whom he had no address. At his enlistment, he made his will out to his former orphans home. Military recruiters reported that the men who were enlisting were anxious for active service overseas, and did not care for any "home guard" assignments.
- Among those turned down locally early in the enlistment process were a large number American men from Michigan; several Czecho-Slovakian men who had been in Canada for years but were never naturalized as a Canadian; a sturdy, young Polish-Canadian lad who had been accepted, but then rejected after his father came in and disclosed his true age of fifteen-years old; two husky-looking Native men who were described by the proud recruiting officer as "splendid types of manhood", but were rejected when physical examiners discovered that both volunteers were nearly blind; and several fathers and sons applied together, but in most cases, only the sons were accepted.
- The following is a portion of a report from the Canadian (Sarnia) Observer, September 1939, describing the scene at the recruiting depot on North Front Street:

*... Crowds of young men have been standing in front of the recruiting office ever since it opened. They chat with sergeants and privates stationed in front to answer questions. Then often retire to stand on the curbstone for hours in indecision. Unobtrusively then they slip into the depot and in practically no time, are in the army.*

*Inside the recruiting office door are the recruiting officers for the various companies. The volunteer talks to them and states what branch of the army he would like to join and describes his qualifications. If he seems to fit the requirements here, he is sent upstairs to the medical board where he has to pass three separate doctors who examine him for different things.*

*If he passes the medical examination, and he has to be good to do so, he is passed along a long line of desks behind which are clerks who take down and record a great deal of information about the recruit. Then he is sworn in and told to go on parade the following morning at the armories where he is issued a uniform. He is signed up for the duration of the war....*

- World War II has been referred to as a “young man’s war”. Approximately 700,000 Canadians under the age of 21 served in uniform during the Second World War. Sometimes boys as young as 13 would lie about their age or use falsified written consent letters from a parent, in an attempt to enlist in the military. The underage volunteers who looked old enough were often accepted while many of those who were rejected ended up serving in the Merchant Navy. The youngest Canadian soldier killed during the Second World War was sixteen-year old Private Gerard Dore, from Quebec, a member of the Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal, R.C.I.C., who was killed in the Battle of Normandy.<sup>D</sup> Sarnia’s fallen soldiers numbers reflect the claim that the Second World War was a “young man’s war”. Of the 184 World War II Sarnia fallen soldiers included in this project, 59 of them were between the ages of 18 and 21, representing close to one third of Sarnia’s World War II fallen.
- Recruits in Sarnia took part in physical training, military drills, marching and weapons training at the armory and collegiate campus. In mid-September of 1939, one of the issues military officials had to deal with was the shortage of clothing and shoes. Major McIntyre of the 11th Field Company stated, “It would be a good time for some kind angel to organize a drive for funds so that we could buy enough boots to carry on with for the present. We have two cobblers in the unit who can repair any old shoes and they need not be high shoes either. We can take oxfords, just as long as we can get the men into sturdy enough footwear for drill purposes.” Men were being excused from marching exercises, because of the condition of their shoes. Within days, local citizens, downtown merchants and the Red Cross Society contributed more than enough shoes for the troops. By the end of September 1939, all three units of the Lambton Garrison, the 26th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery; the 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers; and the 1st Field Park Company, Royal Canadian Engineers, had their ranks filled to full strength. In late September, the recruits moved to a camp encompassing all of Bright’s Grove and Lake Cabin Cottages for a six-week intensive training period, where Major Harris stated, “We are going to make these men into soldiers.”
- Recruiting did not stop with the three Lambton Garrison units. Sarnians were also recruited into the Royal Canadian Regiment, the 48th Highlanders, the Essex Scottish, the First Hussars, the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps, the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, the Perth Regiment, the Elgin Regiment and the Kent Regiment to name a few.
- In late September 1939, all German nationals in Lambton County over 16 years of age were obliged to report for registration at the R.C.M.P. office on Queen Street or the office detachment in Port Lambton. The chiefs of police in Petrolia, Forest and Watford were authorized to receive registrations there. German nationals, and those born in territories which were under sovereignty or control of the German Reich on September 3, 1939, were required to report weekly to their place of registration for the duration of the war, and they were issued permit cards, which they were required to carry with them, subject to arrest. In June of 1940, the order to register at the nearest R.C.M.P. headquarters had been expanded to include, “all aliens of German or Italian origin and all persons of German and Italian origin naturalized since September 1, 1929.” Also in June of 1940, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police ordered that all persons living in Canada who were not naturalized Canadians or of British birth, must surrender all their firearms or be prosecuted under the Defence of Canada Regulations.
- The paranoia of sabotage locally was a legitimate concern. During World War I, in December 1917, a group of German conspirators in the United States were convicted in Detroit federal court on charges of having conspired to dynamite the St. Clair River tunnel, among other charges. The scheme involved sending a load of dynamite with a time fuse attached into the tunnel on a small platform attached to roller skates, which would ride the rails from the Port Huron side. Fortunately, the conspirators were arrested before they had the opportunity to carry out their plan. During World War II, in June of 1940, an attempt of sabotage was made on a freight train as it travelled through the tunnel from Port Huron to Sarnia. Holes had been drilled through the floor beneath one of the freight cars containing

four valuable airplane motors, and strips of blankets saturated with flammable linseed oil had been shoved into the car under the motors, and ignited. As the freight train arrived in Sarnia, officials noticed that one of the crates on a car was afire. The flames were extinguished by railway employees and the Sarnia Fire Department. Only four hours earlier, a special train of eight cars loaded with extremely explosive demolition bombs had passed through the tunnel.

- From the outset of the Second World War, the Canadian government had procedures for establishing internment camps across the country to house military prisoners of war, merchant seamen, refugees, and other civilian detainees. When Italy declared war against the Allies on June 10th 1940, residents of Italian descent were subject to internment. In 1942, the Japanese in Canada were interned and Jewish refugees from enemy countries faced internment; however, internment camps for civilians and refugees were separate from camps for prisoners of war. With the exception of the Japanese, the majority of refugees and civilians were released before the end of 1943 and no Italian or Japanese military personnel were ever imprisoned in Canada. In contrast, the first German prisoners of war arrived in the early fall of 1939 and prisoners of war continued to arrive from overseas throughout the war. In May of 1945, nearly 35,000 prisoners of war were held in Canada in 26 POW camps, the majority German. The nearest camp to Sarnia was Camp No. 10, in Chatham and Fingal, Ontario. It was a tented camp housing enemy merchant seamen and enemy officers. It was in use periodically from May 1944 to November 1946. Many of the POWs there were employed in farming projects in southwestern Ontario. Other camps in southern Ontario were located in Ingersoll, Kitchener, Toronto, Bowmanville and Gravenhurst. When war ended, approximately 6,000 German POW's chose to remain in Canada.<sup>F, 2E, 2N</sup>

- In October 1939, the Sarnia city council pledged to hold soldiers' jobs for all city employees who enlisted in the Canadian forces. A number of local industries endorsed the plan and agreed to do likewise, including Imperial Oil Limited, Canadian National Railways, Doherty Manufacturing Company, and the John Goodison Thresher Company. The policy stated that permanent employees enlisting for military service would be assured of re-employment upon demobilization from His Majesty's service. John Goodison stated, "It is one of the least things that is within our power, and we shall be only too pleased to extend such a little service to those who would be serving us and their country in these troubled times." The entire area was made out-of-bounds to the public.

- Also in October 1939, for one Sarnia man, his time in the service was short. Louis Farkas was born in Karcag, Hungary and had served with a machine gun company in the Hungarian army. At age twenty-seven, he was boarding at 215 Water Street, Sarnia, when he enlisted in the army, a member of the 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers, with the rank of Sapper. After he entered the Canadian army, he discovered that his brothers, living in Czecho-Slovakia, had been conscripted into the German forces. While his mother was still living in Karcag, Hungary, his brothers were living in Czecho-Slovakia, when it was seized by the Germans. His brothers were then conscripted into Hitler's army. Louis Farkas applied for discharge because he did not want to run the risk of looking along a rifle barrel at his brothers in the trenches opposite.

- On May 12th 1940, the grim realities of war were brought home to the people of Sarnia when the three local units of the Canadian Active Service said farewell. More than 5,000 citizens cheered the members of the 26th Field Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery, the 11th Field Company and the 1st Field Park Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers as they marched from the city hall square along Christina Street toward the Athletic Park. Marching along with the well-precisioned, smartly dressed soldiers were four bands, two hundred veterans of the last war, and bringing up the rear of the parade were the blue-uniformed cadets from the Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School. At the Athletic Park, there were speeches, hymns, prayers, the playing of the National Anthem and a final march-past the grandstand. On their return to city hall square, the men of the 26th Field Battery were dismissed for a brief hour and a half to be with their families and friends, before leaving from the Canadian National Depot at the Tunnel Station. There was a surging crowd of close to 2,000 at the train station, with many tearful farewells prior to the departure of the 26th Field Battery. The Engineers had marched off from City Hall Park to the armory parade grounds for dismissal. They had a few extra days before they had to return to barracks in London, where they would move out soon after. Two weeks later, the rousing send-off for the three units mobilized in Sarnia was repeated in Guelph and London. The 26th Field Battery departed Guelph for Petawawa Camp, while the 11th Field Company and the 1st Field Park Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers departed London for Petawawa. Hundreds of citizens from Sarnia made the trip to both cities, joining thousands of others, as the troops marched through the city centers to the train stations. Along with the cheering crowds were many touching scenes as the men bade goodbye to their wives, mothers, sweethearts and friends.

- In June 1940, Prime Minister MacKenzie King introduced the National Resources Mobilization Bill (NRMA). It proposed a national registration of eligible men between the ages of 21 and 45 for conscription for home defence. The bill was introduced in response from English Canada for total mobilization of manpower. The Bill was later amended in August of 1942 to allow conscription for overseas service, but initially was never implemented. Later, campaigns in Italy in 1943 and the Normandy invasion in 1944, combined with a lack of volunteers, resulted in Canada facing a shortage of troops. The National Resources Mobilization Act was amended in November of 1944 allowing the government to send conscripts overseas. In early 1945, 12 908 conscripts were sent overseas. Only 2 463 of these conscripted men reached units on the front lines, and out of these, 69 lost their lives.<sup>21</sup>
- By June 1940, at least fifty families in Sarnia and surrounding district had registered, offering to open their homes for the voluntary care of refugee children expected to arrive from Britain. The local Children's Aid Society embarked on the task of finding temporary homes for children torn from their own homes by the scourge of war, and ensuring that the children would be properly cared for. Sarnia families offered to provide these children homes, food, clothing, medical attention and other care free of charge. Despite the Ontario Department of Public Welfare stipulating that not more than two children could be placed in any one home, except in special instances, some Sarnia families offered to take care of as many as six children.
- In early July 1940, the first group of children from Great Britain arrived in Ontario. It was expected that 2,000 would be in the first group, who then were officially referred to as "British Child Guests". The first children to arrive in Sarnia in early July were two brothers and their sister, the children of Major and Mrs. Alfred Tozer of Potters' Bar, north of London, England. They were Olivia Mary, aged 15, Edward Timothy, aged 12 and John Robert, aged 11. They were to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Weir of 133 James Street, who upon the children's arrival were residing at their summer home at Lake Huron beach. Mr. Charles Weir of Sarnia was a veteran of the Great War, and had billeted at the Tozer home while he was serving as a lieutenant with a mobile anti-aircraft unit. Major Alfred Tozer was in France with the British army at the time Charles Weir was boarding there. The two did not meet until after the armistice, but then became great friends. On June 22, 1940, Charles Weir cabled the Tozers and offered to take care of the children during the war. Major Tozer, who was once more in the army, and among those who escaped Dunkerque, was only too glad to place his children in Canada. One week later, the children sailed to Canada. Within five minutes of arriving at the lake in Sarnia, the three Tozer children were playing on the beach and in swimming, along with the two Weir children, Catherine and Jane.
- In early September 1940, six more "British Child Guests" arrived in Sarnia. Five of the children were from Glasgow, Scotland: sisters Isobel (age 8), Jessie (age 10), and Marjorie McIntosh (age 12); and brothers Gordon (age 12) and David Hope (age 14). Eric Yare (age 14) of Kent, England was the other child. The children had first arrived in Toronto where they were under the care of the Children's Aid Society there. When the six young children arrived in Sarnia at the Tunnel station, about 200 Sarnians were present to greet them. The following is a portion of the Observer report on their arrival:
 

*The children showed signs of fatigue when they first came off the train to be surrounded by young and old eager to get a glimpse of them. One little Scottish lassie flashed a ready smile at the bystanders. And it proved to be an infectious smile, for all three of the comely girls were soon, when free of the crowd and excitement, smiling readily. Someone had provided them with some Canadian pears and they were enjoying them contentedly.... All the children nodded when asked if they were going to go to school here, and some of them even seemed to be looking forward to it.*
- Isobel McIntosh would reside with Mr. and Mrs. Norman Perry of 340 Davis Street; her sisters Jessie and Marjory would stay with Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Ferguson of 430 George Street; Gordon and David Hope would stay with Alex Rose of 359 Cromwell Street, later Mr. and Mrs. C.F. Schnarr of 265 South Brock Street; and Eric Yare would stay with Mr. and Mrs. John Cowan at their lakeshore residence, later 262 North Vidal Street. By December of 1940, four more British Child Guests were residing in Sarnia: Roger Butler (age 12) was with Major and Mrs. Gordon McIntyre at 354 London Road; Isabel Miller (age 10) was with Mr. and Mrs. Laurie at 153 North College Avenue; Barbara Scott (age 6) was with Mr. and Mrs. S.B. Scott, and Joan John (age 14) was with Dr. and Mrs. R.K. Stratford in Corunna.
- Three years later, in July 1943, "British Child Guest" Eric Yare, after being the guest of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowan for that time, would return home to England to join the Royal Air Force. He was eager to contribute his effort to help

destroy the Luftwaffe that had driven him from his homeland. He expressed that he had many pleasant memories of Canada and Sarnia, and that the people and scenes made a vivid impression on him. Although England would always be home to him, he hoped to return to Sarnia to visit his many friends here. He said that he was struck by many things on his arrival in Sarnia. He remembered clearly that separately-built wooden houses with verandahs were quite a novelty to him. His chief objection to Canada had been the smallness and dinginess of its railway stations and the difficulty of access to them. He did like the size and speed of the passenger and freight trains. On entering school in Sarnia, he was somewhat surprised by its co-educational character and by the presence of female teachers. He was impressed also by the freer teacher-student relationship and the relative rarity of corporal punishment. He was also somewhat shocked at first by the informal attire of his classmates. He said that he found Canadians friendly, almost embarrassingly so at first. He took part in many sports while in Sarnia, chiefly boxing, but also enjoyed swimming and diving in Lake Huron, which was much more preferable than the North Sea. Cricket was the sport dearest to him, which he successfully attempted to teach to his Sarnia friends, who had proved quite enthusiastic about the sport. For Eric, it seemed that the Canadians' chief topic of conversation was the weather, finding ample justification for this in its' extreme unpredictability. "In England" Eric said, "there is no need to talk of the weather. You can be sure that it will rain."

- In March 1944, another Sarnia "British Child Guest" would return home. After spending more than three years in Sarnia, David Hope, now aged 17 would return to Glasgow, Scotland where he planned to join the R.C.A.F. His younger brother Gordon would remain in Sarnia. David had attended Sarnia Collegiate Institute and was a member of the 7th Sarnia Boy Scouts. He was looking forward to seeing his parents again, Mr. and Mrs. J.N. Hope, and an older brother who was in the British Army. David hoped to return to Canada after the war.

- In July of 1944, four more "British Child Guests" would return home to England after spending four years in Sarnia; Olivia Mary (Bindle) Tozer (who had completed one year at McGill University to her credit), and her younger brothers Edward Timothy and John Robert (who attended Sarnia Collegiate Institute), and Roger Butler (who completed his final year at Sarnia Collegiate). When asked their opinion of Sarnia and Canada comments included: Olivia regretted leaving her friends in Canada but would be glad to see her mother and English friends again; she felt individuals grew up faster in Canada since they were allowed more liberties, such as girls going to dances at the age of 15 or 16 versus England's private schools where girls would only get to social functions at age 19. Olivia and Roger felt schools in Canada had less discipline; Roger said when he first arrived in Sarnia he was impressed with wooden houses, since in England, they were either brick or stone. The children had been spending their summers at the lake shore and said they enjoyed this, especially swimming in Lake Huron; Roger came to like watermelon and corn-on-the-cob which they had never seen before; and John Robert became an ardent baseball and hockey fan.

- In October 1940, the Canadian government announced that one of the six "over-age" destroyers acquired from the United States to be used as a war vessel had been named the *St. Clair*. The honour was greatly appreciated by the residents of Sarnia and other communities along the shores of the St. Clair River. The suggestion to the government that the name *St. Clair* be considered, when naming additional naval craft, had been submitted by Homer Lockhart, secretary-treasurer of the Sarnia Chamber of Commerce. Adding to local interest was the fact that a Sarnia resident was named chief quartermaster of the destroyer. Lloyd Jennings of 173 Parker Street had given up his position as first mate on a Great Lakes freighter to join the R.C.N.V.R. He underwent a period of training in the Canadian navy at an eastern port before being assigned to the *St. Clair*. Lloyd had a wife and daughter residing in Sarnia; his brother Charles was a local fireman, and his other brother Harry was in England as a member of the 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers.

- On a mid-February night in 1941, thousands of local and district residents turned out in downtown Sarnia for a mock "blackout and bombing raid" event and parade. It was organized by the committee in charge of the War Savings Certificates campaign, as a way to demonstrate what might happen should the community be attacked, as the English people were enduring with nightly German bombing raids. The Sarnia Observer reported that, "It was an event the like of which had never been seen in Sarnia and the parade was considered the best since the Armistice celebration in 1918." Sarnia's downtown was jammed with people when the air raid warning sounded, and within seconds, the fire department raced down Front, Wellington and Christina streets with sirens wailing and bells ringing. At the same time, fireworks, to represent bursting bombs and shells, exploded along the waterfront, and flares were fired from rooftops. The parade included numerous floats, the Lambton Garrison Band, local military units, the

Sarnia Volunteer Guards, the Sarnia Township Guard, the Pressey Boys' Band, the Petrolia White Rose Band, the Imperial Pipe Band, the Salvation Army Band, the Hydro employees wash-board band, several hundred Boy Scouts and the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

- In May 1941, the first Memorial War Crosses began to arrive in Sarnia, with notification that others were to be expected. The memorial crosses were issued by the Canadian Government to the mothers and widows of members of the Canadian navy, army, air force, and Canadian merchant seamen who lost their lives while in service to the country. The crosses were of sterling silver with a wreath of laurel leaves entwined between the arms and maple leaf superimposed. The crosses are suspended from a purple ribbon. On the reverse side was engraved the name and regimental number of the deceased. Accompanying the memorial crosses were engraved cards bearing the inscription, "*This memorial cross is forwarded to you by the minister of national defence on behalf of the government of Canada in memory of one who died in the service of his country.*" Among those that received the memorial crosses in May 1941 were Mrs. M.G. Harris (mother) and Mrs. J.M. Harris (widow) of RCAF Sergeant-Pilot John M. Harris; Mrs. E.J. Powell (mother) of RCN Ordinary Seaman Stephen B. Powell; and Mrs. H.O. Le Gare (mother) of RCNVR Able Seaman Hector Le Gare.
- In November 1941, the Sarnia Observer published a letter that had been received by the Sarnia Rotary Club. The local Rotary Club had donated an ambulance through the Canadian Red Cross to the British Red Cross Society in June 1940. The letter had been sent from Miss Jean Dixon in England, the driver of the Sarnia Rotary ambulance. Miss Dixon was a member of the F.A.N.Y.'s, the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry. In her letter, she expressed her deep appreciation for the gift of the ambulance and provided some insight into the life of an ambulance driver during the hectic times of constant German air raids. The hood and cab of the Sarnia ambulance had been damaged, shrapnel marks were left on the body, the windows were broken and an incendiary bomb had struck the vehicle with the result that one of the drivers sustained a burned hand. The following are portions of the letter:

*Dear Members,*

*.... Your ambulance has had many adventures since it left you... It arrived at Liverpool where it was unloaded and was taken to an old and romantic castle the seat of one of the previous dukes, a wonderful place with courtyards, little windows and ancient doorways. It reminded me of Walt Disney's drawings and fairy stories.*

*At this time I was stationed in London and from there we used to take convoys of six to ten ambulances twice a week to London to have stretchers, blankets, water bottles and other equipment put in before they went out to the commands. It now has a number GGP512 and early one morning we set out from London to the British Red Cross Society headquarters, southern command, where it was cleaned and polished by the girls who were on a fortnight's course. After a last check-over it was posted to Plymouth where it was to stay for several months. Miss Dixon was then transferred to Plymouth.*

*Here I met your ambulance again but this time we were not to be parted. The first thing to do was christen him. He always reminded me of a penguin so thinking of Pip and Squeak's nephew I called him Stanley. I expect you have heard of the terrible blitzes on Plymouth so perhaps you can imagine some of the exciting and terrible things that happened there...*

*How we all came out alive I still cannot understand. On three occasions was the actual building in which we were in hit and the last time we crawled out of the ruins of our billets after a land mine had knocked it to the ground. We had many tense moments. Once an incendiary bomb hit the back of Stanley and I jumped out expecting to find my co-driver hurt but to find her underneath with only a small burn on her hand. Our nights were spent collecting the wounded – the days collecting the dead and cleaning the ambulances. After the last blitz Stanley was the only ambulance left out of the original 10, and five or six very tired F.A.N.Y.'s clanked into the battered Stanley with their salvaged belongings for the journey back to H.Q., leaving the burnt and battered Plymouth a memory they will never forget.*

*In Bath, the first thing I did was to take Stanley to the nearest workshops where he stayed for nearly a week. His bonnet and cab roof were badly damaged and several large shrapnel marks all had to be repaired. The windows had to be ordered so I drove him for some time with a badly cracked windscreen and no side windows. Now he is himself again and I spent some time polishing the new paint and patching the roof with a puncture outfit. The affection which I have for him is really amazing. I never realized it was possible to be so fond of a machine even in his grumpiest of moods. He has never let me down and although I took handfuls of glass from his tires, not one puncture did he have.*



*We have quite a lot of work here driving about 400 miles a week...*

*I am sending you some photographs which may interest you. One, as you will see is Stanley before he was sent to the workshops. Before I finish I should like to thank you all again for your kind gift and also for the ambulance and the many other things which you and your countrymen have sent to help us win this war...*

- Also in November 1941, Sarnians were taking advantage of the new “airgraph” service started at the post office. It was a means to send correspondence to members of the armed services overseas by air with a minimum of cost and delay. Messages were written on a letter sized form obtained from the post office. The form was then sent immediately to Toronto where it was photographed on miniature film. A small negative was then made, sent overseas, and upon reaching the U.K., developed. A print five inches by four was made, placed in an envelope and then delivered. The cost of sending a message of about 15 lines was 10 cents, and it was delivered in four or five days.
- The Battle of Hong Kong, December 8 – 25, 1941: In late October 1941, a force of almost 2,000 Canadians were sent to the British Colony of Hong Kong with the task of defending the island against Japanese Empire attack. The Canadian battalions comprised of the Royal Rifles of Canada and the Winnipeg Grenadiers had no battle experience, and it was felt they would have some time their to get more training as there was little chance of an attack. A total of 14,000 made up the defence force, consisting of British, Canadian and Indian regiments and Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps. In early December, the Japanese launched a series of attacks almost simultaneously on Pearl Harbour, Northern Malaya, the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island and Hong Kong. On December 18, the Japanese attacked Hong Kong. The Canadians fought valiantly against overwhelming odds, against troops that far outnumbered them in strength, who were backed with a heavy arsenal of artillery and air support. The Canadians had no significant air or naval defence and had no hope of being relieved or resupplied. On Christmas Day, 1941, after 17 ½ days of fighting, Hong Kong was surrendered. The Battle of Hong Kong was the Canadian Army’s first combat action in the Second World War. Of the 1,975 Canadians who went to Hong Kong, more than 1,050 were either killed or wounded. Of those, 557 were killed in battle or died in POW camps, a casualty rate of more than 50%, one of the highest of any Canadian theatre in the Second World War.<sup>D, E, 2N and 3A</sup> One young man from Sarnia, Max Berger, would lose his life in the Battle of Hong Kong. Hong Kong would not be liberated by the Allies until August of 1945.
- The Battle of the Atlantic, September 3, 1939 – May 8, 1945: It was the longest continuous battle of the Second World War and one in which Canada played a central role. It began on the opening day of the war, and ended almost six years later with Germany’s surrender. It was the struggle between the Allied and German forces for control of the Atlantic Ocean. The Allies needed to keep the vital flow of men and supplies going between North America and Europe, while the Germans wanted to cut these supply lines. To do this, German submarines (U-boats, often hunting in “wolfpacks”) and other warships prowled the Atlantic looking to sink Allied ships (travelling in “convoys”, groups of ships crossing with naval escort protection). The war was brought to Canada’s doorstep as U-boats looked to torpedo ships off cities such as Halifax, Sydney and St. John’s, and even into the St. Lawrence River. Canada’s Merchant Navy, along with the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic. At least seventeen young men from Sarnia would lose their lives in the Battle of the Atlantic.
- At the beginning of the Second World War, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) had only six ocean-going destroyers, five small minesweepers, two training vessels and 3,500 personnel. By the end of the war, Canada had 434 commissioned vessels and 110,000 men and women in uniform (all volunteers). The Royal Canadian Navy had become the third largest navy in the world. The Canadian sacrifices in the triumph of the Battle of the Atlantic were high: approximately 72 Canadian merchant ships were lost, more than 1,600 Merchant Navy personnel lost their lives (one out of every seven Merchant Navy sailors who served was killed or wounded), 24 RCN vessels were sunk, and almost 2,000 RCN members and 752 RCAF members lost their lives during this campaign.<sup>D, E and 2N</sup>
- The Royal Canadian Navy’s fleet included destroyers, cruisers, corvettes, frigates and minesweepers along with the Canadian Merchant Navy vessels. The Navy made major contributions in the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the Arctic and in European waters. During the course of World War II, approximately 200,000 Canadian men and women would enlist and serve with the RCN and Merchant Navy. Approximately 4,200 Canadian navy personnel would perish in the war.<sup>E</sup>

- Mac-Craft Corporation Limited was a boat building plant that was formerly situated in Wallaceburg. In March 1940, it acquired property in Sarnia that had been a distillery ten or twelve years earlier. By February 1941, the new Mac-Craft plant in Sarnia was in operation. On November 27th 1941, the first war vessel built in this city was launched in Sarnia. Work on the vessel had begun in the early summer of 1940. The small war vessel, a submarine chaser, named the *Fairmile HMC No. Q062*, was launched at the Sarnia Mac-Craft Corporation. Mrs. J.T. Barnes, the wife of Sarnia's mayor, christened the ship as it slid down the marine railway, by smashing a bottle of champagne on the bow. One week earlier, a large number of invited Sarnians had gathered at the plant to witness the launching. Arrangements had been made for a special ceremony, and the ship was prepared to slide into the water, but at the last minute, because of an unforeseen delay in dredging a channel from the boat works to the harbor, the event had to be postponed. Workmen then had to remove a water main from the boat works to the water's edge, and pull out rows of spiling from the former site of the Cleveland-Sarnia Saw Mills property. A week later, following the brief christening ceremony, the vessel slid smoothly down the railway until the stern touched water. Suddenly the boat stopped and became stuck in the track. After 15 minutes of pulling on cables and ropes, the vessel glided free into the St. Clair River. There was only a small crowd present at the launching, which came as a surprise to most Sarnians, as there were rumours circulating that the ship would be kept in the plant until the next spring. The launching of the Fairmile brought back memories for local citizens of the last large ship to be constructed and launched in Sarnia. It had been over fifty years prior, that the *SS Monarch*, which had been built at Dyble ship yards in Sarnia, was launched in September of 1890. The passenger ship *Monarch* would meet its fate in 1906, wrecked after striking a rock near Isle Royal in Lake Superior.

- A few days later, the last weekend of November 1941, the *Fairmile Q062* was officially given her first trial, a run on the St. Clair River with forty-seven persons aboard. The little ship backed away from its dock at the Sarnia elevator slip and turned around gracefully heading down the river to the Imperial Oil Limited dock where she took on a cargo of fuel. Then she went through her two-hour test run down the river, where at times, the ship appeared to be racing automobiles on highway 40. Officials of the Royal Canadian Navy and Department of National Defence gave its performance high praise. The patrol boat, officially described as a submarine chaser, was a credit to the boat builders and contractors of Sarnia who built the sleek, speedy vessel based on designs sent from England. With sandbags sitting in her depth-charge cradles, the deck was finished in the dull gray of the navy, and the interior fittings were of highly varnished reddish wood. A description of the gadgets and fittings within the small, comfortable pilot house was not allowed to be disclosed at that time. The details of the powerful Hall-Scott twin marine motors, such as the size, the revolutions per minute and the speed of the craft, were also a navy secret. The men's and officer's quarters were neatly finished with galleys, ward rooms, soft leather covered mattresses, and neat little natural-finished mess tables suitable for two persons. One week after the launch of *Q062*, a second Fairmile subchaser, *HMC Q063* was launched by Mac-Craft Corporation in Sarnia, one month ahead of schedule. At the time, it was believed to be a new record for quick construction in Canada. Both ships were completed within six months. The two Sarnia ships along with a sister ship from Midland would winter in Sarnia until the spring of 1942.

- Both *Q062*, in April 1942 and *Q063*, in January 1943, would be loaned to the free French Navy during the war. Both would serve off the south coast of Newfoundland until the end of the war. Mac-Craft Limited of Sarnia completed five more Fairmile subchasers between October 1942 and September 1943, numbers *Q101* to *Q105*. One more Fairmile was completed in November 1943, the *Q115*. At the end of the war, the *Q062* would be re-acquired by the Royal Canadian Navy and renamed the *HMCS Wolf*, while the *Q063* would be sold. *Fairmile Q105* would years later become the *Duc d'Orleans*, a charter boat in Sarnia from 1978 until 2005. The Sombra Museum is now the home of a number of artifacts from the *Q105*, including the original blueprints, compass, parts of the hull and the ships' original propellers.

- In December 1941, Mrs. Charles C. Clarke of 121 Forsythe Street, Sarnia, received a letter from Major Gordon McIntyre, acknowledging a Christmas gift of chocolates sent to him by the Ladies Field Auxiliary, Sarnia. Major McIntyre was the first commanding officer of a field company of Royal Canadian Engineers formed in Sarnia and mobilized at the start of the war. The following is a portion of that letter:

*It thrilled me to think that you ladies still keep me in mind. Although I have commanded two units since and am now at headquarters, I may say without exaggeration that the boys I had from Sarnia were the best bunch of lads that ever came across the Atlantic. I was talking to Col. (A.G.) MacLean who commanded them after I left. He thinks they are the best field company in the Canadian Army overseas. I have heard a lot of good things said about them which*

*always makes me stick out my chest and say that I was one of them once. They are a unit to be proud of and already making a name for themselves. The world will hear more of them. They may be considered 'crack' troops and the cream of the Canadian Army. I am very proud to have been associated with them.*

- In late December 1941, Sarnia Mayor John Barnes, as chairman of the local Civilian Defence Committee, offered advice to Sarnia citizens, stating that it was urgent that they become acquainted with measures to be taken in the event of an air raid attack. Instructions included: if at home or work during an emergency, stay there, seek cover at once; keep streets clear for movement of emergency vehicles; do not use the telephone; keep on hand a supply of water; be prepared for incendiary bombs by keeping on buckets of sand; and keep on hand a moderate supply of first aid equipment.

- In late May 1942, over three thousand Sarnians came out to welcome two British "Blitz" Boy Scouts who were on a coast-to-coast tour of Canada. Hugh Bright, aged 17 and Roy Davis, aged 18, told of their experiences during air raids in England. Their visit to Sarnia began with a luncheon at the Windsor Hotel, attended by local Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Brownies and their leaders, representatives from local service clubs and civic officials including Mayor J.T. Barnes. It was followed by a parade beginning at City Hall which moved along Christina Street to Victoria Park. At the park, thousands of local citizens gathered to listen to the boys' experiences. The following is from seventeen year-old Hugh Bright of Scotland:

*Canada is fine and dandy. The first thing that struck us when we arrived in Canada was the number of lights. We stayed up at night just looking at them. I remember my first meal I had. I couldn't believe it. The steak I had would have been a week's ration in Britain. The scenery in this country is marvelous.*

*The first thing you hear in an air raid is the siren. We have become so used to it that we are out of bed, dressed, and to our post by the time the siren ends. It blows for one minute. 'Jerry' first drops incendiary bombs to start fires and mark his target. All the men between 18 and 60 years of age are in the fire guard. Their job is to put out the incendiaries. After the incendiaries fall, the heavy bombs come, after which 'Jerry' drops more incendiaries to set on fire what he had destroyed. We, as Boy Scouts, are organized to put out incendiaries, dig out people who are trapped in buildings, and be as useful as we can whenever asked to do a job.*

Eighteen year-old Roy Davis of Southampton, told the large Sarnia crowd of the food the British were getting at the time:

*We only get two eggs a month in England now and everyone looks forward to the meal with eggs in it. There is no white bread, it is all brown. The government says brown is best for us. We have two ounces of butter each week to spread on the bread. When the butter is gone, we have two ounces of cheese to put on the bread.*

*In the bombing raids, it isn't the soldiers who suffer, but rather it is the civilians. In one raid 40,000 incendiary bombs dropped on the residential and business section of Southampton in one half hour. It certainly kept us busy putting them out.*

The two "Blitz" Boy Scouts had been chosen for the Canada tour from Boy Scouts across Britain who had given noteworthy service during air raids. Roy Davis did outstanding work during all the air raids at Southampton. Hugh Bright had rendered exceptional and courageous service as a stretcher-bearer throughout heavy air raids on the Clyde, Glasgow.

- On the first day of summer, June 21, 1942, Sarnia, along with Point Edward and Port Huron, held their first test "black-out". The united 15-minute drill was a test of the Civilian Defence and Air Raid Precautions (A.R.P.) Committees emergency preparedness in the event of enemy air attack. Warning sirens across the area sounded to start the drill, then within seconds, street lights, homes, cars, downtown businesses and industry lights like those at Imperial Oil Limited were extinguished. The only lights visible for miles were those of passing lake freighters, navigation signals on the bridge and ironically, a spotlight that illuminated the war memorial in Victoria Park which had been mistakenly left on. A few minutes later, fire engines, ambulances and utility vehicles were dispatched and racing through the downtown streets of Sarnia and Port Huron in response to simulated emergencies. Afterwards, Mayor John T. Barnes congratulated the citizens of the city for the manner in which they cooperated and stated, "It was a good test and will probably make the people of Sarnia conscious of what they may have to go through if Sarnia is ever raided." A number of these "black-out" drills would be held in Sarnia during the course of the war, organized by the Civilian Defence Committee.

- In July 1942, Lieutenant Commander C.H. Mott, the commanding officer of a minesweeper, wrote a letter to Sarnia Mayor John T. Barnes expressing his desire to visit with the mayor and some of the city's leaders. The minesweeper that he was the commander of was the *H.M.C.S. Sarnia*, named in honour of this city. It was one of more than 300 ships that were named for Canadian communities during the Second World War.
- The *H.M.C.S. Sarnia* (J309), was a 165 foot, steel-hulled Bangor-class minesweeper, launched in January of 1942, and later commissioned for service at the Toronto Shipbuilding Yards on August 13, 1942. Present for the ceremony were Sarnia Mayor John T. Barnes, Mrs. Barnes and a small group of Sarnia civic officials. Also present were representatives from a number of Sarnia organizations who had provided comforts and gifts for the crew of the *HMCS Sarnia* not supplied by official naval sources. In a telegram to the Mayor Barnes from the Minister of National Defence for Naval Affairs, he stated, "The interest that the people of Sarnia have shown in the ship and crew is greatly appreciated." Upon the mayor's return to Sarnia, city council made plans to donate a crest of the city (to be hung in the commanders cabin) and a large washing machine (for the crew), as the city's gift to *HMCS Sarnia*. The *HMCS Sarnia* was never able to visit the port of its namesake. Not long after being commissioned, the *HMCS Sarnia* would escort a Quebec-Sydney convoy arriving in Halifax in mid-September 1942, subsequently being assigned to the Newfoundland Force. In February 1944, the commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander R.C. Chenoveth and crew forwarded two photographs of the *HMCS Sarnia* along with expressions of thanks from the officers and ratings to the city for the interest shown in their welfare. The commander also suggested that certain electrical equipment which would benefit the whole ship's company might be of more value than personal comforts, owing to the fact that the personnel changed frequently. It was suggested that additional loudspeaker equipment together with record playing attachments be purchased for the ship, along with hot plates and electric irons for use in the various messes. City Clerk Miss M.D. Stewart, chairman of the *HMCS Sarnia* committee said that her committee would endeavor to secure the required articles. In mid-September 1944, Sub. Lieut. Douglas Whalen and three members of the *HMCS Sarnia* would arrive in the city for a visit. They were met at the train station by a welcoming committee and taken to city hall and then to a hotel. During their two-day stay, they were given a tour of the city and entertained by local dignitaries. Their sight-seeing tour included Canatara Park, the harbour at Point Edward and the Polymer Corporation plant. Entertainment included a dinner in the Sarnia Golf Club; a civic dance at H.M.C.S. Repulse, headquarters of the local Sea Cadet Corps, that included Ollie Case's orchestra; a semi-formal reception at city hall; and a supper-party put on by the women staff of city hall at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Basil Williamson, 366 Cameron Street. During their visit, the *HMCS Sarnia* was in port undergoing a major refit, after participating in minesweeping and short convoys out of Halifax. It would eventually be assigned to the Halifax Local Defence Force until June 1945.
- In mid-April 1945, the *HMCS. Sarnia* would be involved in a life saving rescue. On the evening of April 15, 1945, with the war drawing to a close, the minesweeper *HMCS Esquimalt* set out from Halifax on a routine anti-submarine patrol around the harbor approaches. The *HMCS Sarnia* was also patrolling the area, in another sector. Lurking in those same cold northwest Atlantic waters was German submarine U-190. In the early morning hours of April 16th, U-190 idling in the Halifax harbor fired a single acoustic torpedo that struck the starboard hull of the *Esquimalt*. The ship sank in four minutes, too fast to send out a distress signal. Twenty-eight men went down with the ship, the remaining forty-three scrambled into Carley floats (life rafts). There was not enough room for all, so some clung desperately to the sides in the frigid waters. The *Sarnia* had been waiting at a rendezvous point for the *Esquimalt*, and when it failed to appear, the commander of the *Sarnia* feared the worst, as a German sub had been spotted in the area just weeks prior. It was nearly four hours after the *Esquimalt* went down that search action was finally initiated. The survivors were left in the freezing waters for almost six hours. When the *Sarnia* arrived, men were clinging to the Carley floats, some barely alive, others already dead, floated nearby. The *Sarnia* performed its rescue duty admirably, with engines at full stop and defenceless, hauling the survivors and dead aboard up scramble nets, while the threat of being attacked loomed. The *Sarnia* would pick up 27 survivors and 13 corpses. The *Sarnia* then ran a zigzag course back to the safety of Halifax harbour. In total, twenty-eight men went down with the *Esquimalt*; the remaining forty-three had scrambled to Carley floats, but sixteen of those sailors died of exposure before the *HMCS Sarnia* arrived. Only twenty-seven of the *Esquimalt*'s crew of seventy-one survived the sinking. With the war in Europe ending a mere three weeks later, the *HMCS Esquimalt* was the last Canadian warship to be lost during the Second World War.
- In October 1945, two months after the war had ended, Sarnia city council would receive a letter from Lieutenant

D.F. Mossop, O.C., the commanding officer of the *H.M.C.S. Sarnia* with news of the fate of the ship. The letter read: *Perhaps it would be easier for me to look into the future and let you know just what we expect to happen to the ship. As you no doubt have read in the dailies, many in fact most ships of the Canadian fleet have been declared surplus by the authorities and are to be turned over to the War Assets Corporation for disposal. That I am afraid is the fate of H.M.C.S. "SARNIA" in the very near future. We expect within the next month to have the ship turned over to the War Assets and fully out of commission.*

*It seems a hard fate for a ship which has accumulated an envious record among not only the Canadian Navy but all Allied Navies for a series of brilliant feats which frustrated the enemy on a number of occasions and brought succor and life on one occasion to some of our own lads. However, 'c'est la guerre' and at least it is comforting to realize the "SARNIA" is retiring from service after completing her job in a manner which brought credit to her officers and men and I trust honor to the city whose name she carries and the good people of the city who were so thoughtful during the ship's wartime commission.*

*When the ship is finally through, in approximately a month, I personally expect to be proceeding home for discharge, at which time I hope to be able to spend a day or so in Sarnia and personally relate some of the tales of the "SARNIA'S" feats to you and express our profoundest thanks for all your citizens have done for the crew in the days when every comfort meant so very, very much during the monotonous patrols.*

- Lieutenant Mossop would visit the city in early November 1945, the guest of honour at a banquet by Mayor Hipple and city council at the Sarnia Golf Club. The dinner was also attended by Bell Telephone employees, Delta Phi Sigma Sorority and the Public School Teachers' Association, groups that had been active in supplying the crew of the *H.M.C.S. Sarnia* with comforts during the war. Lieut. Mossop presented to Mayor Hipple as a gift to the city, the name-plate removed from the deck of the vessel, along with the ship's ensign, the one she had been flying at the time of the *Esquimalt* rescue. In speaking about some of the ship's history, Mossop said that the minesweeper *Sarnia* had cleared more mines from waters of the eastern seaboard than any other ship, Canadian or American. In describing the *Sarnia's* role in rescuing the *Esquimalt* survivors, he said the lives of several of the men had been saved by artificial respiration applied by the minesweeper's crew. Others had been supported in the water by crewmen of the *Sarnia* who had jumped over the side to their rescue. In thanking the people of Sarnia for past gifts, Lieut. Mossop said, "I was only on the ship for a few months but she upheld Sarnia traditions to the highest."

The *H.M.C.S. Sarnia* was decommissioned October 28, 1945 in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Years later, in March 1958, she was transferred to the Turkish Navy to serve as a patrol boat, the *Buyukdere*, until 1972. Beginning in 1995, fifty years after *Sarnia's* dramatic rescue of the *Esquimalt* survivors, there were a number of *H.M.C.S. Sarnia* reunions held to honour her impressive war record. Aside from former crew members of the *Sarnia*, also attending some of the reunions were a number of survivors of the *Esquimalt* sinking and the Engineering Officer of the German submarine *U-190*.<sup>N, X, u</sup>

- Another Lambton County community had the honour of having a Canadian Navy ship named in her honour. The *H.M.C.S. Petrolia* (K 498) was named in honour of the "Hard Oil Town" in April 1944. The *H.M.C.S. Petrolia* was one of a dozen Castle-Class corvettes assigned to the Royal Canadian Navy. The ship was built in Belfast, Northern Ireland, launched as the *HMS Sherborne Castle* in February 1944 and transferred to the RCN and commissioned on June 29, 1944. Hundreds of local residents of *Petrolia* packed Victoria Hall on the evening of April 26, 1944 for the official adoption ceremony of this latest ship of the Royal Canadian Navy. A model of the corvette was christened on the Hall stage flanked on each side by naval men and Sarnia Sea Cadets. The *H.M.C.S. Petrolia* was used for Atlantic convoy service for the duration of the war.<sup>N, P, and X</sup>

- Not all who put their lives on the line to serve Canada during the war did so in a military uniform. A little known organization that did this was the Corps of (Civilian) Canadian Firefighters. During a visit to the United Kingdom in 1941, Prime Minister McKenzie King was asked by Winston Churchill to provide a contingent of firefighters to assist British firefighters in combating the fires caused by persistent air raids. By March 1942, recruitment began for the Corps of Canadian Firefighters. A total of 422 Canadian men volunteered for the Corps, leaving behind their homes and families to answer the call of duty overseas. At least five men from Sarnia-Lambton were part of the Corps, including Sarnians Charles F. Jennings (214 Napier Street), William Boulton (214 Cotterbury Street), Clarence Taylor (Murphy Sideroad), H. Smith (Watford) and A.O. McFarlane (Forest). Charles Jennings and William Boulton were members of the Sarnia Fire Department. Arriving overseas beginning in May 1942, only half of Corps volunteers were professional firefighters; the other half had no experience. After completing a four-week

familiarization course, they were posted to fire stations in Southampton, Portsmouth, Plymouth and Bristol. During their time in England, the Corps of Canadian Firefighters responded to all fires both domestic and those caused by the German air raids. They worked often in perilous conditions to effect rescues and battle fires usually started by bombing. There were a total of 11 Canadian casualties, including three deaths, in the Corps of Canadian Firefighters overseas between May 1942 and May 1945.<sup>D, E and 3A</sup>

- The Dieppe Raid, August 19, 1942: The raid on Dieppe, a small town on the coast of France was the first major Canadian engagement in the war (after Hong Kong), and one of the darkest chapters in Canada's military history. Code-named *Operation Jubilee*, it saw more than 6,000 men come ashore at five different points along a 16 kilometre-long stretch of heavily defended coastline. The goals were to destroy radar and other military installations, seize a neighbouring airfield, capture a German divisional headquarters and to take some pressure off the Eastern Front. It would also serve as a test run for the future invasion of Europe. The raiding force was made up of almost 5,000 Canadians, 1,000 British commandos and 50 American Rangers. The main force arrived ashore behind schedule, as daylight was breaking instead of under the cover of darkness, to the already alerted German defences. The well-entrenched enemy troops sitting atop 75 foot-high cliff top positions cut down the fully visible Canadians as they waded into the surf, trying to cross the cobblestone beaches to the protection of the seawall. By mid-morning, it was clear that the raid could not continue, and the retreat began. Through great courage, many men were taken off the beaches under heavy fire, and by late afternoon, the last boat had departed. The remaining Canadians were forced to surrender. Of the 4,963 Canadians that took part in the battle which lasted only nine hours; 2,460 were wounded, 1,946 were taken as POW's and 907 lost their lives.<sup>D, E and 2N</sup> One young man from Sarnia, Glyn Jones, would lose his life at Dieppe.

- In the first few days after the Dieppe Raid, relatives and friends of Sarnia and Lambton troops overseas waited anxiously for news of their loved ones who were members of the fighting units that had stormed the beaches. Initially, lists of names of wounded soldiers were released that included a number of local men – many of them Sarnia engineers who had transferred to the Commandos just months prior and who had been rated as particularly adept exponents of this type of warfare. A number of local men, once they returned to England, were able to wire home to their parents that they were on the raid and now safe. In the days following the raid, the list of published casualties expanded each day, with more Canadian soldiers listed as killed in action, missing in action, seriously wounded or wounded.

- In the weeks and months following, stories of some of the Sarnia men's experiences at Dieppe were printed in the Sarnia Canadian Observer. What follows are portions of three of these men's stories:

> Arthur Hueston, the son of Mr. and Mrs. H.M. Hueston of North Christina Street:

*Soldiers recalled the gallant heroism of Lieutenant Arthur Hueston (Essex Scottish Regiment) of Sarnia, Ontario. He and his platoon were on a tank landing craft and as the ramp was lowered at the beach machine-gun fire and shells crashed around them, streams of bullets pouring into the boat. A corporal was hit in the mouth and Hueston crouched to help him. Then some kind of high explosive landed inside the craft, setting the tank on fire. The other tanks clanked ashore and the boat started to drift off the beach. It was 20 yards from land when Hueston and his men jumped into the water and started to swim in. They were all wearing "Mae Wests" but the weight of their arms and ammunition made swimming difficult. Hueston reached the beach which was laced with fire. He didn't give a thought to his own safety but in the true officer tradition thought only of his men. He threw off his equipment, said a soldier who was there with him, and went back into the water trying to rescue men who were still floundering in the sea. He finally had to give up and it is believed he crossed the beach to the seawall. His parents in Sarnia would receive the news in mid-September 1942 that their son Arthur was reported missing in the Dieppe raid.*

> Lieutenant William ("Bill") Alexander Ewener was born in April 1905 in Battersea, London, England. He came to Canada with his parents in 1908. He had played football for the Sarnia Collegiate junior and senior teams, the intermediate Wanderers, the Sarnia Imperials (lineman) and the University of Western Ontario Mustangs (center), before the war. He was an employee of Imperial Oil Limited for five years (in Peru), and returned to commence his studies at the University of Western Ontario for his Bachelor of Arts Degree. He then studied medicine for four years prior to enlisting in April 1940 with the 11th Field Company, later attached to the 7th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. W.G. Ewener of 494 Wellington Street:

*Shortly after Ewener leaped ashore at the head of a group of Royal Hamilton Light Infantry men, the unit that bore the brunt of the assault with the Essex Scottish he was struck in the chest by a machine gun bullet. Despite the*

*insistence of others that he withdraw from the action, Ewener refused to do so. He picked up the equipment of another wounded man and then continued with the attack. Some time later he was seen dressing the wounds of wounded comrades. "He refused to withdraw until the last cat was hung," one of his comrades told Fred Griffin, noted war correspondent of the Toronto Daily Star.*

During William's recovery in England from the serious chest wounds and shrapnel wounds in the legs that he received, he wrote to his parents in Sarnia. He made no reference to the action, to how he was wounded, nor to the extent of his wounds. He assured his parents that he was well on the way to recovery. In expressing thanks to his Sarnia, London and Toronto friends, he wrote, *"The tears were very close to my eyes when the cables started to arrive from so many friends back home. It hardly seemed possible that so many would act spontaneously at such a time... It was certainly a grand way to cheer me up when things looked blackest."* In writing about his recovery in hospital, *"The first week we spent here was marvelous despite the pains of our wounds and the sharpness of our tempers as all of us were incensed we had to leave good friends in unfriendly territory. Every one is impatient to get back in harness and help avenge those we left behind."* Lieutenant William Ewener would be awarded the Military Cross for his actions at Dieppe. He was the first Sarnian to win the Military Cross in World War II. The official citation is written as follows: *Landing with the first wave of attackers from the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, Ewener suffered chest wounds almost immediately on reaching White Beach. In spite of his wounds he organized his demolition party and attempted to cross the beach and esplanade, although exposed to extremely heavy machine gun fire, in order to reach a road block objective. When more of his men were wounded he carried a 75-pound charge of explosives as far as the Casino. Lieut. Ewener continued to show great determination throughout the entire operation and refused to leave until the last groups were taken from the beach.*

There were further reports from some of Ewener's men that William Ewener calmly dressed the wounds of others on the beach while awaiting evacuation. He was also reported to have carried a wounded sergeant and later a wounded corporal to safety in the face of heavy shell fire. One of those rescued in this fashion was believed to have been Ronnie Taylor of Sarnia. It was not until months later, in October 1942, that William disclosed to his parents how dangerously wounded he was, and that he was near death for some weeks after he returned to England from Dieppe. Modestly he wrote of his exploits which gained him the M.C., "I must have carried on in a sort of semi-conscious daze." Shortly after he landed on the beach, he was hit in the left chest just above the heart by a heavy machine gun slug or a light anti-tank gun bullet. The lead hit a rib and was deflected toward the breastbone and came out of the right chest. The concussion collapsed the upper part of his left lung. On the barge which returned him to England, he collapsed in the bottom of the boat which was, "two-thirds full of water and blood, and I was yanked to safety." He would remain in an English hospital from August 1942 until February of 1943. In August 1943, he would be promoted to Acting Captain, attached to the 30th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers.

> Lance Corporal John Molyneax ("Red") Fisher, along with his brother Bill, enlisted at the Sarnia recruiting office on the first morning it was opened on September 4, 1939 with the First Field Park Company. Prior to enlisting, John was employed as a tinsmith by Howard and Mundy for six years. After Dieppe, John wrote to his mother, Mrs. Frank Grant of 151 Proctor Street only days later. What follows is a re-cap of his experience:

*He summarized his injuries as a piece of shrapnel in his right foot and possibly a piece of bone chipped off where he was struck by a shell fragment. He never mentioned his exploit of storming and knocking out a German machine gun nest that was cutting swaths in the ranks of the Canadians on the beach at Dieppe. Lance Corporal Fisher's only concern in the letter were fear that his mother would worry, sorrow at the number of pals he lost that day, a fountain pen he left behind at Dieppe and the sore foot he was nursing. For his actions on that day, Corporal Jack Fisher was awarded the Military Medal. The official citation is written as follows: Immediately upon landing with L.-Sgt George Hickson (Kitchener, Ontario), Fisher was wounded in the foot and ordered out of action, but later took a sapper and tried to get into Dieppe. With high explosive charges he destroyed a machine gun position, killing the personnel. Unable to proceed because of heavy enemy fire he was returning to the machine gun position when he met an infantry officer with a large number of sticky bombs. These were carried forward and placed against a wall of a building in the esplanade. Fisher detonated them all, setting the partly-ruined building on fire. Returning to the Casino he organized the returning Royal Canadian Engineers personally for evacuation, and destroyed the remaining demolition packs in the building. During the whole operation, L.-Cpl. Fisher was an inspiration to all by his display of personal bravery and initiative, although wounded.*

Lance Corporal John Fisher received his medal from King George at an investiture ceremony in Buckingham Palace in October 1942. In 1943, he would marry a British woman, Mary Teresa O'Shea, who would arrive in Sarnia in August 1944, one of a number of "war brides".

> In mid-January 1943, the Canadian (Sarnia) Observer printed the story of the first Sarnia man to return home after participating in the Dieppe raid. The following is a portion of that story on Sapper John (Jack) Stevens:

*Two Boats Sink Under Sarnia Boy*

*Bearing scars of battle sustained in the historic Dieppe raid of August 19, 1942, Sapper John Stevens, 23, modest former drug clerk, is home with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Stevens, 260 Maxwell Street. Sapper Stevens arrived last night and was welcomed as he stepped from the train by his parents, two younger brothers, Jim, 15 and Bill 7... and a small group of relatives and friends.*

*Sapper Stevens was under fire for the full eight hours, a section of his unit of the Royal Canadian Engineers was in action on the beach. It was not until he had debarked on a tank landing craft that he was struck by mortar fire and machine gun shells from a dive bomber. As the tank carrier sank, a destroyer raced up and rescued the group of Canadians clinging to it. Aboard the destroyer Sapper Stevens was given sedatives, but a short time later a dive bomber scored a direct hit and the destroyer sank. Despite his wounds the Sarnia lad managed to swim until he was again picked up by a submarine chaser. Fifty Canadians, some wounded, were aboard when it tied up at a dock in an English port. The greater part of Sapper Stevens left ankle was shot away and part of the calf of his leg. He was also struck on the right elbow. Despite the nature of his wounds, he is able to walk with the aid of a cane. "We wanted action and we got it," he said. "The one thought of the boys over there is to get another chance to avenge those who fell."....*

*"We landed on the beach in front of the tobacco factory at 5:20 in the morning," Sapper Stevens said. "They knew we were coming. They had massed two divisions of approximately 40,000 to meet us." The Canadians who comprised at least 80 percent of the raiding party numbered no more than 5,000 to 6,000. The electric light plant was the particular objective of the Stevens party, consisting of 26 men under the command of Lieut. L. Watt, Toronto. Each man was heavily armed and carried explosives on his back. They had been instructed to blow up the plant, but didn't reach it.*

*A group of the Royal Regiment of Canada (Toronto) was assigned to protect the engineers as they pressed forward to their objective, but the Royals were practically wiped out by the heavily concentrated fire of the German defenders. For some time, Sapper Stevens assisted in the unloading of many Churchill tanks. It was the first time the Churchills had been in action. "We proved we could land 'em," he observed.....*

*The young Sarnian paid tribute to the work of the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. "Nazi planes were falling all around us," he said. "We had mastery of the air." He also had words of praise for the Royal Navy and the doctors and nurses. "When we returned to Britain we were met by a fully equipped hospital train," he said.*

*...Sapper Stevens said that men who never swam before, swam when precipitated into the water, after landing or rescuing craft had been sunk... The losses would have been heavier had it not been for the gallantry of the wounded, who lying on the beach fought a rear-guard covering action as the others were evacuated, the soldier said. He declined to mention the part he had played in this phase of the battle. "You can't beat the spirit of the British people, their morale is high. They couldn't do enough for us," he said.*

John (Jack) Stevens would return to Sarnia. Years later, his daughter Dee, would marry Thane Hughes, whose father had landed at Juno Beach on D-Day.

• One year after the Dieppe raid, in mid-August of 1943, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* wrote a feature listing some of the men from Sarnia who took part in the Dieppe Raid, at least 36 of them. Many of them were part of the Essex Scottish Regiment, which had many men from Sarnia and district. The Sarnians who took part in the raid included Capt. William A. Ewener (wounded, received Military Cross); John Fisher (won Military Medal); Privates John J. Hawkins, Roy Huggett, Harvey Huggett, Jack Stevens (wounded), Ronnie Taylor (wounded), William Black, John Crockett, and Charles Crockett; Corporal R.D. Taylor; Sappers John J. Stevens, Milton D. Sinasac, and Robert O. Soucie; Sgt. Charles Clark and his two sons, Lance-Sgt. Jack Clark and Corporal Reg Clark; and Bombardier Michel Pruliere. Among the prisoners of war were Lieutenants A.M. Hueston, Neal M. Watson, and Thomas Doherty

**HIS BRAVE YOUNG LIFE ON EARTH FOR EVER ENDED.  
STILL WRAPT AROUND HIS HEART THE FLAG HE DEFENDED.**



(did excellent work getting heavy tanks ashore); Corp. Grenville Ward; Gnr. N. Demeray; Pte. L. Date; and Malcom Moley (Thedford). Reported missing were Corporals Jack Graham and Lyle H. Robertson; Sappers Glyn Jones, C.M. Blondin, Alvin J. Archer, D.A. Dunn, Frank R. Scriver, Russell P. Johns, "Chick" Hewitt, and Albert W.T. Brown; Sgt. C.J. Towler and others.

- In October 1943, as part of a Victory Loan campaign, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* printed a poem written by a young London, Ontario girl, Mona Gould. The youthful author wrote this moving tribute in memory of her older brother, Lt.-Col. Howard McTavish of London, Ontario. He had been killed on active service with the Royal Canadian Engineers in August of 1942 at Dieppe.

*This was my brother  
At Dieppe,  
Quietly a hero  
Who gave his life  
Like a gift,  
Withholding nothing  
His youth...his love...  
His enjoyment of being alive...  
His future, like a book  
With half the pages still uncut*

*This was my brother  
at Dieppe  
The one who built me a dollhouse  
When I was seven,  
Complete to the last small picture frame,  
Nothing forgotten*

*He was awfully good at fixing things,  
At stepping into the breach when he was needed.*

*That's what he did at Dieppe  
He was needed,  
And even death must have been a little shamed  
At his eagerness!*

- The Petroleum industry was established in the Sarnia area in 1858. In 1898, Imperial Oil Company moved to Sarnia from Petrolia and built a refinery. A five-year tax break from Sarnia's town council, crude oil arriving by pipeline from Petrolia and Oil Springs and easy access to shipping made the port of Sarnia an ideal location for Imperial Oil's relocation. When the Japanese entered World War II, they captured the majority of the Allies' natural latex and natural rubber supplies from Southeast Asia. Canada and its allies scrambled to create a synthetic rubber plant to fuel war needs, a top priority for the success of the war effort. Sarnia was selected as the site to spearhead development of synthetic petroleum-based rubbers for war materials. Sarnia was chosen because its Imperial Oil refinery could supply some of the chemicals needed, and the rest could arrive by ship to the plant site on the St. Clair River. Polymer Corporation Limited was built at the request of the Government of Canada in February of 1942 as a Crown Corporation, at a cost of \$50 million. In an incredible, almost impossible industrial and chemical engineering achievement, production of rubber began just 13 months later in what became Sarnia's Chemical Valley. Polymer produced 5000 tons of artificial rubber from oil every month. The product was used in everything from the tires of vehicles and warplanes, inflatable boats, piping gaskets, electrical cable insulation, and shock absorbers to airplane parts. Much of it was sold to the U.S. as part of the common war effort. The establishment of Polymer Corporation and Dow Chemical (which produced styrene) to manufacture synthetic rubber during the war was a great success and began Sarnia's rise as a major petrochemical industry. Over the years ownership of the plant passed from Polymer to Polysar, to Bayer and Lanxess.

- Established in 1929, Electric Auto-Lite Limited in Sarnia made a major contribution to the war effort. Throughout the war, the company manufactured millions of vitally important war products for the motorized sections of the

Canadian First Army. Principal products included generators, starting motors, distributors, ignition coils, voltage regulators, spark plugs, battery cables, and miscellaneous items such as dashlamps, filters, aerial bases, fuse blocks and fan extensions. These products were used in military vehicles, self-propelled gun mounts, gun tractors, tanks and heavy-duty trucks. During the war, more than 50 percent of the workers in the Auto-Lite plant were women, each one individually trained to handle high precision jobs.

- In September 1942, Camp Ipperwash opened, the latest and most up-to-date military training centre located between Forest and Thedford. Originally it was planned as the A-29 Advanced Infantry Training Centre, but it would become the home of No. 10 Basic Training Centre, which had been transferred from Kitchener. It was a basic training centre for infantry troops. Approximately 48 buildings were to be erected on the 2,200+-acre site at an expense of \$1.2 million, with plans to accommodate 2,000 men for basic training. Structures were to include sleeping quarters, mess halls, a dental clinic, a 150-bed hospital, a nurses' residence, officers' buildings, a fire hall, quartermaster stores, a supply depot, a salvage storehouse, an engineers' workshop, N.C.O.'s quarters, Canadian Women's Army Corps buildings, lecture halls, a large drill hall, a recreational building, a guard house, a sewage disposal plant, a water pumping and purification plant. The first troops from Listowel and Kitchener moved into the camp over the Thanksgiving Day weekend in mid-October 1942. Work had begun on Camp Ipperwash on April 27, 1942, and in late November of 1942, Camp Ipperwash was formally opened by the Honourable Colonel J.L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence. One of the comments made by Colonel Ralston to the troops was, "The Canadian Army cannot be the biggest army in the world, but it can be the world's best, and above all, remember that the citizens of Canada are not only standing behind you, they are standing beside you all the way."

- Camp Ipperwash had been on a parcel of land comprising the Stoney Point Reserve, controlled by the Chippewas Stoney Point First Nation. In a contentious decision, the Department of National Defence used the War Measures Act to expropriate the land from the Department of Indian Affairs, against the wishes of the Chippewas. They then moved some 15 families who had previously resided in the area further west to the Kettle Point Reserve. The Kettle Point band, which supported itself by fishing, acting as guides, and cutting wood in the winter, swelled to approximately 400 members, making it larger than the Sarnia Reserve. The 1941 expropriation agreement indicated that the property would be returned to the First Nations when it was no longer needed for a military purpose. Although the First Nations rejected the offer, but the government moved forward with the appropriation. It was approximately 15 years after the Ipperwash Crisis of the mid-1990s that the government relented and offered to return the land to the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation.

- In January 1943, St. Andrew's Church in Sarnia held a memorial service for three parishioners, all members of the Royal Canadian Air Force, who had paid the supreme sacrifice in the previous year: George William Knowles, Donald Cameron MacGregor and Howard Fraser Thompson. The service was arranged at the request of family members with Rev. Dr. J.M. Macgillivray officiating. In his brief address, Dr. Macgillivray's words expressed the sentiment of many at the time:

*These men, as well as others like them, went forth possessed, perhaps, of a spirit of adventure not unnatural in young men. But it was not only the call of adventure that led them to the King's service in the clouds. There was a deeper motive than that. They had a vision of a new and better world; a world free of tyranny, oppression, injustice and fear. They knew that the only way to secure such a world was by overthrowing forever the forces of evil now threatening mankind; and to that holy task they dedicated their lives. They have entered into the larger life; and to God's keeping we commend them in the Easter hope of a final resurrection to eternal life.*

*It is my personal conviction that they are not now far away from us, and I read to you as suggestive and appropriate some words written by a French soldier killed in 1915 during the First Great War: 'I believe the dead live close to the living, invisible but present; and perhaps it is they whom God sends to us in answer to our prayers, so that their spirit, which is His, may continue to guide us and inspire us.'*

- The Battle of Sicily: This was the beginning of the Italian Campaign, code named *Operation Husky*. The invasion force was the largest armada ever assembled to date and included 150 000 troops, 3 000 ships, 4 000 aircraft and 600 tanks. British, French, American and Canadian allies comprised the invading forces for Canada's first sustained land operation of the war. It began when the Canadians and their allies landed on the southern tip of Sicily, in the early morning of July 10, 1943. 25 000 men of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the 1st Canadian Army Tank Brigade landed on the beaches at Pachino on Sicily that day. The fighting in Sicily would last more than four weeks

until August 6, 1943, during which Canadians would battle through approximately two hundred fifty kilometres of difficult mountainous country, over mine-filled roads, against stiffening German resistance, and in exhausting and scorching heat. The Battle of Sicily saw 565 Canadians die, with approximately 1,800 Canadians wounded and taken prisoners of war.<sup>D, E, 2N, 4A</sup> At least three young men from Sarnia would lose their lives in the Battle of Sicily.

- One reason that the landings on Sicily were successful was the result of an elaborate deception carried out by British Intelligence. In April 1943, the Allies' plan, known as *Operation Mincemeat*, involved placing a corpse (a dead tramp) disguised as a British officer to be found by enemy forces adrift in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Spain. Handcuffed to his wrist was a briefcase containing fake documents which supposedly revealed the Allies' plans to invade Greece and Sardinia, and not Sicily. German intelligence accepted the authenticity of the documents and diverted much of their defensive effort from Sicily to Greece.
- The Italian Campaign continues: After taking Sicily, the Allies crossed the Strait of Messina and came ashore in mainland Italy on September 3, 1943, the fourth anniversary of Britain's declaration of war. Although Italy soon surrendered, the occupying Germans fought for every metre of mountainous terrain. Liberating Italy became a painstaking northward crawl up the mainland, over poor roads, through challenging weather ranging from extreme heat to bitter cold and snow, and against a series of well-protected German defences. More than 93,000 Canadian soldiers would take part in this 20-month Italian Campaign. Canadians fought in Sicily and Italy until February 25, 1945, playing a vital role in victories in battles such as Agira, The Moro, Ortona, Anzio, Cassino, The Gustav Line, Liri Valley, Melfa Crossing, Cerrone, Gothic Line, Coriano and Ravenna. In the spring of 1945, Allied commanders decided to move the British and Canadian troops to fight in Northwest Europe. In *Operation Penknife*, 60,000 Canadians and thousands of vehicles assembled from widely scattered locations and then funneled out of Italy. The speed and deceptions involved in the operation were so successful that the Germans did not realize the Canadians had left until one month later. During the 20-month Italian Campaign, the longest sustained offensive the Allies undertook during the war, nearly 6,000 Canadians would lose their lives from Canada's 26,000 casualties.<sup>D, E, 2N and 4A</sup> Many young men from Sarnia took part in the Battle of Sicily and Italian Campaign, and at least sixteen young Sarnians would lose their lives. Many remain there either buried in Commonwealth War Cemeteries or having their names etched on Memorials in Italy such as Agira, Moro River, Cassino, Gradara, Coriano, Ravenna, Cesena and Villanova.
- Sergeant Jesse Euston Harold was one of many Sarnians who would take part in the battle of Sicily. In early September 1943, his father, J. E. Harold of 148 South Front Street, received a letter his son had written from an army hospital base in North Africa. Jesse had two brothers at home, Harley and Ernest, and his father had served in the Boer War and the First World War. Lying flat on his back on a hospital cot, Jesse couldn't write the letter himself, so he recited his words to Lieut. H.P. Carson, who sat by Jesse's bed and copied the words Jesse wanted his father in Sarnia to read. The following are excerpts of that letter:

*Dear Dad,*

*Just a few lines to let you know I am in hospital, and that everything is alright now...while I was in Sicily, they thought I might lose both my legs...I have been flown to hospital here and now the story has changed...myself and an officer had gone about two miles into the enemy area when they knocked us off our motorcycle with a mortar...while we were standing in the middle of the road, he started to chop us down with a machine gun...Neither one of us stood a chance...The Transport Officer got it with one bullet, clean through the head. I started moving about so he chopped me across the legs and feet, a bullet in the chest, and one in the left shoulder. I made it to the wall at the side of the road before I fell down. When I fell down, I couldn't move, perhaps just as well, because every time I moved, a sniper on the rooftop went to work. But he wasn't very good.*

Sgt. Harold tells of returning to his comrades. He said he was very still for a few hours, but then he started to drag himself back.

*I could feel myself a bit weaker, because I was pouring, and could only step up one pace at a time. It took me half a day to drag myself a quarter mile. I didn't break any speed records.*

Finally he said he fell into a culvert, and stayed there for two days.

*I still can't realize how I managed to get my right boot off, because my foot was just hanging on...two bullets in the same ankle.*

He said he had been more afraid of being taken prisoner than anything else and had lost his tommy-gun. His only weapon was a pistol, and as he lay in the culvert for two days, German patrols passed along the road at night. He said he had nearly called out when he heard their voices. After he was picked up, he learned that a patrol from his own base had gone out to try to locate him, but they had travelled on the opposite side of the road from the culvert, *because they had been dropping mortar and shells on my particular side...I knew that only too well...one of them dropped within five feet of my hole.*

After two days in the culvert, he was picked up. He said in his letter that authorities in Sicily thought he would have to lose his legs, but when he was flown to Africa, doctors determined no amputation was needed. Besides the extent of his leg injuries, Sgt. Harold suffered bullets in the chest and shoulder, but, *the mortar didn't do much harm...broke my nose and a piece went through my cheek..*

He finished the letter saying that he would be up and be able to go back to the front in a few months. At the time the letter was written, Jesse Harold's wife and daughter were residing in Toronto.

- In March 1944, messages of thanks to the city of Sarnia for cigarettes sent overseas at Christmas were received by city officials. One of the letters was from Major J.M. Colling, padre with the Canadian Army unit of the Central Mediterranean Force in Italy and former minister at Devine Street United Church in Sarnia. The following are portions of that letter:

*The 14,000 cigarettes from the City of Sarnia arrived in this busy Italian town. Please convey to His Worship the Mayor and the council my deep appreciation of these gifts. Cigarettes are welcome at any time, but in this battle zone they are indeed highly prized and appreciated. When I return, I hope to have the privilege of stating verbally what these gifts mean to troops in an area like this.*

*As perhaps you know, I have been in this area since November. I have seen a great deal. Death and life are words full of meaning here. I cannot, of course, give any information, but you can gather a good picture of our activities here from the radio and the news dispatches. I am still with the casualty clearing station, where I have been attached for the past two years. We have been very busy lately.*

*The Canadians have displayed the utmost bravery here. This country is one of the most difficult to wage war in. It requires a good man just to walk from one place to another. To carry on a defensive war, as we are doing, calls for the utmost in stamina and courage. Our Canadian lads have shown their breeding. We meet many British, Indian, New Zealand and American troops. A fine fellowship exists among all the forces here... Each fighting force respects the others here, for we are all together in the common aim to end the European war as soon as possible. Germany appears to be reeling but, in her desperation, she can still strike hard blows.... Great sacrifices are ahead but our victory is certain.*

*I met two Sarnia lads in our station lately – Privates Waltham and Gray. We had a good chat and talked about the good people of Sarnia. All the lads are longing for the day when we can return. Some, like myself, are going on their fifth year away from home, but all the lads here are proud of the fact that they are here in this sad hour to hasten the victory of free men over the tyrants who would enslave humanity. As you know, we are attached now to the famous 8th Army. It has a glorious record, with still greater victories to come. I hope matters are going well in the city. Give my kind regards to Miss Stewart, Alderman Crompton and the others. With kindest personal regards to you and yours.*

*Yours gratefully, J.M. Colling*

- D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Allied invasion of France, code-named *Operation Overlord*, began on this date, delayed 24 hours from the original planned invasion date of June 5th due to bad weather on that day. The cross-Channel naval phase of this campaign was code-named *Operation Neptune*. This massive invasion into “Fortress Europe” involved Canadian, British and American forces crossing the English Channel to an 80-kilometre stretch of the heavily-defended coast in Normandy, France. The Germans had spent years fortifying the French coast, their “Atlantic Wall” with gun emplacements, machine gun nests, pillboxes, razor wire, concrete bunkers, underwater and land mines, anti-tank walls and beach obstacles. The Germans’ first line of defence was supported by Panzer Divisions, made up of hundreds of tanks, armoured vehicles, and multiple battalions of infantry troops. D-Day was the greatest seaborne invasion in history. The Allied force comprised approximately 156,000 soldiers, 7,000 ships and landing craft, 50,000 vehicles, 1,500 tanks and 11,000 planes in total. There were five landing zones: Gold Beach (United Kingdom); Sword Beach (United Kingdom and France); Utah and Omaha Beaches (United States); and the middle beach, Juno Beach (Canada).<sup>D, E and 2N</sup>

- Juno Beach covered an area of approximately eight kilometers and stretched on either side of the small fishing port of Courseulles-sur-Mer, France. The Canadian assault on D-Day was divided into two sectors – “Mike” and “Nan”. The first Canadians to land in Normandy were 516 Canadian Paratroopers who were dropped behind enemy lines by parachute or by glider. Lancaster bombers and Spitfire fighters from the RCAF supported the invasion and the Royal Canadian Navy supplied about 10,000 sailors in 110 Canadian destroyers, frigates, corvettes, landing craft and minesweepers which assisted in covering the invasion, providing anti-submarine escort and bombing shore targets. After crossing a rough and choppy English Channel, approximately 14,000 Canadian soldiers, led by the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division and the 2nd Armoured Brigade, would storm Juno Beach on D-Day. Around three thousand Canadians were in the first wave at 7:45 in the morning, led by four regiments: the North Shore Regiment; the Queen’s Own Rifles; the Regina Rifles; the Royal Winnipeg Rifles; and a company of the Canadian Scottish and a company of British Royal Marine Commandos. The first wave of Canadians waded ashore and ran through the obstacles and minefields, through the killing zones of German gun positions, and across the beaches as they weathered the curtain of stiff enemy resistance. The first wave took heavy casualties on the beaches. All morning long the battle raged along the precious strip of coast. Ordinary young Canadian boys were remarkable for their bravery and their achievements on June 6th. By the end of the day, they had fought their way into the towns of Bernieres, Courseulles-sur-Mer, Graye-sur-Mer and St. Aubin, and not only had they successfully broken through the German “Atlantic Wall”, but the Canadians had progressed further inland than any of the Allied forces. The cost to Canadians on that one day was high – 47 were captured, 574 were wounded and 359 lost their lives.<sup>D, E, 2N, 3F and 4A</sup>

- One reason for the success of *Overlord* was the Allies’ elaborate effort to deceive the Germans into thinking that the invasion would take place not at Normandy but at Pas de Calais. Called *Operation Fortitude*, the Allies misled the German high command into thinking so by using a variety of tactics: strategically placing dummy landing craft, tanks and vehicles made of rubber and wood; creating decoy airfields and decoy lighting; and “leaking” information through diplomatic channels, double agents and wireless traffic. From April 24, the First Canadian Army participated in *Operation Quicksilver*, which disseminated fictional messages by wireless to create a picture of the army preparing to attack at Pas de Calais. Even after the June 6 landings began, Hitler was so convinced that the landings there were only a diversion, he kept the entire Fifteenth Army of 150,000 men at Calais, where it waited for an attack that never came.<sup>3Y</sup>

- In the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, Canadians across the country awoke to the voice of Prime Minister Mackenzie King in Ottawa on the radio addressing the nation. Following are portions of that D-Day address:

*At half past three o’clock this morning, the government received official word that the invasion of Western Europe had begun. Word was also received that the Canadian troops were among the Allied forces who landed this morning on the northern coast of France. Canada will be proud to learn that our troops are being supported by units of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The great landing in western Europe is the opening of what we hope and believe will be the decisive phase of the war against Germany. The fighting is certain to be heavy, bitter and costly... No one can say how long this phase of the war may last, but we have every reason for confidence in the final outcome.... Let the hearts of all in Canada today be filled with silent prayer for the success of our own and Allied forces and for the early liberation of the peoples of Europe.*

- On D-Day, major city newspapers ran early editions with oversized and dramatic headlines. However specific information on the attack, such as exact location, regiments involved and extent of success could not be released. In Sarnia, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* headline read, “ALLIES GAIN BEACHHEADS: Armies Slash Into Normandy In Auspicious Start To The Assault On Hitler’s Europe.” Families and friends across Sarnia and Lambton County read these details provided in the *Observer*:

- British, American and Canadian troops landed on the Normandy coast in tremendous strength
- the initial landings ranged from 6:00 to 8:25 a.m. B.S.T. (midnight to 2:25 a.m. E.D.T.)
- Germans broadcasts said they were bringing reinforcements continuously up to the coast where “a battle for life or death is in progress.”
- the German radio began broadcasting a constant stream of invasion flashes almost as soon as the first troops landed
- Allied headquarters kept silent until 3:32 a.m. B.S.T. (9:32 E.D.T.) when the following communiqué was issued: “Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces supported by strong air forces began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France.”

SHOULD TIME’S FINGERS BRUSH THE FOLDS OF DUST APART,  
YOU’LL FIND A MAPLE LEAF ENGRAVED UPON HIS HEART.

- Part of the mammoth assault was all-Canadian. R.C.A.F. fighter pilots flew the first sorties over the beachhead area, returned to base to refuel and continued throughout the day to provide cover for the Canadian assault force. R.C.A.F. Canadian bombers joined the R.A.F. aircraft in the previous nights hammering of the French coast. Royal Canadian Navy ships carried Canadian troops to the beaches, landing in the first assault waves, and continued to ferry reinforcements in and casualties out.

- The 'local news' page of the Sarnia Observer on D-day carried the headline, "LOCALLY – BELLS ANNOUNCE INVASION – CLOSE SCHOOLS: City Hears News Early In Morning." Included in the *Observer* that day were some local details:

- People had waited for months for some word that the invasion was on.

- In accordance with a pre-arranged plan, church bells were rung between 7:30 and 8:00 o'clock as a signal that the invasion had started.

- Many people caught the significance, but others called the *Canadian Observer* to enquire the meaning

- The few people who heard the first announcements over the radio about four o'clock called their friends by telephone

- Hundreds of copies of an extra edition of the *Canadian Observer* were bought by readers anxious for details. After Eisenhower's announcement of the landing, as quickly as special news stories were received over the teletype machines, *Observer* staff set it in type and by 7:30 o'clock, an extra edition was on the streets.

- Hundreds of Sarnians of all ages gathered in city churches to meditate and to offer prayers for the success of the Allied invasion. Inside the solemn and silent places of worship, many eyes were dimmed with tears as citizens thought of loved ones now facing the enemy and of those who had already laid down their lives in the cause of freedom. Services were held through the course of the day at Our Lady of Mercy and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Churches, Canon Davis Memorial Church, St. George's Church, St. Paul's United Church, Central United Church and the Point Edward Presbyterian Church.

- Five years prior to D-Day, almost to the day, on June 7, 1939, Sarnia and Lambton residents by the thousands had flocked to London, Ontario to see Their Majesties King Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth on their cross-Canada tour. That day, many of the people who traveled to London and members of the local military units which formed part of the guard of honour were now serving in military units of the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force, and likely some of them were pushing onto the beaches of France.

With limited information being released about D-Day, families in Sarnia couldn't know if their fathers, sons, relatives and friends were among the thousands of Canadians who took part in the invasion. It would be weeks before the *Canadian Press* could reveal the names of regiments and some of the details of the D-Day invasion.

- The June 6th, 1944 landings in France marked the opening of the Battle of Normandy. From the D-Day landings through to the encirclement of the German army at Falaise on August 21, 1944, the Battle of Normandy was one of the pivotal events of the Second World War and the scene of some of Canada's greatest feats of arms. Canadian sailors, soldiers and airmen played a critical role in the Allied invasion force that swept into France that summer. Pushing against fierce and ruthless German forces, including the fanatical 12th SS Panzer Division, Canadians encountered tense battles as troops moved forward. Canadians advanced at Carpique, Caen, Bourguebus Ridge, St. Andre-sur-Orne, Verrieres Ridge and the Falaise Gap. In the first few days after the landing, between June 7-12, Canadian casualties totalled 2,831 – of whom 1, 017 died. Between June 6 and the end of August 1944, more than 5,300 Canadians were killed during the Battle of Normandy.<sup>D, E and 2N</sup> Two principal military cemeteries contain the graves of Canadian soldiers from the Battle of Normandy are buried; Beny-sur-Mer Cemetery--Canadian soldiers killed during the early stages of the battle--and Bretteville-sur-Laize--Canadian soldiers killed in the later stages of the battle. At least eighteen young men from Sarnia would lose their lives during the Battle of Normandy. Ten of Sarnia's fallen soldiers from the Battle of Normandy are buried in these two cemeteries.

- One of the worst war crimes in Canadian history occurred during the battle of Normandy, following the June 6, D-Day landings. As many as 156 Canadian soldiers, taken prisoner by German forces, were executed by their captors, the 12th SS Panzer Division (Hitler Youth) in scattered groups in various pockets of the Normandy countryside. This was Hitler's order as retribution for the invasion on France. On June 7, dozens of members of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders and the 27th Canadian Armoured Regiment were taken prisoner around the village of Authie. The Germans took their prisoners to Abbaye d'Ardenne, an ancient stone church, where later that night, eleven of the Canadian prisoners were taken into the Abbaye's garden and shot in the head. The next morning, seven more

Canadian POW's were taken outside and shot. On June 8, sixty-four Canadians, including several dozen members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, were taken prisoner near Putot-en-Bessin. The prisoners were marched to the Chateau d'Audrieu where later in the day, forty-five of the Canadians were murdered throughout the day. One of those murdered on June 8, 1944 was John Lychowich. He was originally from Manitoba and had moved to Sarnia to work at Polymer Corporation before enlisting in August of 1943. John Lychowich's name is on the Sarnia cenotaph and his story is included in this project. The Canadian prisoner murders and the consequent search for justice is documented in the book *Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy* by Howard Margolian.<sup>D, 2N</sup>

- Corporal George Caven, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Caven of 334 Stuart Street, husband of Mrs. Thelma Caven of 266 Ontario Street, Sarnia and father of a two-year old son, Paul, was a member of the Canadian Scottish Regiment, and was scheduled to take part in the assault on D-Day. In late July of 1944, his wife Thelma would receive a number of letters he'd written over the previous two weeks, including one that he wrote to her on June 6, 1944 as he was waiting in a barge which was standing off the coast of France. He had been discharged two days previously from hospital. Following are portions of that letter:

*I suppose that when you heard the news this morning of the greatest assault that has ever been made in any war, that you would be worried, and thousands of other people would be the same way... I am writing this from the ship and we are just pulling away from the French coast at Le Havre. I am still in the sick bay of the ship with a touch of pleurisy as the M.O. would not let me make the assault with the boys. He is sending me back to England for a few weeks rest.*

*You have no idea of the tremendous forces we have had and up to now the casualties are very small, and I pray to God they will remain so. Our company had a special job to do and, although some of the boys were dumped out of their craft by a mine, they all reached the beach and carried on with their work.... All our boys were in the best of spirits and were confident that they would succeed in the job each had given him to do.*

Cpl. Caven enclosed with the letter, a copy of the circular from General Dwight Eisenhower, which was given to each man the night before the invasion. With this, he said, each man was given a carton of cigarettes and a certain amount of French money, so that he could buy anything he might need after landing. The circular from General Eisenhower read:

*Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force: You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts, you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.*

*Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well-trained, well-equipped and battle hardened. He will fight savagely. But this is the year 1944! Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41. The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned! The free men of the world are marching together to Victory!*

*I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full Victory! Good luck! And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.*

- One well-known Sarnian who took part and survived the D-Day invasion was actor James Doohan, best remembered to a generation of television viewers for his role as Montgomery "Scotty" Scott, the chief engineer in the popular television and film series *Star Trek*. The youngest of four children of an Irish immigrant family, James was born March 3, 1920, in Vancouver, British Columbia. The Doohan family moved to Sarnia and resided at 167 ½ Lochiel Street. James Doohan's father was a veteran of World War I, where he served as a major. James' brother, William Patrick Doohan attended St. Joseph's Separate School and Sarnia Collegiate Institute, joining the Lambton Regiment at the age 15 as a signaller. He would go overseas with the 97th Battery in November, 1941 with the rank of captain. He would rise up the ranks to being a major in the Royal Canadian Artillery to lieutenant-colonel, in command of an artillery regiment in the First Canadian Division. He would serve in Tunisia, Italy and Holland. In May of 1945, William Doohan was awarded mention in dispatches in recognition of gallant and distinguished service

overseas.

James Doohan attended Sarnia Collegiate. At age 19 he joined the Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps and when WWII began, he joined the Royal Canadian Artillery, rising up the ranks becoming a Lieutenant in the 13th Field Artillery Regiment. His first combat action was on D-Day. Twenty-four year old James Doohan was in command of 120 men. On the night of June 6, he was shot six times by an overzealous Canadian sentry when returning to his command post. He sustained four wounds in the leg, one in his chest and one through his right middle finger. The shot to the chest likely would have been fatal had it not been for a silver cigarette case in his shirt pocket that deflected the bullet. The lucky case was a gift from his brother. Approximately one week later, parents Mr. and Mrs. W.P. Doohan in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing them that their son, *Lieuteneant James Doohan was reported wounded in action*. His finger had to be amputated, something he would conceal during his acting career. After recovering from his injuries, he would become a qualified pilot, being posted to 666 (AOP) RCAF Squadron that was stationed at Apeldoorn, Holland. Though he never saw action, James developed a reputation as being one of the craziest pilots in the Canadian Air Force.

- In October 1944, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* featured a story on a Sarnian's act of bravery during the Battle of Normandy. Private Keith Withers, the son of Mrs. Stella Withers of 409 Lydia Street, was a former Sarnia grid star who played on the Canadian Army rugby football team that defeated the United States Army all-stars at White City Stadium, London. The story was told by Lance Corporal Willard Smith of Ridgetown, who credited Private Withers and another soldier with risking their lives and saving Smith from certain death. In telling of his rescue, Lt-Cpl. Smith said that after attacking east of Caen, his unit came under heavy attack, with intense shell and mortar fire from German infantry and Tiger tanks on either flank. On this particular night, Lt-Cpl. Smith, Private Withers and a driver (name unknown) were riding in a carrier. According to Lt-Cpl. Smith, *"The carrier had to take a bumpy country road that the Germans had charted every inch of the way. They plastered us and all we had was the speed of the carrier, 25 or 30 miles an hour, against their accuracy. An 88 finally came through the carrier, and I was wounded and losing consciousness... The carrier was loaded with munitions and afire, but Withers and the driver, disregarding the danger got me clear and into a hole before the fire reached the grenades and the carrier went up in flames."* Private Keith Withers would suffer serious burns in the incident and was sent to hospital in England.

- At the start of the Second World War, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), which had been established on April 1, 1924, had only fifteen squadrons up to strength for mobilization (twelve for home defence and three for overseas service), totaling 230 aircraft. By the early part of 1944, the RCAF had reached its peak strength, equipped with seventy-eight squadrons in service (43 for home service and 35 for overseas), becoming the fourth largest allied air force in the world. Approximately 250,000 Canadian men and women would serve with the RCAF in World War II, many of them with British units. Of this total, approximately 17,000 Canadian airmen would perish in the Second World War.

- One of the RCAF's most significant contributions during the war was the approximately 50,000 Canadians who served in Bomber Command operations overseas. The men who served in Bomber Command faced some of the most dangerous conditions of anyone fighting in the war. The odds of survival were slim. Usually seven men flew in a typical four-engined bomber like the Halifax or the Lancaster. These men worked together under great pressure on their night sorties. Take-offs were often tense, with a roaring aircraft loaded with tons of bombs and more than 6,000 litres of highly-flammable aviation gasoline racing down the runway. At high altitudes, the aircrew shivered in sub-zero temperatures, their oxygen masks sometimes freezing up. German fighters waited for them in the night skies over Europe and powerful searchlights and flak batteries guarded their targets, turning the skies into a hail of shrapnel. Evading the enemy defenses made for challenging flying that sometimes caused aircraft to go into a spin, while the pilot fought for control. Escape from a damaged plane was difficult and many of the Canadians who survived being shot down over enemy territory would become prisoners of war.<sup>D</sup> The risks were so high that almost half of all aircrew never made it to the end of their tour. Of those who were flying Bomber Command at the beginning of the war, only ten percent survived. Nearly 10,000 Canadian airmen perished in the Bomber Command offensive against Germany and occupied Europe, including a number of young men from Sarnia.<sup>D, 4B</sup>

- Sarnia contributed more than its share to the Canadian Air Force. Of the 184 Sarnia World War II fallen soldiers included in this project, approximately 90 of them would lose their lives while serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force, representing close to 50% of Sarnia's World War II deaths. They lost their lives participating in many roles;



serving with fighters, bomber command, and coastal patrol; protecting allied shipping, anti-shipping, anti-submarine, reconnaissance, and transport carriers; and during training accidents.<sup>D, E, 21 and 2S</sup>

- During the war, the RCAF comprised three main parts: the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP); Home War Establishment (Western and Eastern Air Commands); and Overseas War Establishment. Each part of the RCAF provided a different service. The BCATP oversaw training airfields and other facilities throughout Canada that supplied the majority of aircrew for overseas operational service. Such facilities included training schools, elementary and service flying training schools, flying instructor's schools, general reconnaissance schools, air navigation schools, wireless schools, bombing and gunnery schools, flight engineers' schools, radar schools among others. Home War Establishment was responsible for protecting Canada's coasts from enemy attack and for protecting allied shipping. Overseas War Establishment involved operational duties in Britain, northwest Europe, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, with squadrons participating in most roles, including fighters, bombing, reconnaissance, anti-submarine and others. RCAF squadrons were also involved in operations in Egypt, Sicily, Italy, Malta, Ceylon, India and Burma.<sup>E, 21 and 2S</sup>

- Under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, one of the new squadrons formed for service under RAF operational control was adopted by the City of Sarnia. The R.C.A.F. No. 414 Squadron was formed in mid-August of 1941 at Croydon, England. Initially it was formed from a detachment of eight officers and 69 airmen provided by No. 400 Squadron and 200 ground crew personnel supplied by the Royal Air Force. Initially it served as an army co-operation role, equipped with Lysander IIIA and Curtis Tomahawk I/II aircraft. Based at numerous airfields in England, the No. 414 squadron initially occupied itself with exercises and training with the Army during the early period of its career, based at numerous airfields in England. In March of 1944, No. 414 Squadron was officially adopted by the City of Sarnia council in honour of Commander Charles "Smokey" Stover of Sarnia, who was the commanding officer of the unit at the time. The decision to adopt the unit resulted from a letter received by Sarnia Mayor W.C. Hipple from Wing Commander R. Irwin, director of public relations at the overseas headquarters of the R.C.A.F. Commander Irwin pointed out that the squadron not only was commanded by a Sarnian but from time to time included other residents of this city.<sup>N, 2S, 3G and 3H</sup>

- The R.C.A.F. No. 414 "City of Sarnia" Squadron (*Sarnia Imperials*) was unofficially known as the 'Black Knight Squadron'. Its badge included a black knight atop a white horse with red trimmings above a cloud. The squadron's colours were black, red and white and its motto was, "Totis Viribus" (With all our Might). The unit was so beloved in Sarnia that residents not only dispatched occasional parcels of cigarettes, exchanged letters with members of the squadron but also raised \$21,000 to buy a new plane for the squadron.<sup>N, 2S and 3H</sup>

- In early June 1942, the No. 414 Squadron began to re-equip with Mustang Mk I's. Not long after, the Squadron got its chance to take a more active role in the war. In August of 1942, the 414 Squadron was one of four Army co-operation squadrons detailed to reconnoiter at Dieppe. The 414 Squadron would employ the Mustangs over Dieppe on August 19th of 1942, where the first aerial victory ever claimed by a Mustang pilot was credited to the unit. After Dieppe, the squadron resumed training and exercises and soon flew various operations which included coastal patrol, tactical and photo reconnaissance ("populars"), intelligence and offensive low level ground attacks ("rhubarbs"). They targeted railway locomotives, enemy ships, aircraft on the ground, enemy troops and vehicles on the road. In preparation for D-Day, the 414 pilots flew photographic and tactical reconnaissance along the French coast. On D-Day, it undertook spotting missions for naval gun fire.<sup>2S, 3G and 3H</sup>

- Charles Herbert "Smokey" Stover, the son of Mrs. Frances Stover of 191 ½ South Mitton Street, was born in Sarnia on September 8, 1915 and grew up in Sombra. He enlisted in London, Ontario in March of 1941, entering flight school in July 1941. He received his wings on November 21, 1941, arriving in England in January 1942. He was posted to Squadron 414 on March 3, 1942 as a Pilot Officer. His first mission was in a Mustang at Dieppe, on August 19, 1942. On that mission he was able to evade a group of attacking German Focke-Wulf 190's (FW-190's) by diving to "naught" feet; however, he did not notice a cement telephone pole coming up at him from the ground. "There was a crash," he said. "The next thing I knew I'd left four feet of wing behind me. I sure wasted no time getting out of that place." He belly-landed safely back at the base, minus part of one wing and half of his aileron. The Dieppe invasion was a Canadian disaster and included 119 RAF aircraft lost, including two from 414 Squadron. In December 1942, Charles Stover was promoted to Flying Officer and in November of 1943 he was appointed as Squadron Leader of 414 Squadron. In early 1944, Squadron Leader Stover led the R.C.A.F. "City of Sarnia"

Mustang squadron on a raid in which four enemy planes were destroyed over the French city of Chartres, southwest of Paris. The enemy planes were downed so quickly that the Nazis did not fire a single shot in reply.

- On June 6, 1944, D-Day, the 414 Squadron served as reconnaissance spotters for the navy, directing naval bombardment, with Squadron Leader Charles Stover directing the fire of the 15" guns of the U.S.S. Nevada. "I personally have never seen and have never imagined such a scene of concentrated air action. It was a roof not an umbrella of fighters, intruders and bomber aircraft. It prevailed all the way from Cherbourg to Le Havre, and I imagine the Canadians on the ground, making their record-breaking dash for Caen, will have been as impressed by it as we were in the air." In the days following D-Day, 414 Squadron pilots went out daily to take aerial photographs of occupied territory and to spot enemy movements from the air, often flying at tree-top level over their target, disregarding flak or other opposition. They also had their share of combat in the air and conducted fighter sweeps with outstanding success.

- In May 1944, Sarnian Charles Stover was one of four members of the R.C.A.F. to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross. The DFC citation awarded to him reads, *Squadron Leader Stover has been engaged on operations since August 1942. He has completed a large number of flights with outstanding courage and resolution, the first of his sorties being during the Dieppe operation. In August 1943, he led a mission to the Paris area where he destroyed Junkers 88 and damaged enemy locomotives and a tug. During another operation in November 1943, he shared in the destruction of a Junkers 52. Many of the sorties completed by this officer have involved deep penetrations into enemy territory, while others have been on reconnaissance and photographic duties. At all times Squadron Leader Stover has shown outstanding skill and devotion to duty on operations and by so doing has provided a great inspiration to those under him.* On June 23, 1944, Charles Stover was wounded when his Mustang was shot up by a group of German FW-190's east of Caen and he had to bail out, landing 500 feet inside Allied lines and wrenching his back. He would recover at a mobile field hospital in France before being evacuated to England.

- In mid-August 1944, Charles Stover would return to Sarnia on leave. In late August, Charles Stover and his English-born wife received tokens of friendship and esteem at a civic reception in the council chamber at Sarnia city hall. At the ceremony, he revealed that The City of Sarnia squadron which he commanded was one of six R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. reconnaissance formations whose photographs made possible the successful invasion of France. Since January 1944, thousands of pictures of the Normandy coast had been taken by the three Canadian units participating in the prelude to the invasion. In presenting Charles Stover with a gift and welcoming Mrs. Stover to the city, Alderman W.C. Nelson stressed that the reception was a gesture of appreciation to all Sarnians on active service. As Alderman Nelson stated, "Our little gathering is to welcome back to their home city, Squadron Leader Stover, D.F.C., and Mrs. Stover and their family, and to express to Squadron Leader Stover the appreciation of our citizens in the signal honor he has achieved. Our city values deeply, though perhaps silently, the achievement and the sacrifices of every soldier. No words of ours can compensate for the sacrifice and the tragedy of war on the right to live that was theirs. We owe to you and to them all something that perhaps is deeper than can be expressed in words but will I hope, find expression in an unforgettable way in the lives of us all." Charles Stover, in accepting his gift, remarked that he was proud to have been named leader of the City of Sarnia squadron and added that other members were just as glad to serve in it because of this city's fame in the world of sport.

Charles Stover would remain in the Air Force until May 1945, and continue to serve post-war in the RCAF Reserve between 1949-1952. He would return to Sarnia and be employed at Shell Oil until his retirement. He was a beloved husband of Edna (nee Dismore) for 60 years and they would have three children together: Ronald, Murray and Gail. He was appointed Honorary Colonel of 414 Squadron in 1993. Charles Stover would pass away in November 2002, and is buried in Riverside Cemetery, Sombra, Ontario. <sup>N, 2S, 3H, 3I and 3J</sup>

- In August 1944 until the end of the war, the 414 Squadron flew Spitfire IXs and Spitfire XIVs and, operating from bases in France and later Germany, continued to support the Allied armies as they advanced towards Germany. The 414, despite not being a fighter squadron, accounted for 29 enemy aircraft destroyed and 11 damaged, 76 locomotives and 13 naval vessels destroyed. Their primary function – reconnaissance – cannot be summed up statistically, but the squadron won repeated tributes from the Army units with which the squadron operated. At the end of the war, the squadron was disbanded at Luneburg, Germany on August 7, 1945. The 'Sarnia Imperials' 414 Squadron Second World War battle honours included the Defence of Britain, 1942-43; Fortress Europe, 1942-44;

HIS GOD, KING & COUNTRY, HIS FAMILY & NEIGHBOURS.  
HE LOVED THEM ALL & DIED FOR THEM ALL.

Dieppe, France and Germany, 1944-45; Normandy, 1944; Arnhem, Rhine, and Biscay, 1943. Over the years, the 414 Squadron has been re-activated and disbanded numerous times. In November of 1952, during the Korean War, it was re-activated in Quebec, as a fighter squadron equipped with F-86 Sabres, similar to the one in Germain Park. Today it exists as No. 414 Electronic Warfare Support Squadron based in Ottawa, providing electronic warfare support to the combat training of the Canadian Forces.<sup>2S, 3G and 3I</sup>

- In late October 1944, as part of a drive to encourage citizens to purchase Victory Bonds, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* carried a full page advertisement with the headline, “HELP BRING THESE BOYS HOME.” The advertisement contained the photos and names of, “Some of the Lambton Boys who are in POW camps.” The Sarnia/Lambton POWs included were Pte. Malcolm Moloy (taken prisoner in the Dieppe Raid, August 19, 1942); Sapper Charles M. Blondin (taken prisoner in the Dieppe Raid, August 19, 1942); Flying Officer Gene Atyeo, R.C.A.F. (taken prisoner between August and September, 1944); Cpl. Robert A. Zink (taken prisoner between July and September, 1944); Sapper Alvin James Archer (taken prisoner in the Dieppe Raid, August 19, 1942); Sgt. Robert H. Hammett, R.C.A.F. (taken prisoner about August 1943); Flight Sgt. John D. (Bunt) Murray, R.C.A.F. (shot down over Norway in April 1942); Lance Bombardier Norris A. Demeray (taken prisoner after the Dieppe Raid, August 1942); Lieut. Arthur M. Hueston (taken prisoner following the Dieppe Raid, August 1942); Sapper Jack L. Date (prisoner of war since the Dieppe Raid, August 1942); Lieut. Neal Watson (taken prisoner during the Dieppe Raid, August 1942); Flight Sergeant Joseph J. Barr, R.C.A.F. (taken prisoner between April and May, 1944); Leslie Harris, Merchant Marine (taken prisoner from Imperial Oil Tanker, March 1941); and Flight Lt. George Wm. Gardiner of Petrolia (taken prisoner between July and August, 1944).

- In mid-February 1945, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* would feature the story of Lieutenant Neal Watson, the first local man captured at Dieppe to return to Sarnia. After four years away from Sarnia, including two and one-half years in a German prison camp, Neal was first greeted by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. Watson, 339 ½ North Christina Street at the Brantford train station. When Neal and his parents arrived at the Sarnia train station, they were greeted by family members, a crowd of welcomers, and the skirl of the bagpipes, as played by Pipe-Major James Stewart, an 80-year-old veteran of the Boer War and the First World War. Once home, despite the ever present worry about censorship regulations, Neal Watson spoke of his experiences. He had enlisted in July of 1940 and had gone overseas in February 1941 with the rank of lieutenant with the Essex Scottish Regiment of Windsor. Then in December of 1941 he had started special battle training in England in preparation for the Dieppe raid. Leaving Britain before midnight on August 18, 1942 and assaulting the beach at Dieppe about 5:20 a.m. the next day, Neal Watson was among the first ashore, crossing the barbed wire and reaching the seawall before the Nazi defenders opened devastating fire upon those who followed. After hiding below the seawall and being under fire for eight hours, he was taken prisoner about noon on August 19. Watson would spend most of his imprisonment at Oflag VIIB, an officers’ camp near Munich, Germany. Eventually, Neal would be repatriated in an exchange of Allied and German prisoners of war in Switzerland. Neal Watson also brought good news of other Sarnians who were still prisoners of war in Germany, specifically, Lieut. Arthur M. Hueston and Lieut. Thomas B. Doherty. He described life in the prison camp as “not ideal”; however, the strictly curtailed food rations were adequate and the German doctors were among the few Nazis he had a good word for. Neal added that the Red Cross parcels, the cigarettes from Sarnia, and the gifts from various churches made life easier for him and all the prisoners.

- In late May 1945, Lieut. Arthur Hueston had returned to Sarnia. Hueston was a platoon commander in the Essex Scottish Regiment, who was also taken prisoner at Dieppe in August, 1942. Hueston was released in late April of 1945 when the 47th Tank Battalion of the United States Army overran Moosburg prison camp where he was held. Hueston had been in Oflag VIIB, where most of the Canadian officers from Dieppe were imprisoned, but was moved to Moosburg late in the war. Around 2,000 Allied prisoners were marched from Oflag VIIB to Moosburg after American forces advanced across the Rhine. The following are portions of Lieut. Hueston’s description of his experiences:

*Our column was scarcely out of the compound when it was strafed by Allied fighter bombers. Twelve soldiers were killed and 39 were wounded... The march was continued under cover of darkness to Moosburg, the distance was 80 miles... Moosburg was a frightful camp with about 110,000 prisoners of all nationalities packed into a small area. Some lived in tents, others in lousy barrack huts with one tap to 250 men. It was almost impossible to wash or shave. Most prisoners lived in their clothes all the time. German rations consisted largely of rotten potatoes, mouldy black bread and turnips fit for cattle. One man could carry on his shoulder the weekly issue for 2,000 prisoners. Minute*

*quantities of margarine and sugar were provided, along with turnip-pulp jam usually so full of maggots even hungry prisoners could not stomach it. In summer we had one blanket as thin as a handkerchief, in winter, we were promised another but it didn't arrive until mid-winter. Fuel was always so scarce that we spent most of the day breaking up furniture for the fire. In winter, we were given enough coal to boil five cups of tea per man a day, but in summer, there was no coal. Most of the books we received from Canada ultimately found their way into the smokeless heaters. The prisoners at Moosburg watched the three-hour battle that liberated their camp until they had to take cover; We watched the whole show until we noticed bullet holes in the tents. Then we decided it was time to get out of the way.*

- The Battle of the Scheldt, the beginning of the Liberation of the Netherlands: The Scheldt estuary was a gateway from the North Sea to the port of Antwerp. Access to this port was essential to supply Allied armies in their drive for victory in Western Europe following D-Day. During the Scheldt Campaign, the Allies, led by the First Canadian Army, pushed into southwestern Netherlands and northern Belgium beginning in October 1, 1944 and fought until November 8th, 1944. The Battle of the Scheldt was among the most difficult and grueling struggles in the war. The German forces, highly trained, well-fortified and heavily entrenched, had flooded the whole area by blowing up the dykes that held back the North Sea. The bitter fighting took place in winter cold, in a flooded and freezing muddy quagmire. The battle for the Scheldt ended in Allied victory, but the cost was high. The Canadians suffered more than 6,300 casualties including more than 800 killed. At least six young men from Sarnia would lose their lives in the Battle of the Scheldt.<sup>D, E, 4A</sup>
- The Battle of the Rhineland: In February 1945, the First Canadian Army, attacking from the northwest, and the Ninth U.S. Army, attacking from the southwest, launched a great offensive which was designed to drive the Germans eastward back over the Rhine River and bring about final defeat. For the first time, fighting was to take place on German soil and a fierce opposition was expected. The first phase, known as *Operation Veritable*, began on February 8, 1945. The First Canadian Army, strengthened by the addition of British divisions and other Allied units, moved southeast towards the Reichswald Forest. Destroyed dykes flooded the area and hampered the advance and at times troops floundered through water three feet deep, against an enemy that was able to reinforce its positions. Over the course of a month, through mud, rain, thick forests and enemy counter-attacks, the British and Canadian soldiers slowly advanced forward, breaking the Siegfried Line through the Reichswald Forest. The second phase, *Operation Blockbuster*, involved clearing the Hochwald Forest fortifications. Resistance continued until March 10, 1945 when the Germans blew up the last bridges and withdrew east across the Rhine, their last major line of defence. During the month of fighting, the First Canadian Army suffered more than 15,000 casualties including more than 5,300 killed. At least six young men from Sarnia would lose their lives in the Battle of the Rhineland.<sup>D, E, 2N, 3Z, 4A</sup>
- The Liberation of the Netherlands: In mid-1940, the Netherlands were under German control, which meant years of suffering for the Dutch people, highlighted in the "Hunger Winter" of 1944-45, when fuel shortages, exhausted food supplies and cold temperatures caused thousands of Dutch men, women and children to perish from starvation, cold and disease. Canadian Army Corps who had landed on D-Day and fought battles through France, Belgium, the Scheldt and in Germany were dispatched to the Netherlands along with the Canadian Army Corps who had fought in Italy. On February 7th of 1945, the two Canadian Corps began their push to drive the German troops occupying the northeast back to the sea, and those in the west back into Germany. Canadians joined their British, American, Polish, and Belgian Allies and Dutch resistance in a fierce push through mud, canals, farmland and flooded grounds to drive the Germans out of the Netherlands. Often fighting in house-by-house battles, Canadian and Allied forces recaptured major Dutch cities such as Arnhem, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague. By April of 1945, Canadians were dropping vital relief supplies by air to many on the brink of misery and starvation. This was followed by convoys of trucks delivering tons of food daily. On May 5, 1945, the Netherlands were liberated; two days later was declared V-E Day. Over the nearly eight months of bitter and difficult fighting during the Scheldt Campaign and the Liberation of the Netherlands, more than 7,600 Canadians lost their lives while fighting in Holland. Along with the minimum of twelve other young men from Sarnia who would lose their lives during the Battle of the Scheldt and the Battle of the Rhineland, at least eight other young men from Sarnia would lose their lives in the Liberation of the Netherlands.<sup>D, E, 3M, 3Z</sup>
- In May 1945, Mrs. Maynard Elliott of 134 North Russell Street, Sarnia would receive a letter from Miss Betty Schaapma, of Harlingen, Holland. Mrs. Elliott's husband, Maynard, was a sergeant in the R.C.A.F., and their son was Eldon (Buddy) Elliot, a Private with the Highland Light Infantry of Canada, who had been wounded in Belgium in January of 1945. In Miss Betty Schaapma's letter, she praised Private Eldon Elliott, and expressed the gratitude of

the Dutch people for the prominent role which the Canadian forces played in the liberation of their country, including her town of Harlingen. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Our town was liberated from German tyranny the night of April 16-17. How glad and grateful we are; we can't say it with words. Five years we lived in anguish and fear and at last we can breathe again. Next to God we give thanks to the brave Canadian soldiers. Your countrymen were received with tumultuous cheering and the people opened their doors to them to show how grateful they were. In this way, we made your son's acquaintance. It was a great pity that he had to move again but we hope that he soon may return, safe and well, to Canada. He is such a neat, calm boy. On a map, he showed us where you are living. I am sending you a clipping from the first newspaper since VE-Day.*

The clipping was of a proclamation of "Our Liberators", printed in both English and Dutch. "We welcome you, our liberators, as bringers of peace and goodwill. May the five years of brutal oppression and humiliation of our people, years of indescribable grief, disappear like a nightmare, out of which we may awake in the clearness of a new day."

- In early March 1945, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* printed an unnamed soldier's letter that had been received by George A.C. Andrew, a former Sarnia mayor and harbourmaster. George Andrew had himself lost two sons in the war: William Charles Andrew (October of 1941) and George Varnum Andrew (December of 1943). The young unnamed soldier from Sarnia was George Andrew's acquaintance who was in the air force overseas. In the letter, the writer told of the misgivings, fears felt and dread of the process of rehabilitation by many soldiers concerning their return to civilian life. Though written towards the end of World War II, the sentiment expressed in the letter could probably apply to many young soldiers in any war as their service nears an end. The following is a portion of that letter:

*It is quite a problem to know what to do when the war is over. I have been in service since September 1939, and the thought of being a civilian again rather frightens me. As I haven't a permanent job to go to, I'm afraid I shall be at a loss to know what to do for the first six months at least. One thing is certain-it will be a great deal more difficult to change from soldier to civilian than it was to make the opposite transition. In the service one leads a sheltered existence in many ways and it will be a rude awakening for some young fellows, including myself, to have to get out and fight for a living in an entirely different way than that to which we have been accustomed. It will be difficult too, to give up at one fell swoop, rank, prestige and authority attained through conscientious effort and ability, and to exchange it all for a civilian suit, the bottom of the ladder again, and the knowledge that many years of one's life has been entirely wasted. I didn't mean to talk about these things but they have been on my mind for some time so I had to talk to someone. Please forgive me.*

- In late March 1945, a plaque honouring 14 Jewish members of the armed services from the City of Sarnia was unveiled during the regular Passover rites, in the Ahavas Isaac Synagogue, Davis Street, Sarnia. The plaque was unveiled by FO. Morris Skosov, D.F.C., following a brief service by Rabbi A. Roness. Rabbi Roness paid tribute to these Jewish warriors, and compared the deliverance of the ancient Hebrew peoples from the bondage of Egypt to the deliverance of all people from the scourge of Hitler's war. Of the fourteen Jewish men on the plaque, seven had enlisted in the Air Force, six in the Army and one with the Navy. Nine of these men had been overseas, and three of them made the supreme sacrifice. The men, all from Sarnia, honoured on the plaque were M. Berger, S. Bernard, R. Heller, I. Haber, M. Kirk, Dr. I. Mann, A. Rosen, G. Shabsove, M. Skosov, Mitchell Smith, Murray Smith, L. Swartz, I.B. Zierler, Isaac Zierler. At the time of the unveiling, 1.5 million Jewish enlisted with the Allied armies, 15 000 of them from Canada. The three men on the plaque who lost their lives while serving were Max Berger, Mitchell Smith and Isaac Buck Zierler (all included in this project).

- In the spring of 1945, on two separate occasions, reports surfaced that the Germans had surrendered. The first, on April 28, was erroneous; the second on the morning of May 7, was merely premature.<sup>2N</sup>

- The headline on the May 7, 1945 *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer* read:

*Complete Surrender of Germany to Allies is Reported Unofficially Today  
Formal Announcement Of Cessation Of Hostilities Is Scheduled For Tomorrow*

The front page newspaper story went on to state that a number foreign Associated Press correspondents, along with broadcast statements from German and Danish radio, were reporting that Germany had surrendered. The German broadcast statement was attributed to the German Foreign Minister in which he stated that Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz, whom Hitler had appointed as his successor in late April 1945, had ordered "unconditional surrender of all

fighting German troops. After almost six years of struggle we have succumbed.” Allied Supreme Headquarters in Paris were not denying the truth of the reports, instead merely saying that no story of German capitulation “is authorized.” Parliamentary correspondents were reporting that telephone conversations were taking place between Winston Churchill in London, Joseph Stalin in Moscow and Harry Truman in Washington who were undoubtedly trying to synchronize simultaneous release of the news.

- On May 7, 1945 in Rheims, France, at 2:41 am local time, Germany signed the Instrument of Surrender document, which brought World War II in Europe to an end. Official confirmation of the German surrender came the following day on May 8th at 9 am EDT. “Victory in Europe Day” or VE Day was celebrated on May 8, 1945. The war was not yet over – the war with Japan was still underway--but the major threat of Nazi Germany had ended.

- In Sarnia, May 8, 1945 VE Day was observed with restraint. Mayor W.C. Hipple gave his permission for a parade which started a tour of downtown streets at 4 o’clock in the afternoon. The procession included the Lambton Garrison band-- assembled on short notice--marchers, the big ladder truck of the fire department, children and numerous decorated automobiles. Union Jacks, Stars and Stripes and assorted flags of other Allied nations were flown throughout the day from stores, business blocks and many private homes. Paper streamers hung from upstairs windows of hotels and other buildings. During the evening between 3,000 and 4,000 participated in street dancing to the music provided by Ken Williamson’s orchestra. Though some were critical of the belated and unimpressive nature of the city’s observance, Mayor Hipple defended the celebration. “Personally, I am very happy over the restrained way in which the people of Sarnia observed the occasion. I sincerely believe that those who clamored for a more extensive celebration were persons who have not been bereaved in this war or who do not have any relatives still overseas. Those with reasons for sorrow or worry are fully as well satisfied with our quiet observance as I am.” Lieutenant Col. S.G. Stokes, M.C., V.C., officer commanding the 11th Field Company, R.C.E., upheld Mayor Hipple’s attitude on the celebration. Stokes asserted that Sarnia’s observance of VE-Day was quite in keeping with its standing in the Dominion as regards its’ contributions to the armed forces. He pointed out that Sarnia’s percentage of volunteers for the various services was relatively high compared with that of other cities and he thought this was a sound reason for the restrained celebration. Such restraint reflected credit on their relatives at home. Local citizens were also well aware of the news of the Halifax celebrations that had occurred the previous evening. In that city, the poorly co-ordinated VE-Day celebrations which began on May 7, rapidly declined into a rampage of looting and vandalism that lasted for two days.

- The front page of the May 9, 1945 *Sarnia Canadian Observer* carried reports on a number of the major events that were occurring at the time. Headlines of the stories on the front page included GOERING AND KESSELRING ARE CAPTURED; Halifax “Peace” Riot To Be Investigated; Joy Reigns In Moscow; Victory Is Celebrated In Most European Capitals; and Final Act Of Surrender Takes Place In Berlin.

- A national day of prayer and thanksgiving for the Allied victory in Europe was observed on Sunday, May 13, 1945 in cities across Canada, including Sarnia. The Sarnia observance included a parade that began at city hall and moved to the cenotaph in Victoria Park for a special memorial service. It was estimated that more than six thousand local citizens assembled in the park or witnessed the parade. The mile-long procession included bands representing the Sarnia Garrison; the Air Cadet band and Sea Cadet band; drummers and buglers of the 11th (reserve) Field Company; R.C.E. marchers of the Canadian Corps and Canadian Legion; members of the city council; scores of veterans of the two World Wars; the 26th (reserve) L.A.A. Battery army unit under the command of Lieut.-Col. S.G. Stokes and Major J. Newton; Sea Cadets and Air Cadets; two Red Cross nursing units; Imperial Oil nurses; and the St. John Ambulance Brigade and its nursing division. Before the paraders reached Victoria Park, the spectators there heard Prime Minister Winston Churchill start his radio broadcast which was amplified to the crowd from London, England. Major F.G. Hardy, chaplain of the 7th Regiment, R.C.A., and rector of St. George’s Anglican Church, conducted the religious segment of the memorial service that included hymns, prayers and a sermon. Parents and relatives of those who died overseas had the honor of placing the first wreaths at the base of the cenotaph. Wreaths were also laid on the cenotaph on behalf of the city, (by Mayor W.C. Hipple), the Canadian Corps, the Canadian Legion and the Legion’s Ladies Auxillary. The ceremony came to an impressive end with the sounding of “The Last Post” and “Reveille” and the playing of “God Save the King.”

- By early July 1945, Sarnia soldiers began returning home. Through the co-operation of the Sarnia Canadian Legion, Branch 62, the Red Cross and civic authorities, soldiers returning from overseas were being royally

welcomed at the Canadian National tunnel depot. A loud-speaker for each train bringing veterans to the city, provided martial music before each arrived and then announced the names of those aboard. Jimmy Stewart, a World War I veteran, played the bagpipes as the servicemen stepped off the train. A reception booth set up in the waiting room provided them with information. Each man also received two packages of cigarettes from the Canadian Legion, bearing a sticker with the Legion crest and a message of welcome.

- The Far East and the end of the Pacific War: Canadian Forces were involved in the war in the Far East from its outset, beginning with two infantry battalions charged with defending Hong Kong in early December 1941. The Royal Canadian Air Force was involved in the Far East War from the beginning, with many members, including some from Sarnia, assigned to RAF squadrons, serving in Malaya, Singapore, Java, Burma, India and Ceylon. Canadian sailors and merchant seamen would serve on Canadian and British ships. Canadians were also involved in other special groups in the Far East, such as a “Sea Reconnaissance Unit” (frogmen spearheading British Army assaults), and a group of Japanese-Canadians and Chinese-Canadians who volunteered working as interpreters with intelligence units or with the secret “Force 136” team (resistance movements and sabotage operations).

After the Victory-in-Europe (VE Day) in May 1945, Canada and the Allied forces prepared to dedicate their efforts and resources in the struggle against Japan. Approximately 80,000 Canadians volunteered to join the Pacific forces and began concentrating at nine stations across Canada in July 1945, along with 60 Royal Canadian Navy ships, manned by 13,500 men. One of the first Canadian forces to make a contribution in the Far East during this period was the Royal Canadian Navy cruiser *HMCS Uganda*, which participated in Allied operations around Okinawa in the spring of 1945. In August of 1945, the *Sarnia Observer* featured a story on a local sailor who had been on the ship, likely the only sailor of this city to take part in the Pacific War against the Japanese during this period. Leading Steward Charles Taylor, whose wife Mary and six children resided at 165 South Forsythe Street, Sarnia, had joined the Royal Canadian Navy 15 months prior. He had trained at Quebec, Cornwallis and Charleston, South Carolina where he boarded the *Uganda*, crossed the Atlantic to England, and then to the Pacific. Charles Taylor would travel over 63,000 miles aboard the *Uganda*, two thirds of it on active service in the Pacific theatre. The *Uganda* bombarded Truk, fired 12 tons of explosives on Dublon Island installations and attacked the Japanese navy station at Kobe and Kure.

Through the summer of 1945, preparations continued for the Canadian contribution to the invasion of the Japanese Home Islands planned for the fall of 1945. A complete infantry division and several air squadrons were being readied – a force of more than 24,000. All preparations stopped when the United States bomber *Enola Gay* dropped the first atomic bomb (nicknamed “Little Boy”) on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Three days later, the United States dropped a second atomic bomb (nicknamed “Fat Man”) on Nagasaki. This would lead to Japan’s unconditional surrender on August 14, 1945. “Victory over Japan Day” or VJ Day was celebrated on August 15, 1945 (August 15 in Japan, but because of the time zone difference, August 14 in North America). The term has also been used for September 2nd, 1945 when Japan’s formal surrender took place aboard the *U.S.S. Missouri*, anchored in Tokyo Bay.<sup>D,E</sup>

- Petty Officer George Kimball of the United States Navy was aboard the *U.S.S. Missouri* and witnessed the signing of the Japanese surrender. George Kimball was from Brigden, having spent his boyhood days at Kimball, Sarnia and the vicinity. His grandmother, father and uncle resided at the Kimball store. Petty Officer Kimball wrote to his father George Senior, to tell his impressions of the event. The following are portions of that letter:

*It’s hard to believe that it is all over. A short time ago we were at war without much prospect of finishing it very soon. Our boat was chosen for the signing of the surrender terms and from where I was stationed I had a good view. It was a solemn and impressive ceremony and there was no doubt that by the expressions on the faces of the Japanese delegation they sensed the gravity of the occasion. The Japs were a very dejected group of men. There were tears in the eyes of many as they left the ship... The signing of the surrender terms was an awe-inspiring sight and one I will never forget. I was very proud to be a sailor on the mighty Missouri and in on the history making event. Yes, our chests were out, but all was serene. There was no hilarity and it seemed more of a solemn ritual. We are all proud that we have been able to win this war, and we hope it will be the last war that will have to be won. Many have died with this hope. Let us pray that it carries those charged with the forming and preserving of peace to a successful accomplishment of the task.*

- After almost six years of war, celebrations of the war’s end began in Sarnia on the evening of Tuesday, August 14, 1945. The following are portions of the reports from the *Sarnia Observer*:

*Official word of the Japanese surrender was heralded in Sarnia by the blowing of factory whistles, the ringing of church bells, and a bedlam of horn blowing and cheering. A spontaneous wave of excitement swept up and down the streets. Within a few minutes after the official announcement was made at seven o'clock, people began to appear in the streets. Many headed for downtown. People shook hands. Paper fluttered from upper storey windows. People ran around throwing confetti and motorists blew their automobile horns. Children got out their whistles, and noise makers. By eight o'clock, Front and Christina streets were jammed. Huge crowds drifted up and down the streets cheering and shouting, singing and laughing...also blowing paper horns. Motor traffic was heavy as hundreds of cars joined in the procession up Christina and down Front. The din was almost unbearable. Members of the Sea Cadet Corps band were to have a practice, but news of victory changed the plan. As soon as the ratings heard the announcement of the war's end they tuned up their instruments and paraded up Christina Street. They were the first band on the scene and helped start off the spontaneous celebration. It was only a few minutes after seven o'clock that freighters in the river began saluting each other. All up and down the St. Clair, ships' whistles tooted and members of the crew waved and shouted to those on shore. While Sarnia celebrated the occasion, echoes of the Port Huron celebration kept drifting across the St. Clair River and rockets of various colours frequently brightened the sky. The downtown streets remained crowded until two o'clock after which time the diehard celebrants of iron constitution removed themselves to whatever restaurants were open and there drank coffee and held sing-songs until the early hours of the next morning.*

- Official celebrations in the city took place the next day, on August 15, with a parade through downtown. The *Sarnia Observer* report included these comments:
  - *Citizens, young and old, thronged the downtown area of the city and lined Christina Street to the gates of the Athletic Park to witness the largest and best parade ever organized in the history of the city.*
  - *Whatever was lacking in the VE-Day celebration was more than made up by the enthusiasm and vim with which people entered into VJ-Day*
  - *Many people said they hadn't seen as good a celebration in this city since the Old Home Week in 1925.*

Members of the Canadian Legion bearing the colours of the Allies headed the parade, with a stream of marching units and decorated floats and vehicles moving from the city hall to Athletic Park. Participants included the Sarnia Garrison Bugle Band; veterans of World War I and World War II; the Sarnia Garrison Band; cadet units; the Sea Cadet Band; groups of new Canadians such as the Chinese community (restaurant and café owners, chefs and laundry proprietors); First Nations in costume; Scouts, Cubs and Brownies; Sarnia and Port Huorn Salvation Army Corps Bands; a group of beautifully-decorated bicycles; fire trucks and floats entered by among others, Imperial Oil, Polymer Corporation, Mac-Craft, Prail Florist Shop and the Knights of Pythias. At the park, after a reviewing stand and salute by Lt-Col. Eric Harris and Major William Ewener, a short religious service, a welcome given by Mayor W.C. Hipple, a poignant one minute of silence was held in memory of the men who would not return units left for England. Lt-Col. Harris followed with a short speech in which he reminisced on the service and parade held on the same spot in the spring of 1940 before the men of the Sarnia units left for England. Following this was another heartfelt one minute of silence in memory of the men who would not return units left for England. Hymns and the singing of the National Anthem closed the event. The celebrating continued throughout the day and into the night, with the streets just as crowded and noisy as they were the night before. Crowds of people, old and young, gathered beside City Hall to watch the program of entertainment arranged by the Celebration committee that included singers, dancers and artists. Jack Kennedy's orchestra provided the dance music following the program, when the street was taken up with dancers and the dancing continued until midnight.

- On August 19, 1945, hundreds of Sarnians formed a parade in which they paid tribute to those who died in the two world wars and offered prayers of thanksgiving for the newly-won peace. This date also commemorated the third anniversary of the costly Dieppe Raid of August 19, 1942. The parade moved away from the Sarnia Legion headquarters, proceeded up George Street to Christina Street to the cenotaph at Victoria Park. Taking part in the parade was the Lambton Garrison band; the Sea Cadet band from *R.S.S.C. Repulse*; members of the Canadian Legion, the Red Cross, and the Canadian Corps; city officials; and a delegation of Port Huron Legion members and other organizations. At the cenotaph, persons who had lost loved ones in both World Wars laid wreaths in their memory. The service consisted of hymns and prayers, conducted by Rev. G.G. Stone of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Point Edward who was assisted by Rabbi A. Roness of the Ahavas Isaac Synagogue. The service concluded with a minute of silence in memory of the fallen, with the "Last Post" and "Reveille" being sounded.



- In late August 1945, the *Sarnia Observer* interviewed and printed the responses of many of Sarnia's former fliers, soldiers and sailors on their postwar plans. Service men did not expect any assistance from the government other than the gratuities to which they were entitled. Many of them planned to enter fields of small business, where they could be their own boss; for example, owning service stations, fish and chip shops, bake shops, furniture markets and transport services. Farm boys' opinions varied; from wanting to return to their parents' farms to asking their dads to break up the farms so that they could continue on their own. Some had decided not to return to the farms at all – either because they had taken educational courses overseas and now wanted to do something different, or because their injuries of war made them physically unable to do the heavy work of farming. Other servicemen wanted to return to the universities and schools that they left to continue their educational training. Others wished to return to their former places of employment, though for some, they were physically unable to do so. Quite a few of the men interviewed admitted that they were still mentally in what they called “a muddle”.

- In mid-October 1945, twenty-five year old Private George Francis Robinson, a member of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, would make a surprise visit to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Robinson, Bluewater, Sarnia. He had spent almost four years in a Japanese prison camp. He told his story to the *Sarnia Observer*. He had been a member of the garrison at Hong Kong when it fell on Christmas Day, 1941. He wasn't captured until the following day. He had been with an outpost in the mountains when a British officer broke through the Japanese lines and said they were to surrender. They had plenty of heavy and light machine guns, but ammunition was running short and the water supply was exhausted. They would smash their guns and the Japanese would move in immediately. He described how inside the prison camp, the Japanese guards were always trying to cause trouble; for instance, one guard would offer a prisoner a cigarette. As soon as the prisoner lit up, the guard would give the nod to another guard who would step up and smash the cigarette against the prisoner's teeth. Food was always short and consisted mainly of steamed rice three times a day with occasional treats of mule or horse meat, tripe or grasshoppers in soy sauce. His starvation diet reduced him from 162 pounds to 107 at the end of the war. While he was in Hong Kong, an epidemic of diphtheria broke out in the camp and killed a number of fellows. George himself got the disease but, fortunately, recovered. In the spring of 1943, he was moved to Nagata, several hundred miles north of Tokyo. The move was made in the stinking hold of a salvaged Chinese steamship into which 305 prisoners were jammed so that there was no room to lie down. At Nagata, he was employed with other prisoners as a stevedore unloading ships. There were no regular hours. If a ship came in, the prisoners worked until they had unloaded her, sometimes laboring from 5 a.m. until midnight. He was inclined to pity the Japanese girls who also worked as stevedores, carrying 200-pound bags. On his return to Sarnia, he planned to spend two weeks with his parents and then return to Winnipeg to enter high school in preparation for a course of diesel engineering. He said, after the blackout in Japan, that the bright lights of Canada are what appealed to him now and, although the food was sumptuous in Canadian restaurants, he frequently could eat only part of a regular portion.

- In late October 1945, the men of the 26th Battery, R.C.A., returned home to Sarnia, five and a half years after leaving the city and having been through England, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Though many did not return and the personnel of the unit had changed again and again over that time, it was still Sarnia's Battery. When it was mobilized in September of 1939, the unit was composed almost entirely of Sarnia and Lambton County men. On its return, only three original members of the 26th Battery were still with the unit: BSM Peter Oleniuk, 355 South Russell Street; BSM Douglas Urie, Watford; and Sgt. Charles McEwen of Wyoming. Sixteen other Lambton County men returned with the unit, from Sarnia, Petrolia, Forest, Watford, Arkona, Sombra, Alvinston, Courtright and Thedford. The train had been met earlier in the morning in Toronto by Captain James Doohan, an original member of the unit, back in 1939. As the special train pulled into the Cromwell Street station on a sunny Saturday morning, they were greeted by a tremendous ovation from crowd gathered along the Ferry Hill approach. A guard of honour of almost 50 former members of the battery, the Garrison Bugle Band and the bands of the Sea Cadets and Air Cadets met them. The unit marched up the slope to Cromwell Street and, through the cheering crowds which included many relatives and friends, made its way up Christina Street to the city hall where Mayor W.C. Hipple and members of the city council were present to extend the official welcome. Mayor Hipple in his brief word of welcome said, “Sarnia is proud of you, we can only hope you will be able to enjoy some of the comforts for which you have so valiantly fought.” He also paid a tribute to the members of the battery who were left behind, assuring their loved ones of the city's pride in them and their sympathy for those left to mourn. When the unit broke off for half an hour, the men were immediately surrounded by groups of relatives and friends. The following is an excerpt from the *Sarnia Observer* eye-witness report of the scene:

*“Many affecting scenes were witnessed as wives, mothers, and sweethearts greeted their loved ones. Gunner J.A. Good of Watford was greeted by his wife and three year-old son Bobby who found it hard to understand the new daddy who hugged him so closely. One of the few Sarnia men to return with the unit was Gunner Jack Devereaux, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Devereaux, 518 Confederation Street, who, in addition to his parents, was greeted by his wife and a small son Jimmy whom he had never seen. ‘It’s just great, it’s wonderful’ was all that he could say, in the midst of being hugged almost to death by his relatives.”* The square was then cleared for the final fall in and the brief march up Christina Street to the armory for final pay and documentation.

- Two weeks later, army public relations headquarters released a historical sketch of the 26th Field Battery. Formed at Sarnia on September 3, 1939, it was in Guelph until May 25, 1940, when it was amalgamated with the 53rd Battery of Cobourg, to enter the Fourth Field Regiment. It embarked for England on August 22, 1940. The unit supplied two NCOs and ten gunners for the Dieppe raid in 1942, but all were either taken prisoner or killed. The unit arrived in Normandy on July 6, 1944. The battery was among those that saw action in several battles; for the Falaise Gap (at Caen); the campaign to open the port of Antwerp, on Beveland Peninsula; the battle of the Rhine, the liberation of Holland; and the conquest of northwest Germany. The battery casualties was listed as totalling 40 killed in action and 200 wounded.
- Mid-November 1945 also marked the homecoming celebration of the 11th Field Company and the First Field Park Company, two Royal Canadian Engineer units that were mobilized in Sarnia and trained and fought together on the battlefields. Both units commenced their training at Bright’s Grove until December 1939, when they were transferred to Wolseley Barracks in London. Assigned to the Second Canadian Division, both companies proceeded overseas in 1940--the 11th Field Company arriving in England in September and the Field Park Company in December. The Second Canadian Division was concentrated in the Aldershot area in southern England, where they continued training and were tasked with the responsibility of defence against any possible German invasion. In the summer of 1942, detachments from the 11th and First Field were secretly transported to the Isle of Wight to commence training for the raid on Dieppe. Of the 65 men who went from the 11th Field Company, five were killed, 42 were captured and only 18 returned to England. Of the 24 men who went from the First Field Park Company, four were captured, and 20 returned to England. Following Dieppe, the units were reorganized and began another long period of training. One month after D-Day, the Second Division landed on the coast of Normandy. Then the busy days for the sappers began as the 11th and First Field Companies, combined with other units of the Second Division, pursued the German army along the French coast. The engineers cleared roads from mines and built bridges, often done while under fire. Somehow they kept up with the infantry. They would continue to Antwerp and the Scheldt campaign in Belgium, into northwest Germany and Holland. After VE-Day, the engineers were involved in reconstruction efforts in Germany and Holland.
- In the third week of November 1945, the men of Sarnia’s own 11th Field Company, R.C.E. returned home aboard a special train. As the train pulled slowly into Cromwell Street on a rainy afternoon, over one thousand cheering citizens greeted it. Of the 160 men who arrived, only six were from Sarnia and Lambton County; the rest were from points all across Canada, but that did not matter: Sarnia was welcoming the “Triumphant Eleventh”, its *own* unit back home. Children from the public schools were dismissed an hour-and-a-half early to enable them to attend, along with many high school students. The soldiers then marched from the station along Christina Street to the City Hall Square, every inch of the route lined with a cheering, admiring throng. After a short welcome by Mayor W.C. Hipple, the soldiers were moved into the market building, where they were handed packets of cigarettes and chocolate bars from Canadian Legion representatives and Sarnia Red Cross members. Each man then cashed their \$100 cheque which had been handed them in England before leaving, passes were checked, warrants exchanged to tickets and train connection times were provided. From the market, they were directed to the armories where a banquet was awaiting them. In many cases, families of the men had travelled long distances to be in Sarnia to greet them. The wives, mothers and children were made just as welcome at the banquet. Hours later, the men were transported to the evening train to move on to their next destinations, which was to be followed by 30 days leave before their discharge. The *Sarnia Observer* headline of the event the next day read, “Tumultuous Accord As Triumphant 11 Field Reach Home”.
- Also during the third week of November 1945, at the Canadian National Railways station in Windsor, thousands and thousands of next-of-kin, loved ones, wives and well-wishing neighbours welcomed home the Essex Scottish Regiment. Many from Sarnia journeyed to Windsor to join in the mass celebration. A number of Sarnia and Lambton

County men had enlisted with the unit when it first mobilized in September 1939, and more joined the regiment as replacements. After training at Camp Borden, the Essex Scottish proceeded overseas in July 1940. On August 19, 1942, the Essex Scottish Regiment landed on the machine-gun swept beaches of Dieppe where the unit suffered 98 percent casualties. Local Sarnia soldiers with the Essex Scottish who arrived on the train in Windsor included R.J. Campbell, T.C. Cote, G.R. Goddall, W.L. Guzi, J.P. Harvey, L.I. Lowrie, M.A. MacIntosh, S.D. McClymont, B.C. Tripp, J.F. Woodcock, F.J. Bulman, and L.A. Nahmabin (Sarnia Reserve). Other local arriving soldiers were F. Butler and N.R. Stephenson (Arkona); D.G. Gordon and C.H. Jolly (Petrolia); O.S. Hayes (Point Edward); and J.B. McGill (Corunna). Waiting relatives were overjoyed when the troop train pulled into the station. They broke through the cordon line of city policemen, while many hundreds looked down from the roof tops of buildings on Sandwich Street across from the C.N.R. station. Led by the Essex Scottish pipe band, the regiment marched up Ouellette Street to Windsor armories where documentation and leave passes were issued.

- As with the First World War, many families, including some in Sarnia, would not receive news of the fate of their loved ones until after the war ended. One example, not on the local cenotaph but with a Sarnia connection, is Flight Lieutenant Jack Alvin Thurlow. He was born in April 1918 in St. Catharines, educated in Woodstock and joined the Imperial Oil refinery staff in Sarnia on September 1, 1939. He was an all-round athlete and a star player with the Sarnia Imperial football team. He joined the R.C.A.F. in June, 1941, receiving his wings as pilot officer on June 5, 1942. When Air Commander Billy Bishop, V.C., pinned on Jack Thurlow's wings, he asked for a box to stand on to reach the chest of the six foot, five inch, 240-pound airman. He played basketball in England and was a member of the Canadian football team that opposed an all-star team from the United States army. He would rise to the rank of flight lieutenant, serving with the R.C.A.F. 199 Squadron (Let Tyrants Tremble), by flying heavy bombers. In March of 1945, his bomber had been reported missing on a flying mission over Europe. Two months after VJ-Day, in October of 1945, his mother in Woodstock would receive the unwelcome news that her son Jack was officially reported killed in action. The letter explained that on March 5, 1945, his bomber was struck by anti-aircraft fire over Thionville, France, and was so badly disabled that Thurlow had ordered the seven members of his crew to abandon the plane. They parachuted to safety but Jack Thurlow remained at the controls. Only fragments of the plane were found. Twenty-six year old Flight Lieutenant Jack Thurlow is memorialized on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England.
- On November 11, 1945, for the first time, Sarnia's veterans of World War II, along with veterans of the Great War, took part in the Remembrance Day memorial service held at the cenotaph in Victoria Park. Before the service, the veterans, along with members of the Canadian Corps Association, the Canadian Legion, The Lambton Garrison Band and the Sarnia Sea Cadets Band marched from the armory along Christina Street to the cenotaph. Mayor Hipple; representatives of the Canadian Legion and its Ladies Auxilliary; the Canadian Corps; the 26th Battery; the Sarnia Jewish Community; the I.O.D.E. and several private individuals laid wreaths on the cenotaph in memory of Pte. Melvin K. Fisher, Lieut. Ernest Ottaway, Sapper Charles E. Berry, W.O. Leslie Sutherland and Sgt. John C. Clarke. Following the laying of the wreaths, the two minutes of silence, and the playing of the "Last Post" and "Reveille", the veterans then marched to special services at St. John's and St. George's Anglican churches.
- In World War II, many members of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Merchant Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force do not have graves. Lost at sea or in crashes, their bodies were never found or recovered; however, they are remembered with their names inscribed on war memorials. One of these many memorials has the poignant inscription, "To whom the fortunes of war denied a known and honoured grave."
- Many of Canada's and Sarnia's Air Force and Navy fallen are memorialized on one of two War Memorials. The Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England commemorates by name over 20,000 men and women of the Air Forces of the British Commonwealth who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe. This includes the names of 3,050 Canadian airmen. The other major memorial is the Halifax Memorial in Point Pleasant Park. It commemorates by name over 3,200 Canadian men and women of the Navy, Army, and Merchant Navy who lost their lives at sea. This includes 274 casualties from World War I and 2,847 from World War II.
- The deadliest period of World War I for Sarnia's sons occurred during the Last Hundred Days offensive, August 8 – November 11, 1918. At least 30 Sarnians would lose their lives during that campaign. In World War II, the deadliest period for Sarnia's sons occurred during the second half of 1944 and the first half of 1945. In that final twelve months of that war, at least 76 Sarnians would die.

- During World War II, the Royal Canadian Navy was reluctant to disclose information to the public after an attack. The military feared that any information about the location of attack, the identification of ship, the number of men killed, etc., would be helpful to the enemy. So in the interest of national security, family members of lost seaman were given very little information about the loss of their loved one.
- By the end of World War II, nearly 48 000 marriages between Canadian servicemen and European women who met during the war produced approximately 22 000 children. The Canadian army officially discouraged such marriages, but nevertheless accepted the inevitable and assisted the newlyweds. Most of these brides were from Britain, but also from other areas of Europe such as the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy and Germany. Between 1942 and 1948, 43 454 “war brides” and 20 997 children were transported to Canada, first docking in Halifax and passing through Pier 21. Some came to Canada during the war years, crossing the U-boat infested waters of the North Atlantic in troop ships. Most would then board special war-bride trains bound for various points across Canada, including Sarnia. These young women followed their hearts, said goodbye to their families and made their new homes in cities like Sarnia, raising their families and enriching the community. War brides also came to Canada after the First World War. An estimated 54,000 relatives accompanied the returning WWI troops following demobilization.<sup>D, 2F, 2N and 3O</sup>
- A British “war bride” who returned to Sarnia was featured in a *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* article. Mrs. Mary Teresa Fisher (nee O’Shea), of London, England, wife of Lance Corporal John Molyneax (Red) Fisher, arrived in Sarnia in 1944. She had experienced almost five years of war, and as a registered nurse, had plenty of work to do. She experienced the Battle of Britain, was in the dance hall at the time Lieutenant John “Jack” Wright of Sarnia was killed, experienced the early days of the German bombing blitz and the unmanned V-1 and V-2 rocket attacks. In 1942, she met Canadian Army Lance Corporal John Fisher of Sarnia, and they were married in October of 1943 in All Saint’s Church, London, England. One year prior, in October of 1942, Lance Corporal John Fisher had been awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field during the raid on Dieppe. Mrs. Mary Fisher arrived in Sarnia in mid-August of 1944. She described her trip over as very uneventful with calm sea all the way but, “I was seasick the whole time I was on shipboard.” She was one of a party of 200 women and children who arrived in Canada. Those sailing were given one week’s notice and were not allowed either to bid anyone good-bye or to write to their families. They crossed the Atlantic without convoy. Upon arriving in Sarnia, she was impressed by all the lights, since she had not seen a city illuminated at night in almost five years. She was very surprised to see the abundance and variety of fruit and vegetables at the Sarnia market, so she didn’t think the rationing in Canada was anything compared to that in England. She found most things here—for example, trains, stations, and cars—were made on a larger scale. The houses here, however, were smaller than those in England, and not as high, but the grounds around the houses were larger with more grass, but fewer flowers. She stated two things that she will have to get used to, “are sleeping in a bed (my usual sleeping place in London was under the kitchen table), and your Canadian heat waves.”
- At the start of World War II, in September of 1939, more than 58 000 Canadian men and women had volunteered to serve in the Canadian Forces. Canada was the first Commonwealth country to send troops to Britain in 1939. Over the course of the War, approximately 1.1 million Canadians and Newfoundlanders would serve. This included 200 000 in the Royal Canadian Navy and Merchant Navy, and 250 000 in the Royal Canadian Air Force. During 1939-45, more than 40% of the male population between the ages of 18 and 45--and virtually all of them volunteers--enlisted.<sup>D, E</sup>
- Of the approximate 47 000 fallen Canadians of World War II, the casualties by branch were as follows: Navy 4 200; Air Force 18 000; and Army 25 000.<sup>E</sup> Of the World War II names inscribed on the Sarnia cenotaph, almost 50% of them died in service with the Air Force.

### **Notes on the Korean War, Vietnam and Afghanistan Peacekeeping**

- The following is a brief description of some of the historical events and major battles of the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan. Sarnia and Lambton citizens participated in all these wars, and some would make the supreme sacrifice.
- The term “United Nations” was first used in January of 1942, during the Second World War, when representatives of 26 nations pledged to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers of Germany, Italy and Japan. The United Nations organization officially began in 1945, replacing its forerunner, the League of Nations which had been created

at the conclusion of World War I. As the Second World War drew to a close, a United Nations Charter was drawn up by 50 countries, including Canada. The United Nations officially came into existence on October 24, 1945 when the United Nations Charter was ratified. The UN was designed to promote co-operation among sovereign states in which each would give up some of its sovereignty in the common interest of all nations to promote peace, security, economic development, social justice and fundamental human rights and freedoms. The United Nations first tried to impose its will militarily in 1950, when it supported South Korea against North Korea in the Korean War.<sup>2N, 3W</sup>

- Only five years after the end of World War II, the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950, when the Soviet-trained and equipped army of North Korea invaded South Korea. The June 26, 1950 *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer* front page read, “Korea Reds Push Near Capital – North Urges ‘Surrender’ In Broadcast.” Sarnians would learn that North Korean Communist forces had pierced through two full divisions to the outskirts of Seoul and were demanding the surrender of the South Korean army. An estimated 6,000 had been killed or wounded on both sides, and the United States was immediately sending planes and material. The first Canadian military response was made by the RCN less than two weeks after the outbreak of hostilities. Three destroyers, HMCS *Cayuga*, *Athabaskan* and *Sioux* set sail for the Far East and, eventually Canada would participate in the Korean War under UN Command, with air, naval and ground contributions.

- In late July of 1950, the Sarnia Armory announced that following receipt of orders from Western Ontario Area Headquarters in London, intensive recruiting for the Canadian Army would begin. Recruits were needed for both the active force and for the reserve units of the Canadian army in response to the outbreak of war in Korea. When Staff Sergeant A.G. Spooner, in charge of the local recruiting drive, was asked if he expected many recruits in the area, he replied, “It certainly looks like it. I got inquiries one on top of the other, just as soon as the *Observer* got onto the street, last night and they started again this morning, almost as soon as I opened the doors at nine o’clock.” The prospect of possibly going to Korea, Staff Sergeant Spooner felt, might attract a number of adventurous youngsters. He added, “Though goodness knows, a lad joining the permanent force and electing for a parachute unit would get about as much adventure as he’d ever need.” For their part, the Canadian Army was facilitating the enlisting of recruits. Potential recruits, for example, were being told that the standards for entry to the active force had been considerably reduced; for instance, where previously a recruit was required to have grade 10, and sometimes grade 12 educational qualifications, recruiting officers had now been ordered to take grade 8 qualifications. Sarnia recruits were sent to London for a medical examination, received a refund of their fare from Sarnia, and if they qualified, they were in. A number of Sarnia-Lambton youths also reportedly joined the United States forces at recruiting stations in Port Huron and Detroit, the idea being that there was a better chance of getting into the fray faster via the American forces.<sup>N</sup>

- In early August of 1950, Prime Minister St. Laurent announced that a special Canadian force of ground troops would be raised for service in Korea. The Government stated that because of the world crisis, they would take “all the qualified men” they could get, with no set limitation on the number of men enlisted in the regular and reserve forces. On August 8, 1950, a full page ad appeared in *The Sarnia Observer* with the headline; THE CANADIAN ARMY NEEDS MEN NOW! – For the Canadian Army Special Forces. The special volunteer brigade was being raised “to meet aggression in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the North Atlantic Treaty.” Enlistment standards were that recruits had to be physically fit, mentally alert, between the ages of 19 and 35 inclusive (19 to 45 for tradesmen), and either single or married. Preference would be given to veterans of the last war. Canada promised to provide pensions, care for the wounded, veterans’ benefits and a guarantee that the men would get their jobs back. A private on entry into the army would receive \$122 monthly in basic pay and a subsistence allowance, with an additional \$30 monthly if married. Men were needed for the Infantry (Royal Canadian Regiment, Princess Patricia’s and the “Van Doos” Royal 22 Regiment); Artillery (2nd Field Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Regiment); Army Service Corps; Electrical and Mechanical Engineers; and the Medical Corps.

- In the first day following the publication of the above advertisement, the Sarnia Armory reported being besieged by applicants eager to join the Canadian infantry brigade. Staff Sergeant A.G. Spooner said he was “swamped.” He added, “I think the majority of the men who came in here, went straight off to London after an interview.” Canadian army headquarters in London stated that more than 60 Lambton district men were handled during the first two hours of recruiting, including forty from Sarnia.<sup>N</sup>

- In late August of 1950, the *The Sarnia Observer* featured a story on what was believed to be the first known

Sarnian to have been in action in Korea. Eddie Doyle, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Doyle of 124 North Mackenzie Street, spent his 21st birthday, August 2, in action against the North Koreans with the 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Army. Eddie Doyle was born in Detroit, but was educated at Lochiel Street School before working for Electric Auto-Lite and the Lambton Awning and Canvas Company. Eddie enlisted in the U.S. Army in January 1949. After training in Kentucky and being posted with the first Cavalry Division, Eddie and his division were hastily sent to Korea in May 1950. He landed at Taejong, May 16, and had gone into battle immediately. In a letter to his parents in Sarnia he wrote, "We didn't know it but we were surrounded. I spent my 21st birthday in the thick of the fighting. I dug so many foxholes, I don't remember." He didn't think much of the country he was in – it was terribly hot, "Oh, for some blueberry pie and iced tea" he wrote.

- In late May of 1951, the reality of the Korean War hit home in Sarnia with the May 31, 1951 *Sarnia Observer* front page headline, "Sarnia Man, 27, Father of Two, Dies in Korea." Private Patrick O'Connor, who had served in World War Two, the son of James Philip and Angela Loretta O'Connor of Sarnia, husband of Vera Irene O'Connor and father of four (not two) young children, all under the age of four, was killed in action only one month after arriving in Korea. Patrick's older brother, James Michael Barry O'Connor, a member of the RCAF, had lost his life in World War Two. Both O'Connor brothers' stories are included in this project.

The following is a portion of an editorial from the June 1, 1951 *Sarnia Observer*:

*The first Sarnian to make the supreme sacrifice in the Korean War has been Private Patrick William O'Connor... He has died, as did his brother, Warrant Officer Barry O'Connor and others in the Second World War, in an effort to preserve our way of life...Private O'Connor after having served during the previous hostilities and in consideration of the sacrifice of one life already made by his family in that struggle against German domination, might have been excused had he chosen to ignore the call for volunteers to combat the current Communist aggression and remain at home with his wife and young family. The fact that he did not do so but rather again answered his country's call should be an inspiration to others to emulate his patriotism and valor... The sympathy of the community goes out to those who are bereft by the scourge of war. Casualties among our fighting men bring home to us all the tragedy of such conflicts but they also emphasize that our freedoms are not cheaply bought or preserved.*

- On June 7th, 1951, a plaque to honor the memory of former students of Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School who were killed during World War II was unveiled at a public ceremony held in the school auditorium. Sarnia Mayor W.C. Nelson, military and educational dignitaries, and relatives and friends of the men being honored were among the guests present. As strains of the "Last Post" and "Reveille" re-echoed throughout the auditorium and flags were lowered, then raised, by representatives of the three branches of the armed service, the plaque was unveiled by Robert Dobbins, the oldest soldier in seniority on the staff. The bronze plaque, two feet by three feet, had the names of 111 former pupils who made the supreme sacrifice in the Second World War. Lieut.-Col. W. Eric Harris, former commanding officer of the 26th Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery spoke to those gathered: "We come here today on the seventh anniversary of D-Day to publicly testify and proclaim that the memory of those who died in war will remain forever green, fresh and lively in our hearts. Let us hope and pray that in spite of threats and fears of another war current in the world today, there will be still not another call to graduates of this school, a call which they already have met twice in a generation. They did not die in vain. Today we have a free world, united in the face of potential aggression, because of their sacrifice."<sup>N</sup> A record of the "Sarnia Collegiate Institute War Memorial Plaque" is included in this project.

- Though intermittent armistice talks started in July 1951, more Canadians, ironically, were wounded or killed after, not before, the peace talks began. The reason is that while talks dragged on, UN front-line commanders were not allowed to mount any major offensives. Their orders were to dig in and to hold. While company-sized attacks were sometimes mounted to improve defences or to keep the enemy off balance, the war was mostly fought in no man's land with patrolling, night raids and artillery barrages. During this time, Canadian troops languished in hilltop defensive positions surrounded by mines and barbed wire, occasionally sending patrols out at night to test the enemy's defences. The Chinese, meanwhile, struck at will, often with waves of men, inflicting casualties and wearing down Canadian morale.<sup>D, N and 2E</sup>

- Three years of Korean War involved tough fighting on steep hills, across dangerous valleys and through dense jungle, with weather ranging from stifling heat to extreme cold, and with soldiers having to endure long marches, bugs, snakes, bad food and disease. Approximately 22,000 Canadian soldiers and more than 4,000 sailors and airmen

served in the Korean theatre. Many became casualties, including 516 who paid the ultimate sacrifice. After the war “ended”, approximately 7,000 Canadians continued to serve in the theatre between the cease-fire and August of 1957.<sup>2E</sup>

- The Korean War ended on July 27, 1953. The *Sarnia Observer* front page headline on that day read, “SHOOTING ENDS IN KOREA – Armies to Retire, Form Buffer Zone.” The following is a portion of the main story:

*SEOUL – Shooting stopped along the Korean battlefield at 10 p.m. tonight, 9 a.m. Monday EDT, bringing to an abrupt halt 37 months of death and destruction. While ground fighting was all but nil in the final hours, mounting Communist artillery fire took its toll of Allied soldiers up to the last minute. At 10 p.m., a hush fell over the front. The last man to die may never be named. Nor, perhaps will the last hero. The front, usually aflame at this hour of night, just grew dark. Men heaved sighs of relief, but with great caution. As the clock ticked off the seconds, they grew more brave.*

*Silence came after a smashing artillery duel between Allied and Red guns that began in mid-afternoon and built up a deafening crescendo shortly before 10 p.m. All day and into the night the Reds sent artillery and mortar barrages screaming into Allied lines east of Kumhwa on the central front... Allied artillery boomed back trying to silence the guns. Associated Press correspondent Randolph said all firing stopped at 9:43 p.m. A few seconds after 10 p.m. wild yells broke out from the U.S. troops. Even as the shooting ended, litter jeeps and ambulances wound down dusty hill trails from outpost ridges, bringing moaning, broken men to rear hospitals.*

With the signing of the armistice document by generals of the United Nations and North Korea, the nervous truce began with troops of each side pulling back 1 ¼ miles (2 km). A buffer ‘demilitarized’ zone 2 ½ miles (4 km) wide and running the entire length of the 155-mile front was established. The task of exchanging prisoners began approximately one week later. The exchange included the release of an estimated 14 Canadians, 922 British, 3,313 Americans and approximately 8,000 South Koreans, along with 74,000 North Korean and Red Chinese held by the UN command.

- The July 27 *Sarnia Observer* also published comments from a number of prominent Sarnia citizens on the armistice in Korea. They spoke of having great joy with the signing of the truce and expressed a few cautionary words; for example, Mayor W.C. Nelson said, *Surely the world will welcome this step towards peace, and hope it holds to the day when our young people can plan their future free from the threat of war and its attendant destruction. However, there should be no lessening of our defence program. The policy of the United Nations should be one of unrelenting scientific research and development so that we may attain and never allow to weaken a defensive strength behind which we can feel reasonably safe and which none will dare challenge. Possibly then, some of our effort can be directed toward helping the unfortunate peoples and so assure our own continuing progress. This armistice may thus present a great opportunity for human achievement.*

- In the United States, the war was initially described by President Harry Truman as a “police action” as it was an undeclared military action, conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. The Korean War is more often referred to as “The Forgotten War” for three reasons: first, the virtual “stalemate” of the on-going war over time took the war off the front pages of newspapers and Canadians lost interest; secondly, it fell between the Second World War and the Vietnam War, the latter having media coverage which provided people with daily news reports; and lastly, the Korean War ended as an armistice, where there was no victor. Boundaries between North and South Korea were simply readjusted around the 38th Parallel. Even today, technically both North and South Korea are still at war, separated only by the Demilitarized Zone between them. Canada’s contribution during the Korean War enabled South Korea to evolve into a free society, allowing its people to build a strong and prosperous democracy versus that of the completely totalitarian, impoverished North Korea.<sup>2E</sup>

- It is estimated that more than 50 men from Sarnia-Lambton served in the Korean War theatre.<sup>N</sup> Three would lose their lives in Korea, their remains buried in United Nations Cemetery in Busan, South Korea. Privates Edward Joseph Knight and Patrick William O’Connor have their names inscribed on the Sarnia cenotaph, Corporal John Richard Toole has his name inscribed on the Point Edward Memorial. All three also have a plaque on the Canadian Korean War Memorial.

- The Canadian Korean War Memorial is located at Meadowvale Cemetery in Brampton, Ontario. The Wall of Remembrance was dedicated in July of 1997. The curved 61 m-long polished granite wall contains 516 bronze

plaques, one for each of the volunteer Canadian soldiers who died in Korea. The plaques are replicas of those gracing the graves in Busan, South Korea. On one wall of the Memorial is a poem written by Jack LaChance. Jack LaChance served with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Korea. After his honourable discharge in 1952, he resided and worked in business in Sarnia. The following is LaChance's poem engraved on the Memorial:

*Each uniquely mounted nameplate  
On this Korea Veterans' Wall  
Tells the story of a Person  
Who rallied to their country's call  
  
With courage and with Vigor  
They trained and went to war  
And shielded us from danger  
On the South Korean shores  
  
They gave their lives for freedom  
That we all share today  
In a far-off foreign country  
Where most of their bodies lay  
  
We still hear the buglar sounding  
Each stirring note of his "Last Call"  
While viewing all the nameplates  
On this Korea Veterans' Wall*

- Located in Germain Park is one of Sarnia's military landmarks, a Royal Canadian Air Force Memorial. It is the F-86 MkV Sabre Golden Hawk fighter jet, number 23164. The plane was a surplus jet, one that had come to Sarnia earlier. Originally it had been stored in a warehouse and was later damaged by fire in 1970. In September of 1973, as a monument to honour the airmen who died in the Battle of Britain of World War II, it was dedicated in Germain Park.
- The Germain Park jet is a Canadair CL-13 Sabre, a variant of the North American F-86 Sabre. In 1948, the Canadian government decided that the F-86 would be the next fighter jet of the RCAF. Canadair Limited in Montreal produced the Canadian Sabres, under project number CL-13. Six versions of the CL-13 were produced—from the Sabre Mk. 1 to Sabre Mk. 6. The Germain Park Sabre is a Sabre Mark. 5. The first Canadair CL-13 Sabre flight took place in 1950. Production of the jet increased during the Korean War, and they were produced until 1958, with a total of 1,815 CL-13s built in Canada. They were used by the RCAF and also exported to several NATO allies. Canada did not send any fighter squadrons to Korea, but it did supply sixty F-86 Mk 2 Sabres to the United States Air Force. Canadian pilots were also sent there on "exchange" with the United States Air Force, where they flew in 1,036 sorties in Korea. For the United States Air Force, the F-86 was used very successfully as its primary air-to-air fighter jet against the Soviet-built MiG-15s. The F-86 was the RCAF's principal fighter during the first decade of the Cold War, with 12 squadrons based in Europe and several stations in Canada. The Royal Canadian Air Force retired the F-86 Sabre from fighter operations in 1963.
- The F-86 jet in Germain Park is painted in the metallic gold and red colours of the RCAF "Golden Hawks" aerobatics flying team. The "Golden Hawks" were a Canadian military aerobatic flying team established in 1959 to celebrate the R.C.A.F.'s 35th anniversary and the "Golden" 50th anniversary of Canadian flight. The initial six-plane team flew Mk V aircraft, later the Mk VI, and the team was very popular, doing many shows a year across North America. The Golden Hawks were the predecessors of the modern-day Canadian Forces "Snowbirds" aerobatics flying team. The Golden Hawks team continued in operation until February 1964. The F-86 in Germain Park was never an active member plane of the Golden Hawks.
- In the fall of 2013, Sarnia's Golden Hawk was removed from its Germain Park pedestal to undergo an extensive restoration thanks to the efforts of a volunteer team of aeronautic enthusiasts, including the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association (COPA Flight 7) and members of the Royal Canadian Air Cadets 44 Sarnia Imperial Squadron. The Sabre jet's most notable Golden Hawk pilot, F/L Jim McCombe and his flight crew--LAC Harnum and LAC Campbell—were honoured by having their names lettered beneath the canopy trim in the tradition of the Golden



Hawks. Sarnia's Golden Hawk was remounted on its pedestal in Germain Park in the fall of 2014. It was re-dedicated as part of a tribute to the Battle of Britain, and in honour of all of the RCAF pilots and personnel who have served for this country, past and present, and also in honour of the Golden Hawks aerobatic team, including the pilots, crew chiefs, and ground personnel.

- Regarding the Vietnam War, no “official declaration of war” was ever made between North Vietnam (allies China and the Soviet Union) and South Vietnam (principal ally, the United States). Conflict in the region stretched back to the mid-1940s. By May 1954, war had essentially begun, with full active United States units introduced in 1965, in the middle of the Cold War era. The Vietnam War “ended” in April 1975. During the Vietnam War, the Canadian government maintained that it was an impartial and objective peacekeeper, with the aim to help negotiate for peace and to administer aid to victims of the war; however, along with providing technical assistance, the Canadian government and Canadian industry did help the United States by sending medical equipment, military supplies, ammunition, and raw materials for the manufacture of napalm and Agent Orange.
- It is estimated that between 30,000 and 40,000 Canadians volunteered for service in Vietnam within the branches of the United States military, serving in the army, navy, air force and marines. Of this number, approximately 12,000 Canadians actually went to Vietnam, and an estimated number of fewer than 5,000 Canadians served in Vietnam. This cross-border enlistment was not unprecedented; both the First and Second World Wars saw thousands of Americans join the Canadian Forces before the United States officially declared war on Germany. For many Canadians who went to Vietnam, the process of enlisting was just a matter of crossing the border and getting a post office box or using a friend's address. Often, they joined because their father or their brother or uncle had served in the military, and they wanted to maintain the tradition. Of the Canadians who served in Vietnam, some estimate that between 400 and 1000 lost their lives. A number are still listed as “Missing in Action”.
- The true number of Canadians who volunteered, fought and died in Vietnam will likely never be known. Many crossed at a border city and listed that town as their place of residence. Others had dual citizenship and were enlisted as “Americans”, while more were already members of the U.S. military prior to the outbreak of war.
- The Canadian Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The North Wall) in Windsor, Ontario, which was dedicated in July 1995, has the names of approximately 121 known young Canadians who lost their lives or are MIA in the Vietnam War.
- This author could not uncover any record of any Sarnia or Lambton individual who had lost his or her life while serving in the Vietnam War. There was certainly evidence, however, that a number of men from Sarnia and Lambton County did serve in the Vietnam War and returned to Sarnia/Lambton.
- The Canadian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is located at the National War Memorial in Confederation Square, Ottawa. The Tomb was added to the war memorial in the year 2000. It was created to honour the Canadians whether they be navy, army, air force or merchant marine, who died or may die for their country in all conflicts.
- The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Ottawa holds the remains of an unidentified Canadian soldier who died near Vimy Ridge, France during World War I. The body of the soldier was formerly buried in Cabaret-Rouge British Cemetery in Souchez, France, near the memorial at Vimy Ridge. It was selected among the over 1,600 graves of unknown Canadians buried in the vicinity of Vimy Ridge. The remains were exhumed in May 2000, the coffin flown in a Canadian Forces aircraft to Ottawa, accompanied by a guard of honour, a chaplain, Royal Canadian Legion veterans, and representatives of Canadian youth. After lying in state for three days, the remains were transported to the National War Memorial by a horsedrawn carriage in a funeral procession accompanied by the Governor General, the Prime Minister, veterans, and members of the RCMP. The body of the unknown soldier was then re-interred in a sarcophagus in front of the War Memorial.
- At the first Remembrance Day following the tomb's installation, a new tradition of respect formed spontaneously as attendees placed their poppies on the tomb. Now a widely practiced tradition, others leave cut flowers, photographs, or letters to the deceased. The tomb honours more than 116, 000 Canadians who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of peace and freedom.
- Following World War II, Canada, like many countries, looked for ways to prevent war. During the Suez Crisis of 1956, Canada's Lester B. Pearson proposed that a multinational United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force be sent to

Egypt to separate the Israeli, British and French troops from the Egyptian troops. On November 24, 1956, the first Canadian Peacekeepers, as part of the UN, set foot in Egypt. It was then that the term 'peacekeeping' entered popular vocabulary.<sup>D</sup> Through years of commitment, Canada has played a prominent role and established itself as a nation of peacekeepers throughout the world.

- As peacekeepers, Canadian Forces have provided numerous roles: supervising cease-fires and withdrawal of opposing forces; delivering humanitarian aid; supervising elections; repatriating refugees; disarming warring factions; restoring shattered landscapes (eg. clearing of mines); and nurturing stable governments and human rights.<sup>D</sup>
- As peacekeepers, Canadian soldiers have demonstrated a long-standing willingness to put their lives on the line to help others achieve peace and to preserve and to defend freedom. Many have given their lives, and many more have been wounded, their injuries to body and to mind lasting a lifetime. These brave Canadian peacekeepers include a number of men and women from Sarnia.
- Canada has participated in the majority of peace support operations mandated by the United Security Council over the years, with Canadians serving in more than forty international peace support operations. This includes peacekeeping missions in Egypt, the Congo, Indonesia, West New Guinea, Yemen, the Dominican Republic, India-Pakistan, Pakistan, Iran-Iraq, Cyprus, the Middle East, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Angola, Iraq-Kuwait, Namibia, the Western Sahara, El Salvador, Cambodia, Bosnia, Mozambique, Somalia, Haiti, Uganda-Rwanda, Croatia, Kosovo, the Balkans, Guatemala, East Timor, Ethiopia, East Timor, Sudan, Darfur and Afghanistan.
- Canada's Peacekeeping role in Afghanistan began in late 2001, in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. In early October of 2001, the *HMCS Halifax* was directed to head for the Arabian Sea as part of Canada's counter-terrorism efforts. The first group of approximately 40 Canadian commando soldiers from Joint Task Force 2 was sent secretly into Afghanistan in early December 2001. The first contingents of regular Canadian troops arrived in Afghanistan in January-February 2002, and were initially stationed near Kabul. Starting in 2006, Canada took a larger role starting in 2006 after the Canadian troops were redeployed to the dangerous Kandahar province. At that time, 2 500 Canadian Forces personnel were in Afghanistan, with nearly half of them comprising the battle group, along with tanks, artillery, helicopters and drones.
- Canada had several reasons for participating in the mission in Afghanistan: to defend Canada's national interests; to ensure Canadian leadership in world affairs; to identify and to neutralize al-Qaeda members in that country; to topple the Taliban regime, which was supporting international terrorism; and to help Afghanistan rebuild and create a better governed, more stable and viable country. More than 40 000 Canadian troops would serve in Afghanistan, rotating through different campaigns there. It was the largest deployment of Canadian troops since World War II.
- Canada withdrew the bulk of its troops from Afghanistan in July of 2011, ending its combat role on the front lines there. Though its combat role was over, Canadian military remained in Afghanistan. Canada's role there was diverse: protecting the future of Afghan children and youth through developing education and health; advancing security by enforcing the rule of law and protecting human rights; promoting regional diplomacy; and helping deliver humanitarian assistance.
- In late 2013, approximately 1 000 Canadian Forces personnel were still deployed in Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force. The ISAF was renamed the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan. Its role was to help train and mentor the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. In mid-March of 2014, the remaining Canadian troops left Afghanistan, officially ending Canada's military involvement there as part of NATO. The twelve plus years Canadian Peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan came at a cost 158 Canadian soldiers lives and over 2100 wounded. Fourteen of the Afghanistan fallen soldiers are from Southwestern Ontario, including two from Lambton County.
- On March 12, 2014, Canada's military personnel officially withdrew from Afghanistan. At an understated departure ceremony held under heavy guard at NATO headquarters in Kabul, the Canadian ambassador to Afghanistan told the remaining soldiers there prior to their withdrawal, "Your strength has protected the weak; your bravery has brought hope to hopeless; and the helping hand you have extended to the Afghan people has given them faith that a better future is within their grasp." The last of the Canadian troops left Afghanistan aboard military transport planes on March 15, 2014.

• On May 9, 2014, the “National Day of Honour” was commemorated across Canada to honour the legacy of the Afghanistan heroes. The Government of Canada set aside this day to mark the end of the country’s military mission in Afghanistan. Ceremonies that included vigils, parades and moments of silence were held in towns and cities across the country, including in Ottawa and in Sarnia. This one-time event was set aside by the Government for two principal reasons: to recognize and to honour the members of the Canadian Armed Forces in Afghanistan; and to pay tribute to the fallen, to the sacrifices of the wounded, and to the special burden borne by the Canadian Armed Forces families. Prime Minister Stephen Harper was one of the dignitaries who spoke at the ceremony in Ottawa. Part of what he said included, “Canadians have always been willing to shoulder our share of the burden in defence of our freedoms and of the values we share with our fellow human beings. In the spirit of Vimy, that is what you did in Afghanistan where the fight was as fierce as any Canadian has ever seen. That is why the dates 2001-2014 will be chiseled into the stone of the National War Memorial.”

*Creed*

*If they should ask you,  
Why do you fight?  
Tell them, For Freedom. For the right  
To live in peace; to worship God;  
To build a cottage, turn a sod  
That is my own; to trust my friends;  
To know that when the work day ends,  
A wife and children wait to greet  
Me with a smile. I fight to meet  
The future unashamed; to read  
What books I will; to choose the creed  
I wish; face politicians unafraid,  
And criticize, if need be, laws they’ve made.  
These are the web of life; for these I lend  
My strength; these are the rights that I defend.*

*By Dick Diespecker*

## SARNIA AND CANADA AT WAR KEY EVENTS TIMELINE

### SOUTH AFRICAN (BOER) WAR

#### **1899**

- October 11: War begins when the Boer Republics declare war on the British Empire.
- October 30: First Contingent of Canadian soldiers leave for South Africa.

#### **1900**

- February 18-27: Battle of Paarrdeberg. First major action by Canadian Infantry; result is a significant victory.
- November 7: Battle of Leliefontein. Canadian military units valiantly & successfully cover a British withdrawal.

#### **1902**

- March 31: Battle of Hart's River –the second bloodiest day of the war for Canada.
- May 31: War ends (Treaty of Vereeniging) with a British victory and annexation of both republics by the British Empire.

#### **1908**

- The Boer War Memorial Fountain was erected in Victoria Park, Sarnia.

### WORLD WAR I

#### **1910**

- May 4: Under the Naval Services Act, the Canadian Navy is established.

#### **1911**

- August 29: Canada's Navy is renamed, with the new designation, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN).

#### **1914**

- May 7: Sarnia is officially proclaimed as a city.
- June 28: Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife in Sarajevo.
- July 28: War officially begins, with Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia.
- August 1 and 3: Germany declares war on Russia, then war on France and Belgium.
- August 4, midnight: United Kingdom, including Canada and Newfoundland declare war on Germany.
- August 19: The first volunteers begin to arrive at Valcartier camp, Quebec.
- October 14: 1st Contingent of Canadian Expeditionary Force arrives in a massive convoy in England.
- December 21: The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry arrives in France, the first Canadian unit committed to battle in the Great War.

#### **1915**

- April 22: Canadians see first major action at Ypres; first use of poison gas against Canadian troops.
- April 22-May 25: Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium; Canada's first series of major battles.
- May 3: Lt-Col. John McCrae of the Canadian Expeditionary Force composes "In Flanders Fields".
- May 25: Second Canadian Division formed in Canada
- December 25: Third Canadian Division is formed.

#### **1916**

- June 2-13: The Battle of Mont Sorrel, Belgium. Over 8,000 Canadians killed or wounded.
- July 1: Beaumont Hamel. The first battle of the Somme, where the 1st Newfoundland Regiment was virtually wiped out, over 700 casualties in less than half an hour.
- July 1-November 18: The Battle of the Somme, France. More than 24,000 Canadians were killed.
- September 15: Battle of Courcellette. The first use of the tank and the rolling barrage.

#### **1917**

- April 6: The United States enters the war.
- April 9-12: Battle of Vimy Ridge, France. "Canada becomes a nation", at a cost of 7,000 wounded and 3,600 lives lost.
- August 15-25: The Attack on Hill 70, France. The victory cost more than 9,000 Canadian lives.
- August 28: PM Robert Borden Military Service Act passes, making conscription mandatory.
- October 26-November 10: The Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. 12,000 Canadians wounded, more than 4,000 killed.

*WE WILL NOT FORGET YOU; WE LOVE YOU TOO DEARLY FOR YOUR MEMORY  
TO FADE FROM OUR LIVES LIKE A DREAM.*

### **1917 continued...**

- December 6: The Halifax Explosion. French munitions vessel *Mont Blanc* explodes in Halifax Harbour, killing almost 1600 people.
- December 17: For the first time, some Canadian women are given the right to vote in a federal election.

### **1918**

- June 27: Attack and sinking of Canadian Hospital Ship *HMHS Llandoverly Castle*, the most significant Canadian naval disaster of the war.
- August 8: The Battle of Amiens, France which begins the Allied offensive. Canadians advance through German defences.
- August 8-November 11: Canada's Hundred Days. In final 3 months of war, 39,000 Canadians wounded, and more than 6,800 killed.
- November 2: The Canadian Corps capture the town of Valenciennes in its last major battle of the War.
- November 11, 11:00 a.m.: Armistice of Compiègne signed, ending the Great War.

### **1919**

- January 18: Paris Peace Conference opens, to establish the terms of the peace. Canada took part, having gained international recognition for its great contribution during the War.
- June 28: Signing of The Treaty of Versailles, the Peace treaty ending war between Germany and the Allied Powers. It includes a plan to form a "League of Nations" (precursor of the United Nations), in which Canada gains an independent seat.
- November 11: The first Armistice Day is declared by King George V, taking place throughout the Commonwealth.

### **1921**

- July 5: Canada adopts the poppy as its national flower of Remembrance.
- November 7: The original Sarnia Cenotaph Memorial is officially unveiled in Victoria Park.

### **1924**

- April 1: During WWI, Canadians flew with the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service. On this date, a permanent national air force is established in Canada, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF).

### **1931**

- November 11: Armistice Day renamed to Remembrance Day and is ensured that it will always be November 11th.

## WORLD WAR II

### **1939**

- mid-May: King George VI and Queen Elizabeth embark on month-long tour across Canada.  
(May 31: King George officially unveils the National War Memorial, *The Response*, in Ottawa)
- June 7: Thousands of Sarnia/Lambton citizens travel to London, Ontario to see the King and Queen.
- March 15: Germany invades Czechoslovakia.
- August 26: All Canadian merchant ships passed from owner control to the control of the Royal Canadian Navy.
- September 1: Germany invades Poland, the official start of the War.
- September 3: Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declare war on Germany.
- September 3: Montreal-bound passenger ship *SS Athenia* sunk by a German submarine; 117 were killed including four Canadians.
- September 3- May 8, 1945: The Battle of the Atlantic. The longest continuous battle of the war.
- September 10: Canada and Newfoundland declare war on Germany, officially entering the Second World War.
- September 16: The first convoy sails from Halifax, escorted by the Canadian destroyer *St. Laurent*.
- December: First Division of Canadian troops set sail for Europe.

### **1940**

- June 10: Italy declares war on Britain, including Canada, and France.

### **1941**

- November 27: First war vessel, a submarine chaser, the *Fairmile HMC Q062* is built and launched in Sarnia.
- December 7: Japan attacks Pearl Harbour, declares war on Britain, Canada, United States and allies.
- December 8-25: The Battle of Hong Kong. Japan attacks and overtakes vastly outnumbered Canadian defenders.

VICTORY WON, YOUR DUTY DONE, NOW WITH THY BROTHER WHO LIES IN FRANCE.  
JUST SLEEP IN PEACE, DEAR SON.

## 1942

- February: Polymer Corporation is established in Sarnia, in order to manufacture synthetic rubber for the war effort. (13 months later, Sarnia facility began production)
- August 13: The Royal Canadian Navy minesweeper *HMCS Sarnia* is commissioned for service in Toronto.
- August 19: The Dieppe Raid (*Operation Jubilee*). One of Canada's worst military disasters, with more than 900 losing their lives.
- September: Camp Ipperwash opens, a basic training centre for infantry troops.

## 1943

- July 10-August 6: Battle of Sicily (*Operation Husky*). Allied invasion of Sicily, launching the Italian Campaign.
- September 3, 1943-February 25, 1945: Italian Campaign continues; Allies invade mainland Italy. Over 20 months of fighting, more than 26,000 Canadian casualties including nearly 6,000 Canadians killed.

## 1944

- March: RCAF No. 414 Squadron is officially adopted by the city, becoming the RCAF *City of Sarnia* Squadron.
- June 6: D-Day (*Operation Overlord* begins): 14,000 Canadians land in Normandy, France (Juno Beach).
- June 6-August 21: The Battle of Normandy. Allies push into France, with over 5,300 Canadians killed.
- October 1-November 8: The Battle of the Scheldt. Allies push into Belgium and the Netherlands; more than 6,300 Canadian casualties, including over 800 Canadians killed.

## 1945

- January: 13,000 Canadian conscript soldiers proceed to Britain, but only a few thousand enter combat.
- February 8-March 10: The Battle of the Rhineland; more than 5,300 Canadians killed.
- February 7-May 5: The Liberation of the Netherlands; over 7,600 Canadians killed.
- May 7: Germany surrenders. The next day, May 8, is declared V-E Day (Victory in Europe).
- July 26: The U.S., U.K. and China issue the Potsdam Declaration, calling for the surrender of Japan.
- August 6: First atomic bomb ("Little Boy") dropped on Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, second atomic bomb ("Fat Man") dropped on Nagasaki.
- August 15: Japan surrenders. Due to the time zone difference, surrender is announced August 14 in North America. Date is declared V-J Day (Victory over Japan Day).
- September 2: Japan signs the official "Instrument of Surrender" aboard the *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.
- October 24: The United Nations organization is created with the signing of the United Nations Charter.

## KOREAN WAR

### 1950

- June 25: War begins when North Korean forces cross the 38th parallel into South Korea, and Canada enters the war.

### 1951

- April 24-25: Canadians see action in the Battle of Kapyong.
- July: Intermittent Peace talks begin and would continue intermittently throughout the war. (more Canadians would be wounded or killed after the talks began).

### 1952

- October 2: Canadian Tribal class destroyer *HMCS Iroquois* is hit off the Korean coast.

### 1953

- July 27: Korean War ends\* with the signing of the Armistice at Panmunjom. (\*technically, the two countries are still at war).

### 1955

- November 11: The "new" Sarnia Cenotaph Memorial is officially unveiled in Victoria Park, with the inscribed names of Sarnia's fallen soldiers from World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

## VIETNAM WAR & U.N. PEACEKEEPING BEGINS

### 1940's

- Mid 1940s: No official declaration of war, but conflict in the Vietnam region begins.

### 1954

- May: Vietnam War essentially begins, nine years after the end of WWII and the beginning of the Cold War. North Vietnam (allies China and Soviet Union) vs. South Vietnam (USA ally).

## 1956

- November 24: The first Canadian Peacekeepers, as part of the United Nations force, set foot in Egypt.

## 1965

- Full active United States units introduced into the Vietnam War.

## 1975

- April: Vietnam War ends.

## AFGHANISTAN PEACEKEEPING

### 1998

- November 11: Sarnia's Victoria Park is officially renamed Veterans Park.

### 2000

- May: Canada's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is created at National War Memorial in Ottawa.  
(contains the remains of an unidentified Canadian soldier who died at Vimy Ridge, France in WWI).

### 2001

- December: Afghanistan mission begins with the arrival of Canadian commandoes from Joint Task Force 2.

### 2002

- January: First Canadian troops arrive in Afghanistan.

### 2006

- September: Canada takes larger role, *Operation Medusa*, largest combat operation since Korean War.

### 2011

- July: Withdrawal of the bulk of Canadian troops, ending its combat role on the front lines there.

### 2014

- March 12: Official withdrawal of all Canadian military personnel from Afghanistan.

- May 9: National Day of Honour commemorated across Canada to honour the legacy of the Afghanistan heroes.

### *Us and Them (portion of)*

*Us, and them  
And after all we're only ordinary men.  
Me, and you.  
God only knows it's not what we would choose to do.  
Forward he cried from the rear  
and the front rank died.  
And the General sat, and the lines on the map  
moved from side to side.  
Black and blue  
And who knows which is which and who is who.  
Up and down.  
And in the end it's only round and round.  
Haven't you heard it's a battle of words  
The poster bearer cried.  
Listen son, said the man with the gun  
There's room for you inside.*

*Pink Floyd*

## SARNIA AND CANADA WAR STATISTICS

	Served	Wounded	Casualties	SARNIA Casualties*
South African War (Oct. 11, 1899 – May 31, 1902)	approximately 7 400+	250+	approximately 270+	16 participated, 1 casualty
World War I (Aug. 4, 1914 – Nov. 11, 1918)	approximatley 620 000	172 000+	61 000+**	102
World War II (Sep. 10, 1939 – Aug. 15, 1945)	1 100 000+	55 000+	47 000+	159
The Korean War (June 25, 1950 – July 27, 1953)	26 791	1 500+	516	2
Vietnam War (1964 - Apr. 1975)	estimated 12 000		estimated 400-1 000	
Afghanistan Peacekeeping (Dec. 2001–Mar. 2014)	approximately 40 000	2 100+	158	1
In the Service of Canada*** (as of Sept 2012)			approximately 1 800	

For both World War I and World War II numbers above, they are for Canada and Newfoundland combined. (Newfoundland, though a British Colony, did not join the Confederation of Canada until March of 1949)

\* Sarnia Casualties numbers are based on the number of names on the City of Sarnia Cenotaph only (does not include others that may have been missed or those from surrounding Lambton County)

\*\*Some sources, including the First World War Book of Remembrance list this total as 66,000+. This is because several thousand personnel died after the disbandment of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, so includes military personnel who died from August 4, 1914 to April 31, 1922.

\*\*\*In the Service of Canada

Canadians that gave their lives in service to their country, including peacekeeping (eg. Afghanistan) and other foreign military operations, domestic operations and training, since October 1947 (it does not include the Korean War).

Note: Sarnia and Canada's approximate populations at the start of the two World Wars;  
1914: Sarnia = 10,900    1914: Canada = 7.8 million    1939: Sarnia = 18,240    1939: Canada = 11.2 million



*Dulce Et Decorum Est*

*Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.*

*Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.*

*In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.*

*If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie; Dulce et Decorum est  
Pro patria mori.*

*By Wilfred Owen*

## SARNIA'S BOER WAR MEMORIAL NAMES

NAME & Service #	DATE OF BIRTH & DEATH + AGE FORCE, REGIMENT + RANK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
COLTER, Charles Flerke 322	<p>B: approx. 1869 in Strathroy, Ontario      D: Unknown</p> <p>Royal Canadian Field Artillery "D" Battery Gunner - Sergeant Former Corps – 27th Regiment, Lambton</p> <p>Son of Charles Colter and Elizabeth Colter (nee Howe), both of Ireland, family resided in Petrolia, Ontario. Enlisted December 28, 1899 in London, Ontario. Honourably discharged January 10, 1901.</p> <p>Married Lillian May Colter (nee Foster), October 18, 1902, in County of Hastings. Two children; Charles (b: 1903) and Elinore (b: 1910). Charles Coulter would be a dentist in Petrolia, family resided in Toronto in 1911.</p>
CRONE, Daniel Jeffrey 216	<p>B: January 24, 1876 in Sarnia, Ont.      D: August 5, 1900 in Johannesburg, South Africa      Age: 24</p> <p>Army: Royal Canadian Dragoons (1st Armoured Regiment) Private Former Corps- 27th Regiment, Lambton</p> <p>Son of William Crone and Catherine Crone, of Bosanquet, Lambton County. Enlisted January 2, 1900 in London, Ontario. *Daniel Crone was the only Sarnian to lose his life serving in the Boer War. Daniel died of Enteric fever (typhoid), in Johannesburg. Awarded Johannesburg and Diamond Hill Clasps.</p> <p>Buried in Braamfontein Garden of Remembrance, Johannesburg, South Africa. There is also a memorial dedicated to him at Irwin Cemetery, Sarnia, Lambton County, and a memorial plaque in the Federal Building on the corner of Christina and Davis Streets, Sarnia.</p> <p><b>*MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON DANIEL CRONE FOLLOWS THE CHART</b></p>
GORMAN, Frederick 7154	<p>B: October 13, 1876 in Lodon, Ontario      D: September 7, 1941      Age: 65</p> <p>Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry Sergeant Former Corps – 27th Regiment, Lambton</p> <p>Son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Gorman, of 556 North Christina Street, Sarnia. Sisters Harriett and Winnifred Gorman. Both of Frederick's grandfathers were veterans of the old British army, both served together in the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Frederick's paternal grandfather's last name was O'Gorman (of Ireland). When grandfather O'Gorman enlisted, somehow the 'O' was dropped from the name, never to be restored. Frederick's father, Henry Gorman, served with the Hundredth Regiment, in the Indian Mutiny of 1857-8. Henry Gorman was employed as editor and proprietor of the <i>Sarnia Daily Observer</i> for many years and later a local magistrate.</p> <p>Frederick served as <i>Observer</i> reporter and advertising solicitor for a time. As a youth, was a member of the St. Clair Borderer's Band; later Frederick joined the 27th Battalion and then the Seventh Company attaining the rank of Lieutenant. He enlisted in the RCR on October 21, 1899 in London, Ontario for service in the Boer War.</p> <p>In South Africa, as a Sergeant, he was in engagements at Paardeburg, Bloomfontein, Hout Nek and Vet River in the Orange Free State and in Pretoria. He was discharged December 25, 1900.</p> <p>On return to Sarnia, he rejoined the Seventh Company, where he remained until 1913, retiring as a Major. He was also made a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters, Sarnia.</p> <p>Frederick would enlist and serve in World War I. He initially joined the 70th Battalion, C.E.F. in July 1915 as a Major. Sometime after enlisting, he married Mrs. Fannie Clark Gorman (who served as a nurse at Camp Borden in WWI). Couple resided at 329 North Vidal Street.</p>



## SARNIA'S BOER WAR MEMORIAL NAMES continued

NAME & Service #	DATE OF BIRTH & DEATH + AGE FORCE, REGIMENT + RANK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
<b>MACKENZIE, Harold</b> 316	B: January 30, 1877 in Lambton County      D: approx. 1933      Age: approx. 56 16th Field Battery "D" Battery R.C.A. Private Former Corps – 27th Regiment, Lambton Son of John Alexander MacKenzie and Helen MacKenzie (nee Crawford) of Sarnia. Siblings: George, Norman and Helen. Father John was a Sarnia barrister. In 1901, Harold resided in Guelph. He was employed as a bank clerk, Bank of Commerce, Guelph. Enlisted January 4, 1900 in Guelph, Ont., in the "D" Battery of Artillery of the Second Canadian Contingent. Discharged January 10, 1901. In 1906, resided in Saskatchewan. He is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia.
<b>McMILLAN, Daniel Clarence</b> 7214	B: April 5, 1876 in Thedford, Ontario      D: January 29, 1964      Age: 87 2nd Special Service Battalion R.C.R. Private Former Corps - 27th Regiment, Lambton Son of Daniel Donald McMillan (farmer) and Elizabeth McMillan (nee Jones), of Lake Road East, Thedford. Siblings: Annie, Ida, Minnie, Thomas, Catherine, Finlay Walter, Bessie (Betsy), Alfred, Martin and Gordon. Employed as a clerk at the White Front drug store, Sarnia. Enlisted October 21, 1899 in London, Ont. Discharged December 25, 1900, then lived in Sarnia. Upon return, made a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters, Sarnia. Married Mabel Etta McMillan (nee Boale) on February 9, 1910 in York, Toronto, Ontario. In 1911, resided in Moosejaw, Saskatchewan. In 1916, resided in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. Occupation druggist. One child, Peter McMillan, born 1913.
<b>NEAR, Benjamin</b> 233	B: approx. 1876 in St. Mary's, Ontario      D: 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles Private Son of Henry Near, of St. Mary's, Ont. Enlisted January 2, 1900 in Regina, Saskatchewan. Discharged January 14, 1901.
<b>NEVILLE, Harry M.</b> NOTE: On the Sarnia Memorial, his name is inscribed as H.M. Neville	B: approx. 1881 in Ontario      D: Son of Cavendish Neville and Mary Neville (nee Smith) of England. Siblings; Elizabeth, Arabella Katherine, Sarah, Mary (May), Georgina, Frederick, Emily, John Cavendish, Lucy Edith, Herbert Sandford (see below), Alice Maude, and Henry Martin. In 1861, family was residing in Lambton West until at least 1891. In 1901, family was residing in Wapella, Saskatchewan.
<b>NEVILLE, Herbert Sandford</b> 232 and 1408 NOTE: On the Sarnia Memorial, his name is inscribed as H.S. Neville	B: July 1876 in Lambton County      D: June 4, 1944 in Chilliwack, British Columbia      Age: 67 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, and later the South African Constabulary (SAC) Son of Cavendish Neville and Mary Neville (nee Smith) of England. Siblings; Elizabeth, Arabella Katherine, Sarah, Mary (May), Georgina, Frederick, Emily, John Cavendish, Lucy Edith, Harry (see above), Alice Maude, and Henry Martin. In 1861, family was residing in Lambton West until at least 1891. In 1901, family was residing in Wapella, Saskatchewan. Living in Saskatchewan at his enlistment. Enlisted in army in 1900 in Ottawa, and the SAC on June 6, 1901. <sup>5</sup> Married Muriel Hampton Neville (nee Walton) in 1907 in Gladstone, Manitoba. Together they had two children; Morris (b: 1908) and Hilda Claire (b:1915). In 1916, family was residing in Regina, Saskatchewan.

## SARNIA'S BOER WAR MEMORIAL NAMES continued

NAME & Service #	DATE OF BIRTH & DEATH + AGE FORCE, REGIMENT + RANK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
NEVILLE, J.F. 101	Lord Strathcona Horse      Private
PARDEE, John Blair 7423	B: April 12, 1871 in Sarnia      D: June 6, 1927 in Sarnia      Age: 56 2nd Special Service Battalion R.C.R. Member of local militia prior to war. Son of Timothy Blair (a barrister) and Emma Kerby Pardee (nee Forsyth), of Sarnia. Siblings; Louisa Helen, Frederick Forsyth (would become a senator), Edwin Charles, Henry Mason, Timothy Blair, and Emma Kathleen. Enlisted March 10, 1900 in Toronto. Discharged November 5, 1900. Upon return, made a member of the Canadian Order of Foresters, Sarnia. Married Alice Maud Pardee (nee Clark) on June 28, 1904 in County of Essex, Ontario. Occupation in 1904 recorded as real estate broker. In 1911, couple residing in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario with their two children; Helen Blair and Edward. Buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia.
REYNOLDS, Richard Henry 215	B: approx. 1877      D: Royal Canadian Dragoons    Former Corps – 1st Hussars Regiment    Private Brother of Phillip Reynolds, of Warwick, Ont. Enlisted December 30, 1899 in London, Ont. Discharged January 21, 1901 Returned to Canada February 15, 1901, needing treatment for enteric fever.
SCOTT, Charles Reade 7239	B: October 7, 1880 in Forest, Ontario      D: 1926 in Jacksonville, Florida      Age: approx. 46 2nd Special Service Battalion R.C.R.    Private Former Corps – 27th Regiment, Lambton Son of Alexander Scott (of Ireland) and Emma Scott (nee Richardson, of England), of Forest, Ontario. Siblings; George Alexander, Edith Elizabeth and Reginald Faber. Enlisted October 24, 1899 in London, Ontario Charles Scott was a prisoner from about May 29 - Jun 18, 1900. At one time, he was reported killed at the Battle of Paardaberg. Discharged December 25, 1900. Married Hester Ann Hall on January 30, 1907 in Lambton, Ontario. In September 1918, signed World War I Draft Registration Card in Portland, Oregon, occupation recorded as salesman. Wife Hester died in 1922. Second marriage to Brenda Rehada Alamada Taylor on April 27, 1922 in London, Middlesex, Ontario. Occupation recorded as merchant. Two children in second marriage; unknown and Rosemary Taylor (b: 1924). Died in 1926. Buried in West Evergreen Cemetery, Jacksonville, Florida.
VAN TUYL, Thomas Walter	B: February 2, 1871 in Petrolia, Ontario      D: August 16, 1903 in Petrolia, Ontario      Age: 32 An honour graduate and winner of the Governor General's Bronze Medal at the Royal Military College, Kingston in 1891. During Boer War, served in the Second Contingent "D" Battery as First Lieutenant. Returned to Petrolia in January 1901. Son of Major Benjamin Stoddard Van Tuyl (of New York, served in American Civil War, Union Army) and Kate Van Tuyl (nee Cheney, of New York). Major Benjamin Van Tuyl relocated to Petrolia after the Civil War to become an oil man. Originally employed as a drilling contractor/oil operator. In 1874, Major Van Tuyl joined forces with J.H. Fairbank forming Van Tuyl and Fairbank Inc. Hardware in Petrolia, originally established in 1865, and still in business today. Thomas' siblings; Benjamin Blossom (engaged in explosives business in Petrolia) and Louis Gleeson (graduate of the Royal Military College, later employed in the Intelligence branch of the Ottawa Defence Department). Thomas' mother Kate died in August 1886, his father Benjamin died in December 1900 (both parents died in Petrolia). Thomas Van Tuyl died of Typhoid fever in 1903. He is buried in Hillside Cemetery, Petrolia, Ont.

The Boer War Memorial Fountain was erected in Sarnia in 1908. The Memorial lists sixteen men from Sarnia-Lambton County who participated in the South Africa War of 1899-1901. Of the sixteen names on the Boer War Memorial, only one man died while serving.

The following is the story of the only Sarnian to lose his life while serving in the Boer War:

**CRONE, Daniel Jeffrey (#216)**

Daniel Crone was born in Sarnia on January 24, 1876, the son of William Crone (born in Whitby, Ontario) and Catherine (nee McKellar) Crone, of Sarnia Township, later Mandaumin, Ontario. His parents William (a farmer) and Catherine were married on September 30, 1869, in Bosanquet. His siblings included: Francis J. (born 1871), Margaret (born 1875), Sarah A. (born 1879), James Scott (born 1880) Christina Catherine (born 1882), John Thomas (born 1883, died at age 3), and William J. (born 1895). At enlistment, he was employed at the C.P.R. Express and Telegraph Office, in Sarnia. Daniel enlisted on January 2, 1900 in London, Ontario. He was initially a member of the 27th Battallion, St. Clair Borderers, headquartered in Sarnia. The following is the story from the *Sarnia Observer* following his enlistment:

*Daniel Crone, lately employed in connection with the express department of the C.P.R. here, went to London Saturday and after being examined enlisted in the second Canadian contingent for South Africa. He was allowed home for Sunday and Monday and left this morning again for London to take up his active duties as a member of the London Company. Before leaving, a number of young men met at the oyster parlor of Alex Kelly and entertained Mr. Crone to an oyster supper. Dan, as he was familiarly called, has many friends in Sarnia and vicinity who wish him a safe return to his home and friends.*

Prior to going overseas, some citizens of Sarnia collected and presented a draft for fifty dollars to him. Daniel was also a member of the Cawdor Camp, Sons of Scotland Club in Sarnia. At the Cawder Camp meeting after Daniel had enlisted, the club wrote and delivered a complimentary address to him accompanied by \$25 in gold. The following is an excerpt from that address:

*Upon your leaving for South Africa, the officers and members of Cawdor Camp, Sons of Scotland, desire to express their high appreciation of your patriotism and valor and observe with delight that the patriotism and chivalry so characteristic of our Scottish ancestors has descended to their sons and is now so practically displayed by the valorous step which you have taken in offering your services at such a moment and time in defence of the Empire. We all unite in expressing our admiration of the spirit displayed by you, and hope that you will have an opportunity of rendering efficient service to our country and that you will be spared to return to us.*

*Peter Symington, Secretary*

*John Cowan, Chief*

In his first few weeks, Daniel was training for the Mounted Rifles at Stanley Barracks, in Toronto. The following is a portion of a letter he wrote to the *Sarnia Observer*:

*This place is named the workhouse, by the boys, which it certainly is. We have to get out at bugle call in the morning, at half past six o'clock, and parade to stables and tend horses. We get back to barracks about eight and get dry bread and coffee, sometimes a little meat, for breakfast. We are called out at nine again and do not get back till about one. The first day we were here, we were sent out on mounted parade without saddles for about two hours. A good many of the horses were young and had never been ridden before. Lots of the boys were thrown off time and again. Some were sent home because they could not ride their horses. My riding was counted good, and I tell you I was greatly relieved when I was told so. Hardly anything could induce me to turn back now. Although there are a good many things I do not like, I never was so happy in my life.*

Initially a Trooper with the Canadian Mounted Rifles, Daniel would become a member of the Army, Royal Canadian Dragoons (1st Armoured Regiment), with the rank of Private. On June 25, 1900, Daniel wrote his parents a letter, which they would receive one week prior to his death. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

*Dear Father and Mother,*

*This is nearly the first opportunity I have had to write since I left Kroonstad. No doubt you have read a few of our doings since we left there, so I need not relate too many of them. We did not have any opposition at the Vaal River, where we most expected it and where the enemy could or should have made a great stand. We, however, had a hot time with them at Krugerederp, near Johannesburg. It was a miracle that we were not cut to pieces there. About 600*

*of us were ordered to take a kopje which was about 1500 yards from the Boer lines. We had no sooner got started towards it, when they started to shell us at a furious rate. We galloped on to shelter of the kopje without a scratch, although their shells fell right among us. We had to fall behind rocks all day and night. I thought I would freeze. I do not think I ever suffered as much with the cold at home. We got thawed out next day, as the sun is always intensely hot... I might say I have never missed a ride since I came out, nor an engagement that our column was in. When we marched through Pretoria I thought, well, it is all over; but soon found out it was not. The warmest engagement we have been in was north of Pretoria, where you no doubt read of one of our fellows being killed by a 40lb shell. He belonged to D squadron, so did not know him. After two days' hard fighting the Boers escaped at sun down... I will have to close for the present and go and cook my dinner before leaving. For a good while we got nothing to eat but flour, which we had to make pancakes out of. You can imagine flour, salt and water. I will have to write out a few recipes for cooking fine dishes when I get home. Remember me to all. With love to all, your loving son, Dan*

On August 5, 1900, Daniel would lose his life while serving. He died of Enteric fever (typhoid), in Johannesburg, Africa. He was awarded posthumously the Johannesburg and Diamond Hill Clasps. Twenty-four year old Daniel Crone is buried alongside his comrades in Braamfontein Garden of Remembrance, Johannesburg, South Africa. On Daniel Crone's headstone are inscribed the words, *In Memory of Pte. D. Crone. Born in Lambton, Canada. Died 4-8-00. Aged 24. Erected by his Comrades.*

One week after Daniel Crone's death, the *Sarnia Observer* reported on his death. The following is a portion of that report:

*Private Dan Crone Succumbs to Fever. His Death took place on Sunday at Johannesburg.*

*Sarnia citizens were in sorrow last evening when the news of the death of Private D.J. Crone, of the Canadian Mounted Rifles in South Africa, came to hand. THE OBSERVER received an unofficial dispatch during the afternoon that Private Crone had died of enteric fever, but some doubt was entertained as to its authenticity. The worst fears of our citizens were realized later on however, when an official dispatch from Sir Alfred Milner at Capetown to Lord Minto was received by THE OBSERVER, stating that Private Crone, No. 216, of the 27th Battalion, Sarnia, died of enteric fever on August 5th at Johannesburg. The sad news travelled fast, and on the streets on every side could be heard expressions of sorrow and regret. Dr. Johnston, M.P. was notified and he at once telegraphed to Ottawa for information. A reply was received from the Deputy Minister of Militia, confirming the sad intelligence and all hopes that Pte. Crone might yet be alive were abandoned. During the evening Dr. Johnston, M.P. and Sutherland Johnston drove out to the home of Private Crone's parents in Sarnia township, and broke the sad news to them, The scene was a heartrending and sorrowful one.*

*Dan Crone, as he was familiarly called by his many Sarnia friends, was a young man of sterling qualities. He was aged about 23 years, and prior to his leaving for South Africa with the Canadian Mounted Rifles, was in the employ of the C.P.R. Telegraph and Express Company. When the Mounted Rifles were being organized for service in South Africa, Dan Crone was eagerly the first to offer his services. He passed his examination for qualification and was accepted.*

*Private Crone was an honored and valued member of the Albert Street Presbyterian Church and also of the Christian Endeavor society in connection therewith. He was also a member of Cawdor Camp, Sons of Scotland, of this town. To say that the sympathy of the entire community is extended to the bereaved parents in their hour of affliction is only repeating what is a universal sentiment throughout the town.*

Approximately one month after Daniel's death, his parents received the a letter from one of his chum's from Sarnia, also in South Africa, dated August 7th, 1900. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Mrs. Crone, Sarnia, Ont., Canada*

*To Mrs. Crone and Family,*

*I suppose you have already received word about your son's death. My last letter said he was getting better and his death was such a surprise to all around. I generally try and go down to see him every day, so I went down on Saturday, 4th of Aug. in the afternoon, and the nurse told me he was a lot better, and I thought he looked it myself. It was the first time after he had the bad spell that he really knew me and I had on a new suit of khaki and he noticed it right away. I was going down to see him on Sunday, the 5th, but I was on duty so late that I did not get the chance, so as soon as I got my breakfast I went down to see him, as I expected he would be able to have quite a talk, but on entering the hospital I saw the bed empty and the nurse came up and said I suppose you know what has happened,*



*and she told me all. She said a little after I left on Saturday he took a spell of coughing and it lasted for about three hours, then he stopped for awhile and about half past ten on Saturday, the 4th of Aug, he gave three sighs and passed away. The orderly ran for a doctor but when he got there all was quiet. I asked the nurse if I could see the body and she told me it had been sent down to the Victoria hospital, so I went down there and they told me he had been taken from there to the undertaker's. I was making for there when I saw a funeral and I asked the officer who he was burying. He told me it was Dan, so I followed the hearse to the cemetery and saw him laid away. I was the only Canadian that was at the funeral, because none of the rest knew about it. After he was buried the preacher came up to me and said I see your friend has gone at last, and I was speechless. He asked me your address and said he would write to you. Dan had a very respectable funeral, the band was out and played the dead march and three volleys were fired over his grave. I am glad for one thing to tell you and that is that Dan has lived a Christian life all through the war and I am sure he will spend the rest of his days with his God above. After I left the cemetery I went back to the hospital and asked for his clothes and things and the Major said he could not give them to me, so I went to the C.M.R. captain. His name is Captain Greenwood, and he drove me back to the Wesleyan Hospital and I got two rings, one he brought from home and one he found in Capetown, a little silver watch which a friend by the name of Dowling, of Toronto, had given him before he left. There was also a photo of a young lady in a leather case, of which I will send you the proof in this letter. His last request was to one of the orderlies of the hospital to take the Maple Leaf off his hat and send it to me to give to his mother. I have got everything in Capt. Greenwood's charge and will bring them home to you if God spares me... I will close now with the sympathy of all the boys of 4 troop, A Squadron, C.M.R.*

*From Dan's friend,*

*Richard H. Reynolds No. 215, 2nd contingent, 4 troop, A Squadron, C.M.R., South Africa*

*The nurse that took care of Dan was Nurse Pourie, P.O. box 2804, Johannesburg, South Africa.*

*The preacher that buried him Rev. Mr. Morrise, Johannesburg, South Africa.*

*He was buried by the East Lancaster Regiment.*

*There is a Kruger three-penny piece that was in one of Dan's pockets. If there are any letters come for him I will send them back to you.*

*Rich H. Reynolds*

As promised in his letter, Private Reynolds of Sarnia would visit the Crone family in March of 1901, to return Daniel Crone's last belongings from South Africa.

In mid-August of 1900, one week after receiving the above letter, the Crone family would receive the following letter:

*Miss L. Crone, Sarnia, Ont., Canada*

*I write you these few lines to let you know that I got three letters for Dan. I asked the Capt. What I would do with them and he told me to look at the address and send them back to the parties, but I could not see any address, so I sent them all to you and may be you know who they are from. I opened them but I never read a word of them only the headling and the name at the last. I went up to the police barracks at Pretoria to see some of the boys about putting up a headstone for Dan and I formed a committee to see about putting it up. I got over £20, and I am going to order a stone tomorrow and when it*

*is up I will have some pictures taken of the grave and stone and bring them home with me for you. I will send you a list of the subscribers. I could not get up to the squadron, which is at Middleburg, but I saw most of the boys that were on the police. Anything else that comes for Dan I will send right back to you. All the boys send their sympathy to all your family and we will do anything for you while we are out here. If you let me know I will send his things or bring them home when I come. We do not expect to leave Africa for two months yet. I will close now, from your brother's friend.*

*Rich Reynolds, No. 215, 2nd contingent, 4 troop, A Squadron, C.M.R. South Africa.*

*This is the committee: R.H. Reynolds, of London, Ont.; J. Heron, of Toronto, Ont.; A.F. Stover, of Woodstock.*

Fred Gorman, fellow Sarnian and Boer War veteran wrote;

*We were all very much grieved to learn at Pretoria of young Crone's death at Johannesburg. It is impossible for you to understand how closely we from Sarnia keep track of one another out here and the interest we care in one another is 1st rate.... Crone was a fine young man.*



The following letter was written by Daniel's father William, to the Canadian South Africa Memorial Association:

*Mandaumin, March 24th*

*Dear Sir,*

*We are much in sympathy with your movement to erect suitable memorials to the Canadian boys who lost their lives in S. Africa but there was a stone erected to our son by his comrades but we will be willing to subscribe to help erect a monument to others.*

*Yours faithfully*

*Wm. Crone*

Daniel Crone was Sarnia's first ever soldier to die overseas while in service to his country. On August 12, 1900, there was a Memorial Service held in Sarnia for Daniel Crone at the Albert Street Presbyterian Church. At the memorial service, Reverend J.R. Hall said, "We have graves in the Country of the boys who fell in defence of our country, but I do not know of a grave of any soldier who died in the defence of the Empire."

Aside from his actual grave in Braamfontein Garden of Remembrance, Johannesburg, South Africa, there are two memorials dedicated to Daniel Crone in Lambton County. A memorial at Irwin Cemetery, Sarnia, Lambton County reads: *In Memoriam Daniel J. Crone Son of Wm. & Catherine Crone of Sarnia Township. Born Jan. 24, 1876, Died Johannesburg, South Africa Aug. 4, 1900. A member of the First Battalion Canadian Mounted Rifles Serving the British Empire in the South Africa War, 1900.*

There is also a memorial plaque in the Federal Building on the corner of Christina and Davis Streets, Sarnia reads: *1899-1902. South Africa. In Memorium. This tablet is erected by the citizens of Sarnia, Canada. In Memory of Daniel J. Crone, a resident of Sarnia, Ont. Died Aug. 4th 1900 at Johannesburg, South Africa while serving as a soldier of the British Empire, 1st Batt. Canadian Mounted Rifles.*

SOURCES (Boer War and Daniel Crone): B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2D, 2I

\* The following article is courtesy of Dan McCaffrey, a Sarnia-Lambton reporter and author, who wrote this column in November 2005, on the only Sarnian to lose his life in the Boer War.

*When local residents pause to remember the nation's war dead today, they might want to spend at least a moment reflecting on the story of Dan Crone.*

*Crone, the first Sarnian ever to die on a foreign battlefield, fought in the Boer War, a campaign that has all but disappeared from the nation's collective memory. Indeed, when commentators eulogize Canada's war dead they invariably refer to "the two world wars and the Korean conflict."*

*Dan Crone's war is rarely mentioned. He is, in other words, a forgotten hero. It's as if the term "Lest We Forget" doesn't apply to the men of his generation. And if we can forget them, what's to stop us from eventually forgetting about the soldiers of other conflicts? Crone's story should be remembered because it tells us a great deal about the sacrifices young Canadians have made over the decades.*

*When war broke out in 1899, the twenty-three year old employee of the CPR Telegraph and Express Company quickly joined the cavalry. Before long, he found out there was nothing glorious about war. In his letters home, he described sweltering days, cold nights, hunger, homesickness, and fear. On one occasion, he recalled sleeping on an African hillside. "We had to lie on the rocks all night. I thought I would freeze," he said. After weeks of eating "hardtack," he rejoiced in telling the story of how he caught a few ducks and chickens and immediately "began plucking and roasting."*

*In his dreams, he sometimes returned to Sarnia. "I was home one night," he wrote. "Oh! Was I not having a good square meal. I had just cleaned the table when I was awakened to find myself as hungry as ever.*

*I had not eaten for two days at that time." His first taste of combat was scary. "I admit it gives a person a funny feeling when you hear the shells whizzing by you," he told his parents.*

**SLEEP ON, BRAVE WARRIOR. THE YEARS CAN NEVER DIM YOUR MEMORY, VALOUR,  
SACRIFICE, AS NOW YOU REST IN HIM.**

Once, while crossing a river, he was caught in an ambush. "Their shells fell right amongst us," he wrote. "One passed within a foot of me and shot another fellow's horse's ear off. We were ordered to advance and cross the river, which we did on the dead run through water, mud and everything. Some had to dismount and wade through, as it was too deep for horses."

Crone made national headlines in May 1900 when he rode behind enemy lines to rescue a wounded soldier trapped under an exhausted horse. The pair made it to safety, only to learn they'd been reported missing in action. "When neother turned up for a couple of days it was concluded that they had been wiped out or gobbled up by the enemy," the Toronto Globe reported.

In August 1900 Crone's luck ran out. Like many soldiers, his death was anything but glorious. In fact, he succumbed to a bout of fever.

At his memorial service, Rev. J.R. Hall blasted Sarnians who were enthusiastic about the war. "It seems to me that our town, led by some of our citizens, has gone wild—simply wild. Whereto is the glory of war now?" he asked. He added, "Within the past week there has come very near to us something of the realities of war. The only way we could understand something of it would be to go over to South Africa, stand on one of the hilltops there, and see what has taken place. I am afraid that if some of our shoouters were there, they would no longer shout."

\*Dan McCaffery is a reporter, historian and the author of eight books, including six books on military history. He can be contacted at danval3@cogeco.ca

### *The Reaper*

*So now it's done  
Once more the shining field  
Has gone to feed the reaper's blade  
All silent now  
The stubble it lies still  
With blood-red poppies overlaid*

*"Where are my sons?" the mother cries  
"Justly barely grown, yet gone away."  
"Away, away," the reaper sighs  
"Cut down like corn on an autumn day"*

*And so once more  
The Seed of life is sown  
And in the loving earth is laid*

*But it's never done  
Once more the young men all  
Must go to feed the reaper's blade.*

*By Bill Caddick*

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ANECDOTAL NOTES ON SARNIA'S FALLEN SOLDIERS  
(of WORLD WAR I)

**ACKERMAN, Ralph Louis (#602916)**

Ralph Ackerman was born in Sarnia on November 16, 1891, the son of Wilbert Albert Ackerman, of 390 Russell Street, Sarnia. He enlisted on August 16, 1915 in Sarnia with the 34th Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as switchman, and he was single. He would go overseas with the 34th Battalion, arriving in England in October of 1915. He became a member of the Canadian Army Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, 7th Battalion with the rank of Private. During his time in France, Ralph wrote a number of letters home. The following are portions of a few of them:

To his sister Mrs. A.E. Chambers, living on North Mitton Street, on July 10th, 1916, from "Somewhere in France":

*Dear Sister,*

*Just a line or two to let you know that I am well and hoping this letter finds you the same. We are having lovely weather over here now and the roads are pretty dry. I had a letter from Dad just before we went into the trenches the last time. I met Andy McIntosh and a bunch of the 70th boys the other day. They had not been in the trenches, but expected to go in soon. It has a fellow a little scared the first time in, but you soon get used to it and don't pay any attention to all the bullets whistling and zipping round you. I have certainly seen some interesting sights since being over here, and if I get back safe and sound will tell you all about it.... Say, don't send me any tobacco, for we get all we can use issued to us. We get it in the trenches just the same as when we are out. We also have our mail delivered to the trenches. I suppose it is pretty quiet around town now. I have certainly met a lot of fellows from home here. I met Charlie Warren the other night. He was in the hospital with fever the same time as myself.... I have got a big bunch of German souvenirs. I would like you to see them. There are lots of them to be had, but I don't bother with them much. I suppose Harold is growing like a weed. There is hardly any need of money over here. We get fifteen francs every two weeks, and we don't even have to buy tobacco with it. Well Sis, I guess I have told you all the news for this time so will sign off.*

*From your loving brother, Ralph*

To his sister Mrs. A.E. Chambers in August of 1916, from "Somewhere in France":

*Dear Sister,*

*We have been having nice weather over here. It has been pretty dry. The farmers are all busy cutting their crops. It seems funny to see them cutting grain just a few miles from the firing line... It is pretty near three months now since I landed here. It doesn't seem that long, but I have had some warm times in that period, and I suppose, will have warmer yet before it is through. We had a mine sprung on our line just recently, a big one too. I thought Fritz was going to send a bunch of our boys up in the air, but we came out lucky. A mine is a tunnel dug under the ground. They generally dig right under the trench and fill it up with high explosives. When it goes off, you would think it was an earthquake the way it shakes the ground. The one he sprung on us was thirty feet deep. I was just a little way from it... We have lots of straw to lay on, and lots of lice and rats for company. The latter are pretty thick.*

*Ralph*

To his father Albert, living on Russell Street, in January 1917, from France:

*Dear Dad,*

*It is a beautiful spring day here today, but I suppose you have lots of snow at home. We have been having pretty good weather lately, but pretty cold. We sure had some Christmas dinner. We were pretty lucky this year. This is a list of the few things we had for Christmas, so you can imagine if we enjoyed it or not: roast beef, roast pork, mince pie, fried potatoes, cabbage, water cress, nuts, apples, oranges and a lot more stuff... We had a pretty good time before the day was over. Christmas only comes once a year, and we sure made it a merry one. There are about 40 of us in the bombers and we got our own dinner up. Our officer helped us out a lot. He is an awful nice fellow... Say Dad, I could write a book about France now and what I have seen. I've witnessed some sights that some people would give thousands of dollars to see. I have had the pleasure of seeing some nice air duels, only one time, our pilot came out second best, being forced to land in our lines, but the pilot himself was not hurt. Another time an enemy airplane started to fall after a battle with one of our aviators, and his gasoline tank exploded and he came down in one big*

SADLY TODAY I CLOSE MY EYES AND DREAM, AND ONCE AGAIN, MY SON,  
I SEE YOU SMILE. MOTHER



*flame. The pilot was burned so bad that you could not recognize him. He fell within a few feet of where we were stationed. In an attack one day in which I participated, we were accompanied by two tanks. It was a great sight to see them go after Fritz.*

*PS. Believe me dad, if I am spared to come home, I will have lots to tell you.*

*Ralph*

On September 2nd, 1917, Ralph's father Wilbert, living at 390 Russell Street, received the following telegram:

*Sincerely regret to inform you 602916, Pte. Randolph Louis Ackerman, infantry, officially reported missing August 15th, 1917. Will send further particulars when received.*

*Officer in charge of records.*

On August 15, 1917, Ralph Ackerman would lose his life while fighting on the first day of the Attack on Hill 70, France. Ralph Ackerman would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now reported killed in action. Casualty occurred at Hill 70.* Twenty-five year old Ralph Ackerman has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as, Ackerman, R.H.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **ADAMS, Alfred Roy (#90801) – Photograph page 371**

Alfred Adams was born in Sarnia on January 13, 1886, the son of Joshua Fourth Adams and Jessie Loretta (nee Clark) Adams, of 191 Brock Street, Sarnia. His father Joshua was a customs officer. Alfred had three brothers: Charles Frederick (born 1880, who would become a schoolteacher in Calgary); Ernest Joshua (born 1882); and George Percy (born 1889). Alfred resided in Sarnia for many years, and was prominent in musical circles, being an accomplished organist and pianist. He left for Goderich a few years prior to enlisting, and was leader and choirmaster of one of the churches there. Alfred enlisted on June 17, 1915 in Sarnia with the 29th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery. At the time, he listed his occupation as Civil engineer and he was single. He trained at Guelph, going overseas in February 1916. On June 21st 1916, Alfred wrote to his mother from Witley Camp, in Surrey, England where he was training. Following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Mother,*

*I know it is a long time since I wrote, but it was pretty hard to do any writing while we were on our tick to Larkhill, and they have formed a habit recently of springing parades of one kind or another on us for Saturday afternoons and Sunday, so that leisure time is rather a scarce article. We had quite a time on our "trek." It was done under actual service conditions. We left here on the 5th about 8 a.m., the whole brigade the 29th, 41st, 44th and 46th Batteries, travelled of course at a walk. Every hour we would halt for about 10 minutes, see that everything was alright, then on again. Any time near noon we would halt where there was a stream of water to water the horses, feed them and eat a sandwich ourselves. We moved by easy stages only about 12 to 16 miles a day, usually reaching our bivouac for the night about 2 or 3 p.m....*

*He later described his stay in the area of Over Wallop: ... In the evening as soon as the horses are fed and watered, we had a hot meal usually a stew, then we would wander off to the town to see what it looked like. Then there was a roll-call at 9:30 so we didn't have much time to look around. It is broad daylight here now at 9:30 with the daylight saving bill in force, Summer time as they call it. Reville was at 4 a.m. and we moved off again at 6. Of course we slept in the open with a rubber sheet and two blankets, fortunately we did not get much rain at night....The soil all through is chalk but there is plenty of good sticky mud on the surface, and even a short shower turns the place into an abominable mud hole. The first contingent must have suffered tortures in such a place during the rainy season....It will not be long before we move to France now by the looks of things and I guess leave is hard to get then, but the war will soon be over. I think this brings my tale nearly up to date so I'll end here. Everything is going fine, good health and everything else. I'm glad father is keeping up. Hope everything is O.K.*

*Yours, Roy*

Alfred would take part in the battles at Vimy Ridge, the three battles of the Somme, Arras, Ypres, Passchendaele, Cambrai and others. Alfred took his Officer's training in Witley Camp, Godalming, England, starting in January 1918, and later returned to the front in June 1918, having attained the rank of Lieutenant. He became a

**BELOVED PARENTS, I KEPT THE FAITH AND FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.**

**SEE YOU AGAIN IN HEAVEN.**

member of the Canadian Army Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade with the rank of Lieutenant. Alfred Adams was wounded at Amiens on September 4th, 1918, during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign and was confined in the General Hospital in France until October 10th. He was then moved to a hospital in England, where, one week later, on October 17, 1918, he would lose his life. He was listed as, *Died of wounds – 3rd London General Hospital (England), Wandsworth Common, S.W.* Thirty-two year old Alfred Adams is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave III.D.12. Alfred received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Alfred's father Joshua would die less than two years later, in April 1920.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**ALLAN, Arthur John** (#602258) – Photograph page 371

Arthur Allan was born in Palmerston, Ontario on September 18, 1891, the son of James Alexander Allan and Florence (nee McArthur) Allan, of 382 Brock Street, later 239 Mitton Street, Sarnia. His many siblings included Mabel Florence (born 1884); William Albert (born 1886); James Howard (born 1889, see below); Mary Violet (born 1889); Robert Earl (born 1893); Sarah Gladys (born 1894); Edna B. (born 1899); and Velma (born 1900). The family were members of Central United Church. Arthur enlisted in Sarnia on January 13, 1915, with the 34th Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he listed his occupation as a rig brakeman.

Arthur Allan and his brother James went overseas with the 34th Battalion, 'D' Company, arriving in England aboard the S.S. California on November 1, 1915. Both were later transferred to 23rd Battalion, then the 2nd Battalion, arriving in France May 26, 1916. In less than one month, both were transferred to 7th Battalion, Canadian Army Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, with the rank of Private. Both Arthur and his brother James would fight in the Battle of Mont Sorrel. Arthur would survive, but he would lose his brother James, who died on June 13, 1916. Arthur was then transferred to the Somme Front. On September 27, 1916, three months after his brother James' death, Arthur Allan would lose his life while fighting at Hessian Trench near Courcellette, during the Battle of the Somme, France.

Arthur's father would receive the following message from the militia headquarters at Ottawa not long afterwards:

*To James Alexander Allan, 382 Brock Street, Sarnia*

*Sincerely regret to inform you, 602258, Private Arthur John Allan, infantry, officially reported missing since Sept. 27th, 1916. Will send further particulars when received.*

*Officer in charge record office.*

After receiving the above message, Arthur's father received letters from two Sarnia young men who were on active service in France, telling him of the death of his son Arthur. Arthur Allan would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now reported killed in action. Killed in trench leading up to Regina Trench in the Area of the Somme, France.* Twenty-five year old Arthur Allan is buried in Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave III.A.6.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, K, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**ALLAN, James Howard** (#602544) – Photograph page 371

James Allan was born in Palmerston, Ontario on December 23, 1889, the son of James Alexander and Florence (nee McArthur) Allan, of 382 Brock Street, later 239 Mitton Street, Sarnia. His many siblings included Mabel Florence (born 1884); William Albert (born 1886); Mary Violet (born 1889); Arthur John (born 1891, see above); Robert Earl (born 1893); Sarah Gladys (born 1894); Edna B. (born 1899); and Velma (born 1900). The family were members of Central Baptist Church. James enlisted August 21, 1915 in Sarnia with the 34th Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he listed his occupation as a railway brakeman.

James Allan and his brother Arthur went overseas with the 34th Battalion, 'D' Compnay, arriving in England aboard the S.S. California on November 1, 1915. Both were later transferred to 23rd Battalion, then the 2nd Battalion, arriving in France May 26, 1916. In less than one month, both were transferred to 7th Battalion, Canadian Army Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, with the rank of Private. Within one month, on June 13, 1916, James Allan would lose his life while fighting on the final day of the Battle of Mont Sorrel, Belgium. His brother Arthur fought in the same battle, but survived. James Allan would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Ypres (Mt. Sorrel).*

*MY BELOVED HUSBAND WHO GAVE HIS LIFE THAT I MIGHT LIVE.  
MAY HIS NAME LIVE ON. R.I.P.*

Twenty-seven year old James is buried in Allan Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm), Belgium, Grave VI.D.17.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, K, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**ANSBRO, George Patrick (#124280)**

George Ansbro was born in Hollymount, Ireland on March 3, 1895, the son of William Ansbro and Margaret W. (nee Loughlin) Ansbro, of Ireland. Prior to enlisting, George was a member of the Sarnia Fire Department for eight months. George enlisted on October 30, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 70th Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he listed his occupation as a fireman. He would become a member of Army, 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, Quebec Regiment, as a Private. Two years to the day after he enlisted, on October 30, 1917, George Ansbro would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. George Ansbro would officially be listed as, *Killed in action, Passchendaele*. Twenty-two year old George Ansbro has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 30, 32.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BARNES, Charles Harris (#2356758) – Photograph page 373**

Charles Barnes was born in Oil Springs, Ontario on February 15, 1898, the son of George Barnes and Annie (nee Campbell) Barnes, of 413 Confederation Street, Sarnia. His siblings included George Walter (born 1894); John Thomas (born 1896); Robert Clayton (born 1899); Reta Mae (born 1902); and Kathleen Victoria (born 1904). Charles' brother Robert, a former employee of the Mueller Company, served with the Royal Canadian Engineers in France. His other brother John, enlisted in the United States Medical Corps, attaining the rank of Sergeant. Both of his sisters, Reta and Kathleen would become nurses. Prior to enlisting, Charles was employed at the Imperial Oil Limited. Charles enlisted in London, Ontario on May 27, 1918. At the time, he listed his occupation as Still Helper Imperial Oil Company, and that he was single. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 4th Reserve Battalion with the rank of Private.

Charles Barnes left London, Ontario for overseas on September 27, 1918. Two weeks later, on October 10, 1918, he would lose his life while at sea on his way to England, on board the *SS City of Cairo*. In mid-October of 1918, his father George Barnes in Sarnia was officially notified that his son, *Private Charles Harris Barnes 2356758 had died at sea on route to England, on board the SS City of Cairo, October 10th of broncho-pneumonia*. Charles Barnes would later be officially listed as, *Died on board H.M.T. 'City of Cairo' of acute bronchial pneumonia. Buried at sea*. Twenty-year old Charles Barnes has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Halifax Memorial, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Panel 1.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BATEY, Robert Arthur (#123951)**

Robert Batey was born on June 14, 1901, the son of Robert Batey and Blanche Batey, of 124 South Savoy Street, Sarnia. Robert enlisted as a bugler for the Pioneers in September 1915 at the age of fourteen years and three months. He was later transferred into the 70th Battalion, with which he went overseas. About three weeks after landing in England, he went with the first draft to France, as a member of the Army, 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, bombing section, Quebec Regiment, with the rank of Private. On September 15, 1916, Robert Batey would lose his life while fighting at the Battle of Courcellette, during the Battle of the Somme, France. Robert Batey would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died, Courcellette Sector*. Robert Batey is the youngest fallen soldier inscribed on Sarnia's cenotaph. Fifteen-year old Robert Batey has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BEAUMONT, George (#844052)**

George Beaumont was born in Wyoming, Ontario on April 8, 1895, the son of George Beaumont Sr. (born in London, England, a railway employee) and Mary Jane (nee Young, born in Michigan) Beaumont, of 191 Cobden Street, Sarnia. His siblings included Amy May (born 1893); John (born 1897); Julie Martha (born 1899); and Mary Gladys (born 1901, died shortly after). George's mother, Mary Jane would die in March 1901. His father George Sr. would remarry in 1902, to Rachel Maria Young. They would have two children together, step siblings for George:

Eva Ruth (born 1908) and Lillian Margaret (born 1909). Before enlisting, George Jr. was employed for some time with Alex Rose, butcher. While living in Sarnia George enlisted on December 13, 1915 with the 149th Battalion. He recorded that he was single and was employed as a butcher. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Manitoba Regiment, 43rd Battalion, with the rank of Private.

On October 1, 1918, George would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. On November 13th 1918, two days after the Armistice was signed and with the world celebrating peace, George's mother Mary Jane Beaumont would receive the following letter from overseas:

*Lieut. Smith, 43rd Canadians overseas, France, October 14, 1918*

*Dear Madame,*

*It is with deepest regret I have to inform you of the death of your son, Pte. George Beaumont, No. 844052, killed in action October 1, 1918. Your son was killed during a counter attack made on our newly won lines, by the enemy. He was killed instantly thereby suffering no pain. He died bravely facing the enemy and defending the honour of our cause. The officers and men of the company tender their sincere sympathy in the loss of your son and may God assist you to bear the sad bereavement. I am,*

*Yours sincerely, S.G. Smith, Lieut. "D" Co'y, 43rd Can. Bn.*

George Beaumont would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. This soldier was killed by an enemy machine gun bullet, during an attack, near Tilloy, France.* Twenty-three year old George Beaumont is buried in Mill Switch British Cemetery, Tilloy-les-Cambrai, Nord, France, Grave C.16.

In April 1921, George's parents George and Mary Jane Beaumont would receive a letter from their son-in-law, Joseph Acton (of the Salvation Army) who had gone to France to visit their son's grave. The following are portions of that letter:

*The location of the cemetery is in a splendid district situated on the brow of a hill three miles outside of Cambrai. There are about 60 graves in this cemetery, the neighbourhood in which George fell is all under crop now, the grain was about 4 inches high when I crossed the field to the cemetery. I walked over the ground no doubt George had walked many times. I viewed the town from the fields which he had viewed it from, only in his time, the field was all trenches. I traversed the streets leading to Cambrai which George and his comrades had fought in and driven the Germans out, the devastation is everywhere, houses are smashed to the ground. The very trees along the road which leads to George's cemetery are being cut down while I was there as they are dead being hit with shrapnel. I took one or two pictures which I will forward to you later.*

*My visit to the battlefield was a wonderful education to me from many aspects. I saw the terrible picture which I had previously only read of. My heart ached as I looked at the many cemeteries everywhere. I was in one in Belgium with fourteen thousand British boys graves, there is another with twenty thousand graves. Another sad part is that many bodies are still being found. I saw 70 Germans being buried which had been picked up the day previous. A lamentable sad feature is the number of unknown soldiers. I went through a large cemetery and read the names on the crosses and found 70 out of every 100 unknown. The parents of these boys must often think of where their Jack is lying....*

*God Bless to all, Joseph Acton*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BELL, A.** – No information found in searched records links this name to Sarnia.

Possibly Alex Bell or Arthur Bell. No confirmed information from a number of sources.

**BELL, Arthur William** (#226053)

Arthur Bell was born in Point Edward, Ontario on March 26, 1891, the son of Henry Bell (born in England, a conductor, who would become the immigration inspector of the city of Sarnia) and Mary Jane (nee Brook) Bell, of 288 Campbell Street, Sarnia. His siblings included Edith (born 1876); Ella (born 1876); Albert James (born 1878); Harry Henry (born 1884); Alice (born 1890); and half sibling Ettie (born 1882). Arthur was described as well known and popular, having lived in the Sarnia vicinity nearly his whole life. A few years before enlisting, he went west, residing in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Medicine Hat. He had returned to Sarnia about three years prior to his enlistment. Arthur enlisted October 26, 1915 in Sarnia with the Canadian Mounted Rifles Regiment. Single at the

IN SACRED AND LOVING MEMORY OF MY DEAR SON.  
HIS SUN HAS GONE DOWN WHILE IT WAS YET DAY.

time, he listed his occupation as a machinist. After a time spent training in London and Hamilton, he left for overseas in May 1916.

He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Service Corps, Reinforcement Pool as a Private, serving for some time with the infantry in France. He would later be employed at the Ordinance Mobile Workshops in France, where he was engaged at his occupation as a machinist. On October 11th, 1917, he was admitted to a hospital in France with tonsillitis. On October 13, 1917, Arthur would lose his life while in the French hospital. Arthur William Bell would officially be listed as, *Died (Tonsillitis) at St. John's Ambulance Brigade Hospital, Etaples, France*. On October 17th, 1917, Arthur's father Henry Bell in Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*October 17, 1917 to H. Bell, Immigration Inspector, Sarnia, Ontario  
Deeply regret to inform you 226053, Private Arthur William Bell, previously reported seriously ill, now officially reported died at St. John's Ambulance Brigade Hospital, Etaples, October 13th, 1917. Director of Records*

At the time of his death, he was survived by his father Henry Bell; three sisters, Mrs. Wyckoff, Sarnia, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Earl Foster of Medicine Hat; and two brothers, Albert in Winnipeg and Harry in Fort Francis, Ontario. Twenty-six year old Arthur Bell is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave XXX.C.15A. One year after Arthur's death, in October of 1918, the following 'In Memoriam' appeared in the *Sarnia Observer*:

*In loving memory of Arthur William Bell, who died October 13th, 1917, in St. John's Ambulance Hospital, Etaples, France. Friends may think that he's forgotten, when at times I laugh and smile, but they little know the loneliness. Which that smile hides all the while. Friends we were, and pals together, he but waits for me above.*

*A friend and pal*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **BENDALL, William George Henry (#123569)**

William Bendall was born in Marylebone, London, England on April 23, 1888, the son of Mahala Ann Fonvielle (of Middlesex, England). At birth, William was registered as William George Henry Fonvielle. His siblings included Thomas (born 1889) and Mahala (born 1891). His mother, Mahala would re-marry, to Joshua Scales. William would have five half siblings: Joshua John (born 1895); Albert Edward (born 1897); Arthur Sidney (born 1899); Louis Stanley (born 1902); and Ena (born 1906). In 1912, while living in London, England, and working in the milk trade, William changed his last name to Bendall. William would marry Ethel Louisa (nee Collins, of London, England) Bendall. Ethel did not have her father's permission to marry so they arranged a secret wedding on January 13, 1913 in London, England and they later eloped. On May 15, 1913, the couple left England (travelling steerage) aboard the passenger ship *Sicilian*, arriving in Quebec two weeks later. William intended to go into farming, but he had no experience. By July 1913, William and Ethelwyn, (as he referred to her as) had settled in Sarnia, at 132 Savoy Street. Their first son, William Harold George, was born in Sarnia in June 1914, however, tragically died 6 months after birth.

William enlisted September 20, 1915 in Sarnia, at the time listing his occupation as a cooper. After undergoing training in Britain, he was sent to France. He became a member of Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 38th Battalion with the rank of Private. William and Ethelwyn's second son, Denis Lendon, was born in March 1917 in London, England. On October 31, 1917, William Bendall would lose his life, as a result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. William Bendall would later be officially listed as, *Died of wounds (shrapnel wound left side, penetrating) at No. 2 Casualty Clearing Hospital*. At the time of William's death in France, his son Denis was just 7 months old. Twenty-nine year old William Bendall is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium, Grave XXI.AA.18.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **BENNETT, James William (#602276) – Photograph page 373**

James Bennett was born in Glossop, Derbyshire, England on February 15, 1890, the eldest child of George Bennett and Mary A. Bennett, both of Glossop, England. His siblings included John, Millie, Mary, Hester and Frank. William would marry Emily Bennett, and the couple would reside at 176 Ontario Street, and later 474 Davis Street, Sarnia. James enlisted January 27, 1915 in Sarnia with the 34th Battalion, at the time listing his occupation as an

oiler on a steamship. He was later transferred, and in 1916, became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, Quebec Regiment, as a Private. On October 1, 1916, James Bennett would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. He was initially reported as “missing”.

Almost one year after being reported as missing, James’ wife Emily, residing on Ontario Street in Sarnia, would receive the following telegram:

*Adjutant General’s office, Militia Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada*

*Certificate of Death*

*Certified that No. 602276, Private James William Bennett, 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles, Canadian Expeditionary Force, has been officially reported as missing between the 1st and 2nd of October, 1916, and that, after full enquiry made no information has come to hand which would indicate that he is not dead. For official purposes, therefore, his death is presumed to have occurred on or since the last named date.*

*W.E. Hodgins, Major General, Adjutant-General. September 5th, 1917.*

James Bennett would officially be listed as, *Killed in action. This soldier was wounded during the advance on October 1st (1916) on Regina Trench and when his Battalion retired to its former position, he was missing. No further details are available relative to the actual circumstances of his death.* Twenty-six year old James Bennett is buried in Regina Trench Cemetery, Grandcourt, Somme, France, Grave II.D.10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BENTLEY, David Benjamin** (Doctor) – Photograph page 374

David Bentley was born in Warwick Township, Ontario, on December 16, 1864, the son of John Bentley (of Yorkshire, England) and Julia Ann (nee Rogers) Bentley. His siblings included George Albert (born 1867); Annie Louise (born 1869); William Joseph (born 1870, he would become a dentist, serving with the Canadian Army Dental Corps); and John Rogers (born 1873). David attended public school in Woodstock, then Woodstock College and Trinity Medical College 1887. David would marry Ellen Evelyn (nee Allen) in November 1890, in Toronto. David graduated in medicine from the University of Toronto in 1891. David and Ellen would have three children together: Othel (born 1891); Albert William (born 1893); and David Walter (born 1900). David Bentley would live in Oil Springs and Forest, before settling in Sarnia in 1894. A physician who practiced medicine in Sarnia, he was a member of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church. David would have a second marriage, to Alice Shaw (nee Shepherd) in October 1906, in St. Mary’s, Ontario. David, Alice and family resided at 195 Wellington Street, Sarnia. The couple would have one child together, Margaret Alice (born 1907).

David enlisted at the age of forty-nine in the First Contingent on September 23, 1914 at Valcartier Camp, Quebec. He became a member of the Canadian Army Medical Corps, 2nd Field Ambulance, with the rank of Major. He went overseas in October 1914, first spending several months stationed at Salisbury Plains, England. In late November 1914, he wrote a letter home to A.F. McVicar, a friend of his in Sarnia. Following is a portion of that letter:

*November 28, 1914*

*Dear Friend Alf,*

*....I am sitting on my sleeping bag in my tent, one of those hospital tents, and by the way they are pretty comfortable, not withstanding the fact that the weather conditions are bad, rain nearly every day and mud, very bad around the camp. The Downs or Plains, are ideal for training purposes...land is very rolling, hills and valleys making it ideal for all sorts of training for every branch of the service, artillery, cavalry, infantry, etc.. Weather conditions have interfered very materially with the training, but all are keen for business and very little grumbling is ever heard.*

*At present we are acting as a clearing hospital for two brigades. We only keep patients for four days and all who are not fit are sent to a general hospital. We have ten ambulance wagons and about fifteen G.S. wagons, about 260 men and 11 officers, so you can judge about the amount of road space we take up when on the march. I am in command of B Section...*

*This is a great life, there being just enough variation to it to prevent it becoming monotonous. If we get across the channel I am sure we will find less comforts than at present. Most of the medical work so far is being attended to in this country as the wounded can be brought over within 24 hours or 48 hours and I believe some are in hospitals*

HERE RESTS MY ONLY SON WHO DIED FOR HIS COUNTRY  
ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR.

*within a few hours of their being brought back from the firing line.*

*Yours very truly, Major D.B. Bentley*

In early January 1915 while still in England, David would write a letter to his wife Alice Bentley in Sarnia about his holiday time there. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

*January 10th, 1915*

*I found one of your letters waiting for me on my return from holiday.... Capt. Fraser and I went to London and spent New Year's Eve at the Savoy. I sent you their social calendar, which shows a picture of how the last night of the year is spent by society in London. Dinner began about 11 p.m. after which or during which the fun began, all sorts of bon bons (as noisy as firecrackers) being pulled, and grotesque headgear, etc., resulting. All were soon properly decorated, and all were soon friends. A delightful orchestra in every dining room enlivened the place. Then all adjourned to the beautiful ballroom, where the most beautiful women with most exquisite gowns were in crowds. I had only two dances, but such a crowd. On the following day we proceeded to Birmingham, where we stayed with friends of Capt. Fraser... Here we had a most enjoyable, old-fashioned, home-like visit, in a splendid old English home, with such comfortable rooms, cheery fireplaces, hot water heating and too much to eat....*

*On Sunday night we went to Edinburgh, which we found in such a fog that our pleasure there was not so great. However, we saw through the castle and did a little running around, staying at a splendid hotel.... On our return, we found to our surprise that our camp had been deserted, and new quarters taken in a grand old manor.... Two of our sections (200 men), are now conducting a hospital, with good large rooms, well heated, grates and hot water radiators, clean and comfortable....*

David and his unit would be moved to France in early February 1915. The following is a letter that he wrote to his wife Alice, upon his arrival in France:

*Sunday, February 14, 1915*

*S.S. City of Dunkirk*

*Here we are on the coast of France at St. Navaire, after being on board since Tuesday night. We embarked at Avenmouth, near Bristol and had a rather rough voyage. Fortunately I was one of the few who was not seasick and never missed a meal. It would appear that we are due to remain on board until midnight as the tide is out and several other troop ships are in port ahead of us waiting. This is a cattle boat and accommodation rather limited for officers, but we managed to get on ok. Our men of course had their blankets and had to do as best they could on the floors between decks. Our horses came through in very good condition, but the poor animals have had no chance to lie down. Where we will go of course is not known, but the whole contingent will be here and will likely have some weeks or longer on the lines of communication before seeing the trenches. At present we are anchored in a bay within sight of a town.*

*Our last month has been a very comfortable one as far as housing is concerned and about which I have written rather fully. We are in hopes that letters written on the boat will reach you earlier than if we waited until ashore. We are rather a long way from where Will is but may go in that direction. Our men are in good condition and will be ready for any emergency. Being pretty well up in the seniority list, I had a good place to sleep on the trip. It was too rough to get about on the ship very much, but I managed to take one look around and found many who were quite done up with sickness. However, all are around this morning and look quite recovered. Many kept quiet and did not appear for meals, but say they were not ill. Our whole unit are on the boat together with some artillery and the headquarters staff of the Highland Brigade.*

*As there is nothing very important about which to write on a short voyage like this, I will close with love to all at home who will be glad to know that we have not been exposed to submarines and have reached terra firma again.*

*D.B. Bentley*

In early February 1915, David's brother William Joseph Bentley, who was also with the No. 2 Canadian Stationary Hospital, wrote a letter to his friend H. Gorman in Sarnia. The following is a portion of that letter:

*February 8, 1915 Le Touquet, Boulogne Base, France*

*Dear Sir,*

*I wish to tender my personal thanks for the copies of the Observer. It is certainly a source of much satisfaction, I can assure you, to us members of this corps from the home town to receive them.... I am glad to say that the Sarnia quota*

*are all in the very best of health and in excellent spirits. Our hospital is a credit to the Dominion... While it is not as large and commodious as some of the others, nevertheless it enjoys the reputation of being one of the most thoroughly equipped in France. We provide accommodation at the present time for three hundred patients... Since opening we have taken care of a large number of wounded. Many of the cases have proven most interesting from a professional standpoint and the success of numerous operations performed have reflected much credit upon the status of our Medical Officers. We were recently honored by a visit from H.R.H. Prince of Wales... He expressed himself as being most favorably impressed with what he saw. Even the minutest detail was not slighted during his tour of inspection, every ward being visited.*

*I might also mention the fact that following the futile attacks of the enemy upon the Allies' lines on the anniversary of the Kaiser's birthday, we have had the first prisoners of war interned in our hospital. Subsequently they were transferred via hospital ship to England from Boulogne base, as soon as favorably convalescent to warrant them taking passage across the channel.*

*Life while on active service is one strenuous demand in the discharge of duties. We are kept constantly on the "go" to use a common expression. Ambulance trains are continually arriving from "rail head," at irregular and intermittent periods, in fact any hour of the day or night, we never can tell, as we get but brief notice in advance of their coming, possibly a half an hour at the extreme, that is all. Therefore it may be seen that we are required to hold ourselves in readiness at all times, in order to be able to take care of all emergencies...*

*Sincerely yours, W. J. Bentley*

The following is a letter sent in late March 1915, by Captain John MacDonald of the Army Medical Corps in France to his parents Mr. and Mrs. A.E. MacDonald who were living on South Brock Street, Sarnia. The letter makes reference to Major David Bentley and describes the process of handling the wounded at No. 2 Stationary Hospital, First Canadian Expeditionary Force, Le Touquet, France.

*March 28th, 1915*

*Dear Father and Mother,*

*I received your letter of February 24 a day or so ago and was more than delighted to get it and know that all are well. We receive our mail quite regularly, a noncommissioned officer being to go to Bontogne daily for that purpose. Our Canadian mail comes in about two weeks, although I have known some mail to come in thirteen days. We have now been in France almost five months. About the first of December, we came here and converted a large hotel into one of the finest Field hospitals in France, and have been busy constantly ever since. In your letter you ask how we handle the wounded etc. Well, I will endeavour to give you a brief outline of the way we do it.*

*When a train load of wounded arrive, the ambulance drivers are immediately warned for duty, also the squad for duty at the train and when ready leave for the station, some distance away. Meanwhile the hospital is got in readiness for the reception of the wounded. Hot cocoa and oxo are prepared in the kitchen and by the time the first ambulance arrives the sisters have the wards prepared. The patients are transferred from the ambulance to the reception room where the registrar gets all particulars concerning the patient, such as name, rank, age, regiment, length of service, religion etc. They are then removed to the wards; by the way, we have ten wards, each bearing the name of a Canadian province. Ontario being the officer's ward.*

*On arriving in the ward, the orderly removes all the patients clothing which is often torn and covered with mud and blood, and gives him a bath, then the patient receives medical attention. Often the wounded present a pitiful appearance, men with frightful wounds, covered with mud, but full of pluck and very seldom, even a murmur comes from them although they are suffering terrible pain in many cases, We have had very few deaths among the patients, thanks to the constant attention and good nursing care of the sisters, and the skillful surgery and treatment by the physicians. Often bullets and splinters are located by means of the x-ray. When I see a man all smashed up I wonder that he is alive at all, so bad are some of his wounds.*

*Capt. Bentley is kept busy looking after "Tommy's" teeth, and has a beautiful dental office fitted up with field dental instruments. Staff Sergeant C. Luscombe, Sergt. Jack Smuck and Corp. S. Battley are all well and kept busy. I may add that the rumor of Jack Ward's death was unfounded and Jack is very much alive. Corporal Battley is now in the wards and is acquiring a great deal of valuable information in surgery.*

*I heard indirectly from **Maj. D.B. Bentley** a short time ago and the major was quite well. I was in Bologne a short time ago and saw a London man, Sergt. Murray, who is attached to the post office department. Last night a*



*large bundle of Observers arrived for me per kindness of Mrd. McGibbon who sends a bundle about every two weeks. I can assure you they looked good to me; after reading them I pass them on to the rest of the boys.*

*Hoping to hear from you soon, believe me. Yours lovingly,*

*J.A. MACDONALD*

NOTE: The other soldiers of No. 2 Stationary Hospital referred to in the above letter were:

Captain Bentley – (later Lieutenant Colonel) is William Joseph Bentley, who was David's brother, also born in Lambton County. He was a dental surgeon with the Canadian Army Dental Corps.

Sergeant Major John Crawford Luscombe – born in Sarnia (son of James Luscombe), he survived the war.

Lance Sergeant John (Jack) Wesley Smuck – born in Point Edward (son of Emily Smuck), he survived the war, however his brother David Radcliffe Smuck did not.

Corporal Sinclair Battley – service #34267, he survived the war

Lance Corporal Jack Ward – born in Courtright (son of Joseph E. Ward of Sarnia), he survived the war.

In April 1915, Private John Carolan, of Sarnia, would write a letter home describing how he owed his life to Dr. Bentley. Pte. Carolan was hit on April 23 at Ypres. He was with his unit of the 1st Battalion rushing to fill a breach in British defence lines, when he declared he felt a burning pain in his head. The *Observer* covered the story in October of 1915. The following is a portion of that story:

*Shot through the head during the hottest part of the engagement of Canadian troops at Ypres, Pte. John Carolan of Sarnia, declares he owes his life to Dr. Bentley. When Carolan was carried to the rear, among hundreds of others who had fallen under the grueling fire from the enemy's guns, practically unconscious from the loss of blood and exposure on the battlefield, about the first face he recognized was that of Dr. Bentley. "Why that's one of my boys" Carolan says he remembers coming from the doctor's lips through the haze. Dr. Bentley at once gave Carolan the immediate attention that was needed if his life was to be saved. The result of that attention is that Carolan is now well on to the road to recovery. The wounds in his skull, where the bullet entered and plowed its way out, are practically healed, and give him little trouble he says, although at times there is a burning and almost unbearable pain in his head. His left arm is partly paralyzed, but this too, doctors have declared, will be better in time.*

John Carolan, who was born in Ireland and lived for many years in Africa and the East. After being wounded, John was honourably discharged and returned to Canada.

In late April 1915, while still in France, Major David Bentley would write another letter home to his wife Alice. The following is a portion of that letter:

*April 30th, 1915*

*My Dear Alice,*

*You have no doubt read of this terrific battle in which our good Canadian troops played such an important part. It is impossible for me to describe just what our brave men did. I had been waiting for several days for leave... when this sudden battle began. I am glad indeed that I had not got away for our experience was one which we may never again witness. I was at the main dressing station and during the four days there passed through our hands an average of 600 wounded daily. I worked through it all and was able to give attention to a great number. I had two tables going all the time and had one patient being prepared while attending to another. This went on for hours and hours without let up. Two or three other officers were doing similar work, so you can imagine how fast they were cared for. Some of our officers and all of our bearers were at advanced dressing stations and in the trenches caring for and removing the wounded back. We had three of our men killed, 15 men wounded but no officers killed or wounded. Considering the severe character of the fighting it is really miraculous that our casualties were not greater. Our men worked unceasingly and bravely through it all and gave us every reason to be proud of them. James Mair and Sidney Smith, both from Sarnia, are among the wounded, and have been sent down to the base – neither are so far as I can learn, serious. As you will have read the Germans poured poisonous gases into the trenches, which rendered fighting very difficult, but it did not prevent our men from saving the situation and earning them the praise and gratitude of the British Empire.*

*At present we are some miles back in the country, giving our men a much needed rest for a few days. We are living in a field and bivouacking. I have a large tarpaulin for a tent, which is simply a pole with a water proof covering over it.... Since coming here we have been sleeping, cleaning up and taking our ease and I can assure you all very much needed the change after five days and nights of constant strain. When not working we could not rest for we were*

*shelled out of every place we were in and some of the buildings which we occupied as dressing stations are now in ruins. It is feared that our last mail was burned, as our post office was set on fire by an incendiary shell and no trace so far has been found of it. Hoping to soon write you from England.*

*Yours lovingly, D.B. Bentley*

During his three months in France, David Bentley would serve on the front lines between Armentieres and Ypres, and then through the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium in which he was slightly gassed. By the early part of May 1915, David Bentley returned to England, where he was appointed to the command of the Canadian Convalescent Hospital, Monk's Horton Hospital, in Kent. He wrote a letter to his wife Alice to inform her of the news. The following is a portion of that letter:

*London, May 4, 1915*

*My Dear Alice,*

*Just a few lines today to let you know that I am back in England and have orders to proceed to Shorncliffe tomorrow afternoon to take command of and to complete the organization of the Canadian Convalescent Camp. I received a very warm reception this morning when I presented myself to the General, due there is no doubt, to the fact that he has received none but good reports of the efficient work of the Canadian Field Ambulances in the recent engagements in Belgium. I have gone over all the correspondence having a bearing on the work of organization and find that although a lot has been done there still remains much to be done to complete the organization. I hope to be able to call to my assistance several of my old officers and N.C.O.'s, particularly those who have already done good service under trying conditions and have earned a change. I have another reason to hope for this as it will make way for some of the officers of the later contingents to get nearer to the firing line where they will be better able to redeem the good name of their native land as some are reported to have said they intend doing.*

*This afternoon I took a trip out a few miles to see another convalescent home for Canadian officers, which has just been opened out at Bromley Park Hotel, Kent.... The city is still kept pretty dark at night, but the general gaiety indoors keeps up pretty well. Most of the men in khaki that one sees however have a decided limp or are carrying an arm in a sling. I somehow felt as if I should find a quiet corner and keep in the shade as I have no sign of having gone through the horrors of war. I can tell a remarkably thrilling story however, if necessary, but so far I have not been challenged to say why I am here.*

*With love*

*to yourself and the children.*

*Yours lovingly, D.B. Bentley*

In June 1915, David Bentley wrote a letter home to his friend Mr. Gorman in Sarnia, describing the Canadian Convalescent Hospital, in Kent. Its purpose was to accept all convalescent Canadians from the many different hospitals in France and England, and to care for them. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Monks Horton, Kent, England, near Hythe, June 20th, 1915*

*My Dear Mr. Gorman,*

*...we are now serving our mother land and camping on the grounds where the Royal Canadian regiment we camped 57 years ago. The old Cinque Ports are still interesting places and the old forts and canals still remain, though of no military value today.... The old Roman road from Hythe to Canterbury runs past this estate and I often think how nice it would be if we could exchange some of these old roads for the paved street in Sarnia which has to be taken up every winter and laid again in the spring...*

*The hospital is one which will most probably develop to immense proportions as it is intended as a clearing house for all Canadian sick and wounded who are ready to leave the ordinary hospitals in all parts of the British Isles, but are not as yet fit for duty. Here they will receive further treatment, will be fed, comfortably housed or tented, given such work or recreation as each individual case demands until such time as it is decided that they are again fit for duty or should be otherwise disposed of. We are being provided with indoor and outdoor games and the estate is one which lends itself admirably to all sorts of outdoor enjoyment. There are beautiful hedges, wooded areas, fine gardens and everything which goes to make one enjoy living.... We hope to have a number of motor vehicles in time with which to entertain our boys who so well deserve all the comfort which can be given them. Even now we seldom go on a business trip without taking one or more of them along for a motor ride...*

*Already we have had splendid results from this country life to poor chaps who came to us in very nervous conditions*

REST IN PEACE IN THE EARTH OF YOUR FOREFATHERS.  
WE WILL SEE YOU AGAIN IN THE HEAVENLY HOME.

*due to the effect of wounds and the shock of continued exposure to shell fire, and we hope to do great benefit to many more who might otherwise do badly....*

*Yours very truly, D.B. Bentley*

In August 1915, David Bentley's wife Alice and their children Othel, Albert and David Junior arrived in England. In September 1915, David wrote a letter to his friends Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Chittick in Sarnia. The following is that letter:

*Malvern House, East Park Terrace, Southampton, August 18, 1915.*

*Dear Mr. and Mrs. Chittick,*

*I wish to thank you for your thoughtful remembrances. Mrs. B. and the youngsters had a very nice voyage and got by without meeting any "tin fishes". I met them at Liverpool and we came direct to this place. This town is quite a pretty place in which to live and our windows look out on one of its many pretty parks. It is only a short run by boat from here to the Isle of Wight. There are also some large Forest Parks not far from here, numerous military camps, remount depots with horses and mules by the thousand. There is a good "tram car" service and train service to all the places of interest near by.*

*We get a lot of rainfall here, and although the heat is not so great as at home the humidity of the atmosphere makes one feel rather lazy. David is not particularly pleased by the remarks which he hears passed about his bloomers. All the boys here, or nearly all, wear tight fitting long trousers. So he is quite an attraction. As the only Canadians in this town are my own small staff, we are quite conspicuous. English people however, have an unbounded respect for Canadians, as they all know the good work done by the mistrusted and unjustly criticized "First Canadian Contingent"*

*With love, yours very truly, D.B. Bentley*

In August 1915, Major David Bentley was appointed to command the Canadian Medical Stores, Base Depot, in Southampton, England. In mid-August 1915, David wrote a letter home to his friends A.B. Johnston and Alex J. Kelly in Sarnia. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

*August 18, 1915*

*My Dear Friends,*

*Just a few lines to let you both know where I am and what I have been doing. The fortunes of war have now placed me as O.C. of the Canadian Medical Stores, Base Depot, Southampton, with a small unit made up of a quartermaster, one staff sergeant, two corporals and five men. Our work here is to assemble all technical, medical and ordnance equipment for Canadian hospitals going overseas....*

*My office is in the docks and here we see troops passing through daily, the train being run into the docks and the troops at once placed on board the numerous transports in waiting. We don't ask questions or give information as to how many there are or as to their destination, but we know and see the best troops obtainable in the world passing on their way to do battle with our enemies in all parts of the war zone. Were it not for the presence of so many khaki uniforms one would scarcely know there was a war on. In this port too, we see numerous hospital trains daily coming to meet the hospital ships, take on their load of wounded and depart for the numerous hospitals in all parts of the British Isles.... The organization of the medical service from the firing line back to the hospitals in England is well high perfect, and I have had an opportunity of observing it from both extremes....*

*I hope some day to have an opportunity of giving you an account of some of our experiences during the last few days of April in Ypres, Brielen, Vlanenturghe and Poperinghe. It was one of the grandest and most terrific exhibitions of fireworks which I ever witnessed for with every explosion there was something happening either overhead, or around us. To attempt to write about it is rather a huge task. Give my regards to all the old boys.*

*Yours very truly, D.B. Bentley*

Major David Bentley had never been well since being in France, but was always able to look after his duties. About the middle of December 1916, he consulted a specialist who sent him to the Royal Victoria Military Hospital at Netley, where he remained for some weeks but did not improve much. After spending a few days with his family he was sent to a Canadian Hospital at Ramsgate in mid-February 1917. For a few weeks his condition seemed to have improved. However, by the first of April he developed pneumonia which he was not able to throw off. During the last weeks he longed for his home in Sarnia. On April 5, 1917, he died at Granville Hospital, Ramsgate, Kent,

England. At David's bedside when he passed were his wife Alice, their daughter Margaret (age 10), his son David Jr. (age 17) and his brother Capt. William J. Bentley. The cause of death was officially listed as, *Nephritis Chr. And Lobar Pneumonia*. David Benjamin Bentley was awarded the following medals: The British War Medal, the Silver Memorial Cross and the 1914-1915 Star. Fifty-two year old Doctor David Benjamin Bentley is buried at Ramsgate and St. Lawrence Cemetery, Kent, United Kingdom. Grave LA.657. He was laid there with full military honours – a large firing party of perhaps 300 from the Queen's Regiment fired a salute. The "Last Post" was sounded by the Queen's Buglers.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **BENWARE, Neal (#6886)**

Neal Benware was born in Sombra, Ontario, on June 10, 1888, the son of Gabriel Benware and Margaret Benware, of Courtright, Ontario. Neal was living in Point Edward at his enlistment. He enlisted September 22, 1914 in Valcartier Camp, Quebec. A bachelor at the time, he listed his occupation as a sailor. He also recorded that he had prior experience with the 27th St. Clair Borderers. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion with the rank of Private.

In March 1916, Neal Benware wrote the following letter from France to Sarnia:

*Dear Mr. Grace (Neals former employer)*

*I received your welcome letter last night and was very glad to hear that everything, and all the boys are getting on good. I have seen a few boys here that I used to sail with. I am in the trench mortars and we can soon knock a trench down. I got your cigarettes last week. They were badly damaged, but I had a few good old smokes. I think we boys are nearly due to go back (to the front). If the young men in Canada would only join up we would have been out by this time, but if they don't we will have to finish the job, which will be this summer.... I have something good to tell you. I was called over to our company today and was congratulated by four of our old men. Wondered what was coming, when I was told I am recommended for a D.C. medal. So that isn't so bad for the old 27th St. Clair Bordereres. It is getting late so I must close. Be sure and remind me to all the boys.*

*Pte. Neal Benware 58th Trench Mortar Battery, 1st Canadian Division,*

*France*

Two months after writing the above letter, on May 23, 1916, Neal Benware would lose his life while fighting in Belgium. He had been hit by a couple pieces of shrapnel, and died a few hours afterward. Neal Benware would later be officially listed as, *Died of wounds at No. 10 Casualty Clearing Station*. He was awarded the following: the 1914/15 Star; the British War Medal (1914-18); and the Victory Medal (1914-18). Twenty-seven year old Neal Benware is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium, Grave VII.A.17. On his headstone are inscribed the words, *In Loving Memory he gave his life for his country may his soul rest in peace*. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as N. Benward. Neal Benware's name is also inscribed on plaque on the Memorial in the Village of Point Edward.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **BISSETT, Cameron Robert (#3131545) – Photograph page 374**

Cameron Bissett was born in Brooke Township, Ontario on October 30, 1896, the son of Cameron Bissett (a farmer) and Margaret Bissett, of 136 Dundas Street, Sarnia. His siblings included sisters Elizabeth and Margaret Jane (Maggie). He was a member of St. Andrew's congregation, Inwood. Cameron was conscripted to service January 9, 1918, in London, Ontario, with the Western Ontario Regiment. A bachelor at the time, he listed his address as 136 Dundas Street, Sarnia, his occupation as a farmer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, later transferred to the 47th Battalion, as a Private.

Cameron's two sisters would both marry: Elizabeth would become Mrs. Ed. Ironsides living in North Brooke Township; and Margaret Jane, would become Mrs. Margaret Reid (living at 136 Dundas street). Margaret Reid became a war widow when her husband, George Alexander Reid (included in this project) was killed in an accident during training in London, Ontario in October 1915.

On September 3, 1918, less than eight months after being conscripted to service, Cameron Bissett would his life while fighting during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign at Amiens, France. Cameron Bissett would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. This soldier was instantly killed by an enemy shell bursting close to him as he*

was 'digging in' with the rest of his company just after an advance. In mid-September 1918, Mrs. Margaret Bissett in Sarnia was sent a telegram informing her that her son Cameron, had been killed in action on September 3rd. Twenty-one year old Cameron Bissett has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BOLTON, Walter Mason (#331605)**

Walter Bolton was born in Middlesex County, Ontario, on June 18, 1895, the son of Charles J. Bolton and Sarah (nee Scott) Bolton, of 122 South Forsyth Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Frederick George (born 1891) and one sister. Walter would become a member of the Army, Canadian Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade, with the rank of Gunner. On May 11, 1917, Walter Bolton would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting in France. Walter Bolton would officially be listed as, *Died of wounds at No. 4 Canadian Field Ambulance*. Twenty-one year old Walter Bolton is buried in La Targette British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave II.A.14.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BREARLEY, Norman Osbourne (#602786)**

Norman Brearley was born in London, Ontario, on June 13 of either 1897 or 1899. (Note: His Ontario birth records list his birth year as 1899. On his Attestation papers, he recorded his birth year as 1897). Norman was the son of Edward Brearley and Carlana (nee Broad, of England) Brearley, of Brantford, Ontario. His siblings included: Earl Watson (born 1891) and Vernon Adolphus (born 1894). Norman enlisted July 24, 1915, in Woodstock, Ontario with the 34th Battalion. He was a bachelor at the time, listing his occupation as a student. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 13th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On April 20, 1917, Norman Brearley would lose his life while fighting shortly after the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Norman Brearley would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported Missing, now reported Killed in Action. On the night of April 20th 1917, when his company had been relieved from Farbus Wood and were moving back to Nine Elms, this soldier fell out at the top of Farbus Hill to rest. He was No. 1 of his Lewis gun section and carried the gun. He was afterwards found dead, having been hit by a shell which landed in the shell hole in which he was resting*. Nineteen-year old Norman Brearley has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as N. Brearly.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**BURY, Harry Garfield (#8068)**

Harry Bury was born in Sombra, Ontario, on October 3, 1890, the son of George H. Bury (a farmer) and Martha (nee Wells) Bury, of Sombra (living on River Road, two miles north of Sombra) and later 357 Devine Street, Sarnia. He had one brother, Russell V., who was four years younger than Harry, and was living in Detroit at the time of Harry's death. Prior to enlisting, Harry was a sailor on the Great Lakes. Harry enlisted September 23, 1914 in Valcartier Camp, Quebec. Single at the time of his enlistment, he listed his occupation as a sailor. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 2nd Battalion, as a Private. On April 24, 1915, Harry Bury would lose his life during fighting at the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium on the Ypres Salient. Harry Bury was the second Sarnian to lose his life in the Great War. He would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. He was killed on the morning of April 24th, 1915 during the occupation of a recaptured enemy trench*. Twenty-four year old Harry Bury has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial in Belgium, Panel 10-18-26-28. Harry Bury was the first Lambton born casualty of the Great War.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**CARSON, Joseph (#3131559)**

Joseph Carson was born in Fintona City, Tyrone, Ireland, on July 22, 1892, the son of Samuel Carson and Margaret Carson, of Garvallah, Tyrone, Ireland. His siblings included: Edward (born 1885); Margaret (born 1889); Thomas (born 1891); Samuel (born 1895); and Isaac (born 1899). Joseph came to Sarnia, and lived with a relative, Mrs. William Shedden, of 322 Campbell Street, Sarnia. He was employed by Imperial Oil Company for five years. Joseph was conscripted for service January 9, 1918, in London Ontario. Single at the time, he listed his occupation as a farmer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 47th Battalion, with the rank of Private.

On September 29, 1918, Joseph Carson would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In late October 1918, his relative Mrs. William Shedden in Sarnia would receive the news that Pte. Joe Carson had made the supreme sacrifice for his country on the battlefield. Joseph Carson would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. During operations outside of the village of Sailly, he was hit in the stomach by enemy machine gun bullets and instantly killed.* Twenty-six year old Joseph Carson is buried in Raillencourt Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France. Grave I.A.19. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as R.J. Carson.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**CAUSLEY, Edward Frank (#844180) – Photograph page 375**

Edward Causley was born in Sarnia, on November 24, 1897, the eldest child of Levi Francis Causley and Margaret (nee Ward, of Selby, England) Causley, of RR#3 Sarnia Township, later 124 Bright Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Mary Teresa (born 1899); Leo (born 1901); Andrew (born 1904); Arthur Aloysius (born 1906); and Margaret Eileen (born 1909). He also had a half sibling, Margaret Mary. Edward enlisted January 26, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he listed his occupation as a labourer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, as a Private. On August 30, 1918, Edward Causley would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In September 1918, Edward's father Levi Causley of RR #3, Sarnia, would receive word from Ottawa that his son, Pte. Edward F. Causley, previously reported missing, was now listed as killed in action, August 30th. Edward Causley would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now killed in action. He was hit in the head by shrapnel and died a few minutes later. Vicinity of Upton Wood, France.*

In October 1918, Edward's mother, Mrs. Margaret Causley would receive a letter from her brother, Jim, informing her of her son's death. The following is a portion of that letter:

*France, Sept. 22, 1918*

*My Dear Sister,*

*I really don't know how to start this letter. May God give you strength to bear this terrible news of our brave hero, Eddie, who was killed, charging Upton Woods in France. I was inquiring for Eddie, thinking I would see his smiling face, but when they told me the news and how brave he was, I nearly fainted. I could not believe it until I saw his grave. He was to communion a few days before, when I last saw him. How pleased I was to see him. I thought the world of him, our dear, darling boy that is gone....*

*He had no pain; he did not know what hit him. It was a machine gun bullet. He fought all day and went about thirteen miles on, then had the misfortune to get killed, just as they had driven the Germans out. There are three hundred in the cemetery. I will go over to his grave every day and say the beads. I have the Rosary beads he gave me in England. I am heart-broken and sorry over your terrible loss. Well, my dear sister, this is terrible and you don't know how I feel. I really loved the ground he walked on. I will write to you again soon and tell you more. With love to you and your dear family, I remain*

*Your loving brother, Jim*

Twenty year old Edward Causley is buried in Upton Wood Cemetery, France, Grave B.30.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**CHAPMAN, William Herbert (#123017)**

William Chapman was born in Uxbridge, Ontario, on September 29, 1876, the son of Charles Dillon Chapman (a farmer) and Mary Ann (nee Harman) Chapman, of Uxbridge, Ontario. His siblings included: Charlotte Frances (born 1872); Frederick (born 1874, died within a year); Florence Alexena (born 1880); and Della Minnie Ellen (born 1883). At the age of 15, William and his family were living in York West (1891). At the age of 24, William and his family were living in Huron, Michigan (1900). William would marry Bessie Violet (nee Boyd, of Newfoundland) Chapman on February 7, 1906, in Etobicoke, York. The couple would have three children together, all girls. In 1910, William and Bessie, along with their three daughters, were living in Blair, Pennsylvania. One year later, they moved to Lambton, eventually living at 206 Maria Street, Sarnia. William and Bessie would have seven children together: Della May (born 1906); Florence (born 1907); Charolotte Evelyn (born 1909); Dorothy May (born 1911); Ruth Marguerite (born 1913); Charles (born 1914); and Douglas (born 1915).

William enlisted first on August 27, 1915 in Sarnia. At the time, he listed his occupation as a gardener, and recorded that he had previous military experience with the 70th and 39th Battalions, being overseas for 17 months in France. William's second Attestation, his Officer's Declaration, was on February 13, 1917 in Ottawa, with the 257th Battalion. At that time, he listed his occupation as a building contractor. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Railway Troops, 7th Battalion, eventually attaining the rank of Corporal.

In August 1917, Thomas Peacock, a friend of William Chapman who was living at 294 Wellington Street, Sarnia, received a letter from William in France, who was a sergeant at that time. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

*Somewhere at the Front,*

*Thurs., July 5, 1917*

*Dear Friend and Bro.*

*Just a few lines to let you know that I am still well at present, but working hard. We have had some very strenuous times at this part of the front as you have no doubt seen by the papers of the past month. It took lots of hard work and preparation to make the move successfully, but it was accomplished day and night under constant observation of the enemy, and he tried to put every obstacle in the way by sending over all kinds of shrapnel and high explosives. But still we outwitted him and when the time came our artillery simply smothered him with one of the greatest bombardments the world has ever known. Part of his works was blown up by one of the largest blasts ever set off. You could bury a large farm in the crater or hole of the same. Hundreds of Hun were buried in it and will never come out till judgement day. I saw the craters of no less than three of those mines. I had the opportunity of being on the battlefield directly after the big advance and saw some terrible sights. Fritz's trenches for a mile in depth were literally wiped out..... Dead Germans lying all over, some partly buried by shells, some caught in the ruins of their trenches as they had been trying to climb out to come over to us to give up, others lying dead in their concrete dugouts where they had crawled to die, or by being bombed by our advancing Tommies...*

*We are all looking forward to the time we push the cruel Hun to final defeat which we hope will come soon. But it looks like as though those still at home will have to send a few more over to make good our losses. Victories are never won without paying the price, which in this case is human lives and must draw heavily upon the young manhood of the country as it is indeed a young man's war, for it is no place for an old man.*

*I was lucky enough to see the explosion of the mines mentioned, and believe me, it was a sight the like of which few will ever have the pleasure of seeing again. It literally filled the air with flame and the tremble of the ground was felt for miles around. It was a grand spectacle if one could forget that part of the setting was human lives. Talk about rivers being red with blood, here it was shell holes filled with water that was red with blood. There is nothing to compare to the work of our guns. If you see their results you would think as one German sergeant, a prisoner, said to me, that a fly could not go through the fire, and come out alive, let alone a human being. The prisoners I saw looked pretty tough, being from young boys to old men, and looked pretty shaky from the dreadful mauling they went through. Have had quite a number of miraculous escapes myself from high explosive shells and shrapnel. One sharp piece of shrapnel split the end of my thumb and cut down my puttee, ripping it or rather cutting it all down the outside of my left leg about a week ago, and three pieces put three dents in my steel helmet or "Easter bonnet" as I got it issued to me Easter Sunday, but did no further harm. The steel helmets are a God send as they ward off many a serious blow on the head which might cause a fatal wound. I had a dozen or more high explosive shells burst within fifteen and twenty feet of me and still escaped unhurt.*

*While I was in charge of a detachment of men on advance patrol I was on the same detachment duty for 10 weeks, and never lost a man of my patrol, but all have had some wonderful narrow escapes. It was a night patrol and sometimes had to prowl around with gas helmets on. You can imagine how interesting it was to us with gas masks on a dark night – worse than being out on the railroad on a dark night. I came off patrol two weeks ago, and believe me it is a big relief to get at something else, although we still see plenty of shells. They go whizzing over our camp at night and the nervous lads go running around chattering like magpies. I think you might just as well stay in your bed as try to run around dodging them in the dark. You are just as liable to run into one as not. I don't like them, but I feel just as safe in bed as out although a tent don't offer much protection from splinters of shell.*

*Had His Gracious Majesty King George around our part of the front yesterday along with the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces here, Sir Douglas Haig. We are glad to see the advance guard of the American forces have arrived in France to help us along, and believe me, every little bit is welcome. Has the conscription bill finally*

GOD AND CANADA. THAT WAS MY MOTTO.  
FAR FROM MY LOVED ONES I HAVE LAID DOWN MY LIFE.

*passed at home yet? It seems to me to be the only fair way to get men as so many stand back and wait under the voluntary system, and let the other fellow do all the fighting, while they stay at home and enjoy all the comforts, while the other has to suffer the hardships incidental to war. They have had some terrible air raids in England. It seems horrible to think they slaughter the innocent women and children, but if they think that will stop our boys they are mistaken, as it makes them all the more determined to crush the cruel Hun. Things begin to look better on the Russian side again now.*

*I guess I will have to close for this time, but wish to thank the kind friends who have sent me papers and magazines, as papers are a luxury here. When I read them they are passed on to someone else. I met Sergt. Bill Walker a Sarnia man of the old 70th Batt. about a month ago, but he is a Sergt-Major now.*

*I remain as ever your friend,*

*Sergt. W.H. Chapman, 123017, A Company, 7th C.R.T., B.E.F., France.*

*PS. How is your garden coming on? You said you had turned gardener. My wife says she has a lovely one this summer. Wish I was there to eat some of it.*

Thomas Peacock, William Chapman's friend in Sarnia, received a second letter from William in August 1917. It was dated ten days after the previous letter. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Somewhere at the Front,*

*Sunday, July 15, 1917*

*Dear Friend,*

*Just a few lines to let you know that I am still here and still on top, although my previous injury to my back bothers considerable at times, but I am still hanging on. I received a letter a few days ago from Col. R.I. Towers, colonel of the old 70th, and wish he was in command of us now. He is at home at present for a short time.*

*Had a heavy rain last night filling up ditches and shell holes and holes in cross-country transport tracks with water and believe me, the continual stream of ammunition column teams soon turn wet clay into mud. Six horses are hitched to each ammunition wagon and when it comes wet and muddy, the reason for so much horse power is easily ascertained, for they have to drag the wagons through some awful holes, and it is simply astonishing the number of horses and mules it requires to handle things over and above the hundreds of thousand motor transports. We see some fine horses here and it is a common sight to see nice horses and mules lying dead along the road, killed by shell fire, as the poor horses get it just the same as men.*

*I used to think the war would end this summer, but the summer is going fast and still the end is not in sight. Hope it don't go into the winter, as winter here is just harsh, you know. Canadian winters are much more comfortable....*

*I guess you will have conscription by the time this reaches you. I have been informed that myself and 5 or 6 other men have been mentioned by the commanding officer for coolness and bravery under shell fire. I had charge of an advance patrol continuously without relief for ten weeks and one night when the three N.C.O.'s in charge of an emergency repair crew brought their men in, took them and myself and repaired three large shell breaks in the line under continuous shrapnel and high explosive shell fire. Kept the men at work and finished the repairs and got the men back without a casualty. I did not like the job but ammunition had to be got up to the guns, and we could not let a battery be lost through lack of ammunition, so we have to do our duty.*

*I sent you a German steel shrapnel helmet. You can give the German water bottle that is inside to my wife. I thought you would like something from the front as a souvenir and hope it reaches you safely. I remain as ever your friend,  
Sgt. W.H. Chapman, 123017*

Two months after writing the above letter, on September 27, 1917, William Chapman would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting in Belgium. In October 1917, William's wife, Bessie Violet Chapman living on Maria Street in Sarnia, would receive the following letter from the chaplain of the Battalion:

*Mrs. W.H. Chapman, Sarnia, Ontario*

*France, Oct. 6, 1917*

*Dear Madam,*

*You have no doubt already learned of the death of your husband, W.H. Chapman, of this battalion, and of the cause. On behalf of the commanding officer and all ranks of the battalion, I beg to offer you our most sincere sympathy. Your husband died at the post of duty. He came here knowing the danger, and he bravely made the noble sacrifice, the greatest any man can, for a good cause. Assuredly he will receive a splendid reward hereafter. Let this be your consolation in your bereavement. He was buried in a military cemetery attached to the hospital where he died,*

**YOUR DEATH GAVE PEACE TO THE WORLD, VICTORY TO YOUR COUNTRY,  
AND GLORY TO YOUR FAMILY.**



*alongside so many others who have also laid down their lives at the call of duty. Assuring you once more of our sincerest sympathy.*

*Sincerely yours, J.R.O. Gorman, Chaplain*

William Chapman would be officially listed as, *Died of wounds (gunshot wound abdomen) at No. 61 Casualty Clearing Station.* William left behind his wife Bessie and seven children. Forty-year old William Chapman is buried in Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium, Grave V.F.7.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **CHESTER, Frederic Aloysius (#214292)**

Frederic Chester was born in Sarnia, on November 23, 1894, the son of John Chester and Isabella Chester, of 315 North Brock Street, Sarnia. Frederic enlisted April 14, 1916 in Windsor, Ontario with the 99th Battalion. At the time, he was single and living in Detroit Michigan. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 19th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 13, 1916, Frederic Chester would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Frederic Chester would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. While on sentry duty, in the front line trenches about 10 P.M. on September 13th 1916, he was instantly killed by shrapnel from an enemy shell, Courcelette.* Twenty-one year old Frederic Chester has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as F.J. Chester.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **CORRICK, Alfred James (#3131566)**

Alfred Corrick was born in Sarnia, on July 12, 1884, the son Robert Charles Corrick (born in England, a stonemason) and Mary (nee McNally, born in Middlesex, England) Corrick, of 404 George Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Charles Robert (born 1864); Louisa Emily (born 1867); Emma Louise (born 1869); Annie Josephine (born 1871); Frederick (born 1873); John Augustus (born 1876); Andrew (born 1878); Ellen Alice (born 1881); and Beatrice Mary (born 1886). Alfred was popular among a large circle of friends in Sarnia. He took an active part in sports, and was a baseball player of considerable ability and was generally known as "Home Run Haggerty." He would become a member of Sarnia Lodge, No. 126, I.O.O.F. and by trade was a mason, following in the footsteps of his father and brothers. At the age of twenty-seven, Alfred would lose his father, Robert Charles, who would die in December 1911.

Alfred was conscripted to service October 4, 1917 in London, Ontario. At the time he was single, and he recorded his occupation as a bricklayer. On January 8, 1918, prior to his leaving, members of the Bricklayers Union No. 23 held a send-off for Alfred in the Board of Trade room. The following is a portion of the address given by the Union chairmen and signed by the Union president, as they presented him with a gift of a wrist watch:

*We, your brother members of local No. 23 Ontario, meet here tonight with mingled feelings of pride and regret. Tomorrow we all know you leave the old home town and all your old associations, for a grand purpose, that of serving your king and country and doing your little bit, with lots of boys who have gone before. Bro. Corrick, we have all known you for a number of years now and we have always found you to be a good upright and honest union man; and when you leave tomorrow for London to don the khaki you will take with you the good wishes of the union for a safe journey to France and then a happy reunion when the boys come marching home.... May this little token of our regard, ever remind you of your friends across the sea.*

Alfred followed by expressing how much he appreciated what they were doing. There were a few short speeches from members expressing their regret at losing Brother Corrick. At the end of the social, all the boys joined together in wishing him the best of luck for a pleasant journey and a safe return.

Alfred Corrick would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 47th Battalion, as a Private. In October 1918, Alfred sent a letter home to his mother in Sarnia from France. In it, he expressed that he was doing his bit and he was well. He also stated that he had several narrow escapes; and that two of his comrades on a gun had been put out of action, one being killed and the other wounded. On November 1, 1918, Alfred was wounded while fighting during the final stages of Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Ten days later, World War I would end on November 11, 1918. After being wounded, Alfred had sent letters home to his friends in Sarnia, and he was reported to be progressing. So it was unexpected news when on January 13, 1919, one

year after his send-off in Sarnia, Alfred would lose his life in a Brighton, England military hospital, as a result of the wounds that he had received in November. He had symptoms of blood poisoning from the shrapnel wounds that demanded two operations, but to no avail. Alfred Corrick was the last man with his name on the Sarnia cenotaph to lose his life in the Great War. Alfred Corrick would later be officially listed as, *Died of wounds, (previously reported wounded,) dangerously ill. Gun shot wound: Butt. Sepsicemia. Kitchener Military Hospital, Brighton.* Thirty-four year old Alfred Corrick is buried in Seaford Cemetery, Sussex, United Kingdom, Grave A.549. On Alfred Corrick's headstone are inscribed the words, *France: Now Here - At Rest.*

NOTE: The War Graves Register records his death date as January 13, 1919, which is accurate; however his grave marker lists his death as January 13, 1918.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **COULTER, William James (#334850)**

William James Coulter was born in Woodstock, Oxford County, Ontario, on August 21, 1897, the only son of William John Coulter (of Perth, Ontario, who was County Constable) and Belinda Jane (nee Clark, of Oxford, Ontario) Coulter, of 345 Vidal Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Isabelle Louise (born 1892); Anne Gertrude (born 1894); and Mildred Jane (born 1907). William James would move to Petrolia, and later reside in Sarnia several years before enlisting. He was employed by the Canadian Express Company, and also at the Northern Navigation Company in Sarnia. William enlisted April 24, 1916 in Guelph, Ontario, with the 64th Battery, but later transferred to the 24th Battery. At the time of his enlistment, he was single and he recorded his occupation as an express driver. He would go overseas to France in March 1916, on the anniversary of his parents' silver wedding. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Field Artillery, 8th Brigade, with the rank of Gunner. He took part in many engagements, including Vimy Ridge. He was later advanced to Corporal, receiving his stripes on the field.

One of William's sisters would marry G.H. Williams (of Sarnia), who would also serve in the war, enlisting in October 1914, with the 18th Battalion. William Coulter's brother-in-law, G.H. Williams, would go overseas in April 1915 with the 18th Battalion, first training in England, then moving to France. G.H. Williams would rise up the ranks, to sergeant, then sergeant major and then to Lieutenant. At the Somme, G.H. Williams would be awarded the Military Medal for bravery on the field, and at Passchendaele he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He would serve 35 months in France, and would return to Canada. Lieutenant G.H. Williams was only a few hundred yards away from his brother-in-law, William Coulter, when he was fatally wounded.

On November 14, 1917, William Coulter would lose his life, as a result of wounds received while fighting in the days following the Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. When he met his death, he was acting as sergeant in place of his own sergeant, who had been killed. Before learning of his son's death, William's father, William John in Sarnia would receive a letter from his son. Son William James had also sent home his belt and many souvenirs, including: buttons and emblems representing regiments from Australia, South Africa, Manitoba, Calgary Battalions, Royal Engineers, Mounted Rifles, Infantry, Gordon Highlanders, 48th Highlanders, Connaught Rangers, American Battalion, C.V.O., Buglers, Northumberland Hussars, Devonshire Regiment, R.C.H.A.; and buttons from German prisoners; and other souvenirs. Also included in the collection were two paper knives which had been skillfully hammered out of shells. In late November 1917, one week after receiving his son's letter and souvenirs, Williams' father William John in Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*Wm. John Coulter, 345 South Vidal Street, Sarnia*

*Deeply regret to inform you that 334850, Corporal William James Coulter, artillery, officially reported died of wounds, 3rd Casualty clearing station, Nov. 14, 1917, gunshot wound in left thigh. Director of Records*

William James would later be officially listed as, *Died of wounds, (gunshot wound fracture left thigh), at No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station.* Twenty-year old William James Coulter is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium, Grave XXII.DD.6.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **COWAN, Stewart**– Photograph page 376

Stewart Cowan was born in Sarnia, on April 30, 1890, the son of John Cowan (a barrister) and Eliza (nee McIntere) Cowan, of 322 North Christina Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Carrie M., Kate S., John, Annie, Susie, Elizabeth, Hector and Frank. Stewart attended Sarnia public schools, then University College 1907-08; Delta

Kappa Epsilon; Law School. He became a barrister in Sarnia, with the firm of Cowan, Towers and Cowan. At his enlistment, he originally belonged to the 27th Militia. In 1915, he was appointed to the 70th Battalion, and he went overseas in April 1916.

In July 1916, Mrs. W.B. Elsworth of Sarnia would receive the following letter from Lieutenant Stewart Cowan, which he had written while in England:

*Dear Mrs. Elsworth,*

*Two dozen pairs of socks arrived today. I distributed them amongst Sarnia men who are with us. They were certainly more than glad to receive them and being from home they were doubly welcome. I wish you could have seen the men double out of their tents when they heard, "socks from Sarnia" called out. They asked me to thank the members of the Pro Patria Chapter, I.O.D.E. and to say that the socks were needed, as Kitchener boots are to say the least, a bit rough on socks.*

*I notice that you sent three dozen pairs. As I expect to leave for France any day now I have arranged for the distribution of the third dozen when they arrive. Our battalion is pretty well broken up. We have only about five hundred men left, and by the end of this week all the officers except five will be in France. About sixteen are there are now. Everybody would have liked to have gone across as a unit. But the Battalions in France have to be reinforced, so we are being sent to several different battalions.*

*Again many thanks for the socks and best regards from everybody here to all the members of the chapter.*

*Yours sincerely, Stewart Cowan*

*Shorncliffe, England July 5th, 1916*

During the summer of 1916, Stewart Cowan became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 24th Battalion, with the rank of Lieutenant. He would go on to serve on the Front at the Somme. On October 1, 1916, Stewart Cowan would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, at Courcellette, France. Stewart Cowan would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. Killed while leading his Platoon over the parapet in an attack on enemy trenches. At Courcellette.* Twenty-six year old Stewart Cowan has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

The following is a portion of the report on Stewart Cowan's death from the October 13, 1916 *Sarnia Observer*:

*Another Sarnia young man has laid down his life for King and Country in the person of Lieut. Stewart Cowan, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowan of this city, and a promising young law student, who was killed in action somewhere in France. Sunday morning a cablegram was received by Mr. Cowan from Col. R.I. Towers in England, stating, "All Sarnia boys well on the 5th." In the evening another cablegram was received from Col. Towers stating, "Death of Stewart Cowan reported. First information was incorrect. Trying to verify later report." The receipt of the latter cable brought sorrow to the parents, relatives and many friends of the young soldier who was one of the most popular young men of this city. He took an active interest in all athletic sports and was especially active in the great winter game of hockey.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **CRAWFORD, Robert Palmer (#46570) – Photograph page 376**

Robert Palmer was born in Petrolia, Ontario, on November 2, 1886, the eldest son of George J.A. Crawford and Lomila Kathleen (nee Stafford) Crawford, of 323 Christina Street, later 279 Russell Street, and then 110 Victoria Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Grace, Murtle, Royal Bruce (see below) and Devora. Robert enlisted with the 37th Battalion at Niagara Camp on May 31, 1915. At the time, he had two years prior experience with the 27th Lambton Borderers. He was single at the time of his enlistment, and recorded his occupation as a farmer. Robert was transferred to the 48th Highlanders, Machine Gun Section, 15th Battalion, 3rd Brigade as a reinforcement. He was listed as being with the Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 15th Battalion, with the rank of Lance Corporal. He was with the 48th Highlanders after being in the trenches for over a year as a Lance Corporal.

On March 30th of 1916, Robert sent the following letter home from France to his mother:

*Dear Mother,*

*Just a few lines to let you know I am well and kicking. I have not had any mail for some time. In fact our mail system*

*seems to have been all shot to pieces lately, or else everyone has quit writing, and I hate to think the latter. However I expect that everything will be all right soon as things are settled down again. We have moved again since my last letter. At this rate we will soon see the most of France and Belgium. We are in Belgium at present, but quite a way from the front line. This is a fine day but we have had some very nasty weather lately with cold winds and heavy frosts, but spring must come soon now. I will be pleased when the warm weather comes again. I had a few pictures taken in the last town we were in. If they are any good I will send some, otherwise I won't. Best to all.*

*Your loving son, Bob*

Six months after writing the above letter, on September 12, 1916, Robert Crawford would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Robert was killed only a few days prior to his younger brother Royal's arrival in France. Robert Crawford would be officially listed as, *Died of wounds (gunshot wound left shoulder) at No. 49 Casualty Clearing Station.*

On September 19, 1916, Mrs. Lomila Crawford in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son Robert was officially reported as wounded. One day later, on September 20, Mrs. Lomila Crawford would receive another telegram from the official war record office at Ottawa. The latter official telegram reads as follows:

*Mrs. L. Crawford, 132 Durand Street,  
Deeply regret inform you No. 46570, Lance-Corp Robt. Palmer Crawford, officially reported died of wounds, 49th  
Casualty Clearing Station, Sept. 12th, gunshot wounds, shoulder. Signed, O.I.C.R.O.*

Twenty-nine year old Robert Crawford is buried in Contay British Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave I.C.2. Approximately two years later, Lomila Crawford would lose a second son in France, Royal Bruce Crawford. With eerie similarity, she would first receive news that Royal Bruce was wounded and missing, then days later, receive the news that he had been killed in action.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **CRAWFORD, Royal Bruce (#400908) – Photograph page 376**

Royal Crawford was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, on December 28, 1898. NOTE: Ontario Birth Records list his birth date as Dec 28, 1896, but his Military records list his birth date as Dec 28, 1898. Royal was the son of George J.A. Crawford and Lomila Katharine (nee Stafford) Crawford, of 323 Christina Street, later 279 Russell Street, and then 110 Victoria Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Robert Palmer (see above), Grace, Murtle and Devora. Prior to enlisting, Roy was employed in the office staff of the Imperial Oil Company. Royal enlisted with the 33rd Battalion on May 10, 1915, in London, Ontario. A bachelor at the time, he recorded his occupation as a clerk. He trained in London and went overseas with the 33rd Battalion in March 1916, as a corporal. In England, he trained and caught a draft of the 1st Canadian Battalion, cheerfully reverting to Private in order to get to the firing line with more dispatch. He arrived in France in the latter part of September 1916.

Upon his arrival on French soil, the first news that he received was that of his brother Robert, who had been killed on September 12, 1916, a few days prior to Royal's arrival in France. This was a severe blow to young Royal, who was welcomed to the front line with the news of his brother's death in action. Royal would go on to earn his commission on the field, first being promoted to Lance Corporal. In June 1917, Roy Crawford sent a letter home to his mother, Mrs. G. Crawford in Sarnia. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Mother,  
I am well and getting along alright. Hope the folks are all well over there. The weather still continues fine and that is a great thing here. The country looks very nice just now only they have a nasty habit of blowing the scenery into little bits every now and then. But I guess we can stand it if Fritz can.... Hope this is soon over, so we won't have to do much writing. By the way, you can address my letters to Lance-Corporal Crawford now.... Roy*

Roy was later promoted to Corporal and then to Sergeant. In December 1917, he was awarded the Military Medal for bravery. The award reads, "At Passchendaele on Nov 6th 1917 this N.C.O. immediately took command of the platoon when his Platoon Commander was killed during the early stages of the attack. This N.C.O. succeeded in capturing and consolidating the portion of the objective allotted to his platoon. After the objective had been gained he acted as C.S.M. the Coy S.M. having become a casualty, and rendered invaluable services in consolidating

**SLEEP AND REST, DEAR SON, IN A LAND YOU DIED TO SAVE.  
WE WHO LOVE YOU SADLY MISS YOU.**

*position gained. By his courage and skill he assisted greatly in keeping up the spirit of the men. Although wounded he remained on duty until the Company was relieved.”*

His superiors, recognizing his worth, recommended him for a commission, and on February 5th, 1918, he went to England to begin his course to fit him for a commissioned officer's post. He took out his commission on August 6th, 1918, and rejoined his old unit, the "Fighting First" Battalion. In early September 1918, Roy's mother Lomila Crawford in Sarnia, would receive her son's Military Medal, won for bravery on the field, bringing her great joy and pride. On September 13th, 1918, Roy Crawford was wounded in action. He was sent to a hospital in England where he recovered, and then he returned to action. On October 1st, 1918, as a Lieutenant with the Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, Royal Crawford would lose his life while fighting during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign at Agincourt, France.

In mid-October 1918, word of Roy's death had not reached home in Sarnia. The *Sarnia Observer* printed an article on the two Crawford boys, noting that Robert had already made the supreme sacrifice. For Roy; it reported on his rise in the ranks, on his wounding and recovery, and on the Military medal that he was awarded. It also stated:

*... Sarnia is proud of Lieut. Crawford, as it has every reason to be. Going to the front he has worked his way from the rank and file to the commissioned officers' ranks, and if his past history is any criterion of what his future is to be, the young hero has not by any means reached the apex of his military career.*

*Previously to enlistment Roy was employed on the office staff on the Imperial Oil Company, where he has many friends, who are glad to hear of his successes in the war and hope for the return of his strength to enable him to carry on in the heroic way he has to date.*

*His mother received his Military Medal a few days ago and is justly proud of the honor her son has brought on her home.*

A few days after the above article appeared in the *Observer*, Roy's mother would receive a telegram informing her that her son, *Lieut. Roy Bruce Crawford, was officially reported wounded and missing October 1st*. A few days later, she would receive another telegram, this one informing her that her son, *Royal Bruce Crawford, who had been previously reported missing and wounded, is now reported killed in action, date of casualty, October 1st, 1918*. For mother Lomila Crawford, this was her second son lost in the war. Royal Crawford would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported wounded and missing, now killed in action. Was killed by machine gun bullets through the abdomen and one lung. Vicinity of Blecourt*. Twenty-year old Royal Crawford is buried in Sancourt British Cemetery, Nord, France, Grave I.C.19.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **CREIGHTON, Thomas (#24657, also A2878)**

Thomas Creighton was born in South Farnborough, England, in 1878, the son of Michael Creighton and Mary (nee Degan) Creighton, of South Farnborough, England. Thomas would marry Clara (nee Harcourt, of Suffolk, England) Creighton. Thomas and Clara were married on December 16, 1911 in Sarnia. At the time, Thomas was employed as a painter. Thomas and Clara Creighton would have one son together, Thomas Junior, born in 1913. When Thomas enlisted, the family was living at 268 London Road, Sarnia. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 34th Battalion, with the rank of Sergeant. Thomas would serve in Canada. On February 27, 1915, Thomas Creighton would lose his life. He died at Guelph General Hospital, the circumstances of casualty officially listed as, *Pneumonia – Admitted to hospital 20-2-15. Given every care and attention. Had special nurse night and day*. The following is the Guelph and Sarnia newspaper descriptions of Thomas' funeral notice:

#### **TO BE LAID AT REST WITH MILITARY HONOURS**

*Funeral of Sergt. Creighton of 34th Battalion, To Be Held Tomorrow.*

*Guelph, February 28, 1915 – The remains of the late Sergeant Thomas Creighton, of the 34th Battalion, who died in the general hospital here, were conveyed to the Grand Trunk station at 11 o'clock this morning with full military honors for burial at Sarnia. It was one of the most impressive sights seen in this city for some time. The casket was placed on a gun carriage and the cortege was led by the Salvation Army band, playing the dead march from Saul. The 34th bugle band played "Last Post" and "Lights Out" at the station as the train moved out.*

**THERE WAS NO PARTING WORD, NO FAREWELL OR GREETING.  
BEREAVED WIFE AND LITTLE DAUGHTER.**

Thomas Creighton's remains arrived in Sarnia the next day, accompanied by an officer and six privates from the 34th Battalion, who acted as pallbearers. The funeral took place on March 2, 1915 at Our Lady of Mercy Church. It was conducted with military honors and a firing party of twelve men from the wireless and Tunnel guards that had been detailed for duty for the occasion.

Thirty-seven year old Thomas Creighton is buried in Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Cemetery, Sarnia. On Thomas Creighton's headstone are inscribed the words, *Loving wife and son*. Years after Thomas' death, Clara would remarry, to Arthur Groves, to become Clara Groves, of Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England.  
SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **CROUCHER, Jesse Henry Edward (#602611)**

Jesse Croucher was born in Herne Bay, Kent, England, on May 28, 1888, the son of John Thomas Croucher (a brickmaker) and Anne Marie Anderson/Parker, both from England. Jesse's many siblings included: Alice Matilda (born 1866); James Thomas (born 1867); John Thomas (born 1870); Harriett Ann (born 1872); Anne Susan (born 1875); Louisa Jane (born 1877); Rosa (born 1881); Elizabeth (born 1882); Isabelle (born 1885); Florence Maude (born 1890); Lizzie (born 1891); and Violet May (born 1895). Jesse enlisted originally with British Royal Engineers and Army Service Corps in Canterbury, England on December 29, 1908. At that time, he recorded his occupation as a brickmaker. Jesse arrived in Canada (at the Port of Quebec) aboard the passenger ship *Empress of Britain* on July 21, 1910. He listed his destination as Watford, and his intended occupation as farm labourer.

Jesse Croucher would enlist with the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force on July 1, 1915 in Sarnia. A bachelor at the time, living at Devine Street, he recorded his occupation as a car repairer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, 7th Battalion, as a Private. On September 9, 1916, Jesse Croucher would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Jesse Croucher would later be officially be listed as, *Killed in action, at Courcellette. Buried outside Tom's Cut Trench Somme*. Twenty-eight year old Jesse Croucher has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **CUNNINGHAM, Alexander (#3131569)**

Alexander Cunningham was born in Fauldhouse, Lanarkshire, Scotland, on March 28, 1894, the son of James Cunningham, of 347 Cameron Street, Sarnia. Alexander was conscripted to service on October 10, 1917 in Sarnia, with the 1st Depot Battalion. Alexander had a brother that also served in the War, Corporal Jack Cunningham, who would return to Sarnia at Christmas 1917 with gunshot wounds in both legs and the left arm. When Alexander signed up, he was single and recorded his occupation as a farmer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Manitoba Regiment, 43rd Highlanders Battalion, with the rank of Private. On October 3, 1918, Alexander Cunningham would lose his life, while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. He died as a result of gunshot wounds that he had received to right arm and head. Approximately one month later, the Great War would come to an end.

In mid-October 1918, Alexander's father James, would receive a telegram informing him of his son's death, the result of wounds received in the right arm and head. Alexander Cunningham would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. On October 1st 1918, he was wounded by enemy shrapnel. After receiving attention, he was evacuated to No. 30 Casualty Clearing Station where he succumbed to his wounds two days later*. After learning of their son's death, Alexander's mother and father wrote the following:

*Dear son of mine, you sleep with the brave,  
Where no tears of your mother can drop on your grave,  
Unknown to the world, you stand by my side,  
And whisper, dear mother, death cannot divide.*

The following was written by Alexander's sister, sister-in-law, and brothers:

*Peaceful be thy rest, dear brother;  
'Tis sweet to breathe thy name;  
In life we loved you dear;  
In death we do the same.*

Twenty-four year old Alexander Cunningham is buried in Bucquoy Road Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave IV.D.19.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**DAVIES, Sidney Richard (#844276)**

Sidney Davies was born in Strood, Kent County, England, on August 24, 1882, the son of Richard Vickers Davies and Mary Ann Davies, of Strood, England. Sidney enlisted February 14, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. A bachelor at the time of his enlistment, he was residing at 132 Forsythe Street, Sarnia. He recorded his next of kin as Mrs. A. Wilson (sister), of Rochester, England, and his occupation as an actor. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, "C" Company, as a Private.

On October 11, 1918, Sidney Davies would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Exactly one month later, the Great War would come to an end. In mid-November 1918, Reverend F.G. Newton of St. John's Church received official notice that Sergeant Richard Davies had been reported killed in action on October 11th. Sidney Davies would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. Was instantly killed by concussion from an enemy shell, in front of Iwuy on the morning of October 11th 1918*. Thirty-six year old Sidney Davies is buried in Niagara Cemetery, Iwuy, Nord, France, Grave C.26.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**DICKINSON, George (#402727)**

George Dickinson was born in Leeds, Yorkshire, England, on November 18, 1879, the son of Robert Dickinson and Hannah (nee Barmingham) Dickinson, of Leeds, England. George would marry Beatrice Dickinson, of England. The couple immigrated to Canada in 1910. They first resided at 348 Brocker Street, Toronto, and later moved to Sarnia, first to 142 Elgin Street, and then to 383 Russell Street, Sarnia. George enlisted January 18, 1915 in Sarnia, recording his occupation as a plumber, and his marital status as married. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 34th Battalion, with the rank of Private. Approximately a year and a half after enlisting, George was invalided back to Sarnia, arriving on September 1st, 1916. One and a half years after his return to Sarnia, on March 6, 1918, George Dickinson would lose his life as a result of the effects of war. He died at Sarnia General Hospital, the cause of death officially listed as, *Nephritis Chronic. Death a result from the effects of wounds and gas*.

Private George Dickinson's funeral in Sarnia was held with full military honours. The funeral was attended by the Sarnia Citizens Band, the Great War Veterans, the Sons of England, the Mayor and Council members, and representatives of the St. John's Ambulance Society. His comrades acted as pallbearers, there was a firing party and the playing of the "Last Post." The funeral parade route followed Plank Road to Mitton Street, onto Davis to Christina, then north, where they were met and saluted by the Collegiate Cadets at the corner of George and Christina Street. Thirty-eight year old George Dickinson is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**DOXSTATER, Frederick (#844252)**

George Doxstater was born at the Sarnia Indian Reserve, on August 4, 1896, the eldest child of Edward Doxstater (of Oneida Settlement, Middlesex County, Ontario) and Sarah (nee George) Doxstater, of 391 Confederation Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Eva Millicent (born 1898); Mattie Lavinia (born 1900); Norah Hazel (born 1902); Reuben Edward (born 1904); Beatrice Winnefred (born 1905); Lucinda Violet (born 1907); William Henry (born 1908); Julia (born 1909); George Leonard (born 1910); and Austin (born 1914). Before enlisting, Frederick had been employed as car inspector on the Pere Marquette. Frederick enlisted December 16, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 149th Lambton Battalion, Canadian Infantry. A bachelor at the time, he was residing at 304 Rose Street, Sarnia, and recorded his occupation as a labourer. While in England, Frederick would be transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Engineers, 4th Battalion, with the rank of Private/Sapper. He went with that branch of the service to France, serving with them at the Front.

Frederick Doxstater served at the Front in France for about a year when he became ill. He was sent to England due to his ill health, which had been brought on by the hardships at the Front. He would be discharged from England and sent home, reaching as far as Halifax. Frederick did not make it home alive. On November 11, 1918, the

day the Great War ended and the world was celebrating, Frederick's father Edward Doxstater in Sarnia, would receive a telegram informing him that his son, *Sapper Frederick Doxstater, of the Canadian Engineers was dangerously ill at the Cogswell Street Military Hospital, Halifax*. No particulars as to his ailment were given in the official telegram. On November 15, 1918, Frederick Doxstater would lose his life in Halifax, having been there for one week. Shortly afterwards, Frederick's mother Sarah would receive the following telegram:

*Mrs. Ed Doxstater, 391 Confederation street,*

*Regret to inform you 844252, Sapper Fred Doxstater, died at 6:55 p.m. November 15. M.O. Cogswell Street Military Hospital.*

Frederick Doxstater would later be officially listed as, *Death due to tuberculosis, at Military Hospital, Halifax*. At Frederick Doxstater's funeral in November 1918 in Sarnia, he was given full military honours, with members of the Great War Veterans and Sarnia Citizens' band in attendance. The funeral procession began at the family residence on Confederation Street and ended at the Indian Reserve Cemetery. Services were conducted by Rev. Alford of the Sarnia Reserve, assisted by Rev. Hazen, pastor of the Devine Street Methodist church. A firing squad paid their last respect of the deceased soldier. Twenty-two year old Frederick Doxstater is buried in Sarnia Chippewas First Nations Cemetery, Sarnia. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as F. Doxtator. His name is also inscribed on the Aamjiwnaang First Nations cenotaph in Sarnia. The central column of the Aamjiwnaang cenotaph is inscribed, *To our glorious veterans who have served our nation and its allies for peace and freedom – Lest We Forget*. One of the side column's is inscribed, *World War I – In memory of the young men from this nation who served King and country throughout the world 1914-1919 – Frederick Doxstater*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G, 4D, t

#### **EBERLY, Albert Edward (#3131578)**

Albert Eberly was born in Parkhill, Ontario, on January 24, 1895, the son of Minnie Eberly Cathers, of 175 South Christina Street, Sarnia. Albert was conscripted to service January 9, 1918 in London, Ontario. Prior to his conscription, he had spent two years with the 136th Regiment, Edmonton Militia. Single at the time of his conscription, he recorded his occupation as a traction engineer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 47th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 3, 1918, Albert would lose his life, as a result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Approximately two months later, the Great War would come to an end.

In mid-September 1918, mother Minnie Eberly in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing her that her son, *Pte. Albert Edward Eberly, infantry, has died of wounds, at 42nd Clearing Station, September 4th, with gunshot wound in back and left thigh*. Albert Eberly would later be officially listed as, *Died of wounds. During an advance on the Arras Front September 2nd, 1918, he was severely wounded in the back and left thigh by an enemy shell. He was attended to and evacuated to No. 42 Casualty Clearing Station where he died from the effect of his wounds the following day*. In October 1918, she would receive another telegram, this one informing her that the date of her son Albert's death, was September 3rd, 1918. Twenty-three year old Albert Eberly is buried in Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France, Grave IV.E.66.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **EDDY, William Peter (#333930)**

William Eddy was born in Sarnia, on October 25, 1885, the son of Walter Roache Eddy (from England) and Mary (nee Kyle, from Scotland) Eddy, of Christina Street, later 330 South Vidal Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Ethel (born 1888) and Elleellida (born 1890). While living in Winnipeg, William enlisted first in November 1914 with the 90th Winnipeg Regiment and was given a commission as First Lieutenant. He would serve with Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force, Canadian Infantry, 90th Regiment, Winnipeg Rifles as a Lieutenant. When the Regiment was sent overseas, the officers were disbanded. Returning to Sarnia, William Eddy enlisted again on June 15, 1916 in London, Ontario. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as an engineer, and that he had six months of prior militia experience with 90th Regiment, Winnipeg. Later, he would be transferred to Canadian Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade, with the rank of Gunner. He had reverted to the ranks in order to serve his country. William went overseas with his company in September 1916.

While in drill in England, he met with an accident whereby both arms were broken. In May 1917, William



would send a letter home to his parents on Vidal Street, from Bramshott Camp, England. The following is a portion of that letter:

*My Dear Parents,*

*I am sure you must be thinking something has happened to me and indeed it has but I am now recovering, although slowly. I have not been to France, but when we were at Salisbury Plains for firing practice I had the misfortune to get thrown from a runaway horse, breaking both arms. The left arm is nearly alright. I am writing with it – but my right arm is still pretty sore and it will be some time yet before I am fit for service. I am now at the Canadian Military Hospital at Bramshott... Well, how are you all at home anyway, well I hope. I get the papers you send and am glad everything goes well at home. I hope it will not be many months now before I am with you again....*

*Your loving son, Will*

In October of 1917, William was sent to France. Less than one year later, on September 2, 1918, William Eddy would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In October 1918, William's mother in Sarnia would receive the following letter:

*11th Battery C.F.A.*

*September 8th, 1918*

*Dear Mrs. Eddy,*

*It is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the death in action of your son, 333930, Gunner W.P. Eddy, and which occurred on the 2nd instant. Your son at the time was with his gun which was in action in support of the Infantry. During a period of enemy shelling a shell burst close by the gun killing your son instantly and wounding one of his comrades. He was buried by his comrades at P.25 A. 85-75, Sheet 51B., and all his personal effects have been sent to the base and will be forwarded to you. The men of the Battery have expressed their deep regret at the loss of a most popular comrade. On behalf of both officers and men I wish to extend to you our deepest sympathy in your great grief.*

*Sgt. Geo W. Shearer*

*Majo O.C. 11th Battery, C.F.A.*

William Eddy would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. During military operations in the vicinity of Vis-en-Artois, and Dury, whilst his Battery was supporting the Infantry, an enemy shell exploded near his gun, instantly killing him.* Thirty-two year old William Eddy has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **EDWARDS, Fred Christopher (#402729)**

Fred Edwards was born in Bermondsey, London, England, on December 25, 1892, the son of Frederick Christopher Edwards and Margaret (Mary Ann) Edwards, of Walworth, London, England. Fred enlisted January 11, 1915, in Sarnia with the 1st Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he recorded his occupation as a sailor. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, as a Private. On May 3, 1917, Fred Edwards would lose his while fighting in France, approximately one month after the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Fred Edwards would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported wounded and missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died. Attack on Fresnoy.* Twenty-seven year old Fred Edwards has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as F.W. Edwards.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **ELLIOT, Joseph Martin (#602999)**

Joseph Elliot was born in Point Edward, Ontario, on June 12, 1887, the youngest child of John Elliot (from England, a car repairer, and later a Grand Trunk employee) and Alexandria (nee McKay, from New Brunswick) Elliot, of 147 Johnston Street, Sarnia. His siblings included: Henry J., Alexander, Hattie, John, Daniel, Mary C., and Lettie. Joseph enlisted August 21, 1915 in Sarnia. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a brakeman. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, 7th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 9, 1916, he would lose his life, as a result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Joseph Elliot would officially be listed as, *Died of wounds at No. 2 Canadian Field*

*Ambulance*. In late September, Joseph's mother would receive word from militia headquarters at Ottawa informing her that her son, *Joseph Martin Elliot, had died of wounds at No. 2 Canadian Field Ambulance station on September 9*. Twenty-nine year old Joseph Elliot is buried in Albert Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France, Grave I.L.5.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**FAIR, Roy Nichols (#6914)**

Roy Fair was born in Londesborough, Huron County, Ontario, on May 17, 1894, the son of Rev. Hugh James Fair (of Brantford) and Eliza (nee Nicholls) Fair, of Arkona, Ontario. His siblings included: Henry Egerton (born 1876); Mable (born 1878); Clara Maud (born 1880); Mary Edith (born 1881); and Hugh Harold (born 1891). Roy enlisted September 22, 1914, in Valcartier Camp, Quebec. A bachelor at the time, he recorded his occupation as a salesman. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Lance Corporal. On June 15, 1915, Roy Fair would lose his life while fighting in France. Roy Fair would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. He was a member of the grenade section and during the attack near Givenchy on the night of June 15th, 1915 just before reaching the first trench he received a bullet wound in the arm. His wound was immediately bandaged and he was ordered to return to the Dressing Station, but he insisted on going forward, and on reaching the German trench he was hit by a bomb and instantly killed. Body not recovered for burial*. Twenty-one year old Roy Fair has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Roy Fair's name is also inscribed on the Village of Arkona cenotaph and on the Memorial in the Village of Point Edward.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**FITZGERALD, Albert Le Roy (#124737)**

Albert Fitzgerald was born in Sarnia, on June 30, 1897, the son of Ashley Cooper Fitzgerald and Mrs. E.J. (nee English) Fitzgerald, of 200 Wellington Street, Sarnia. Albert enlisted April 5, 1916 in London, Ontario. A bachelor at the time, he recorded his occupation as a driver. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, with the rank of Private. On October 1, 1916, Albert Fitzgerald would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Albert Fitzgerald would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died. (During) Attack near Courcellette*. Nineteen-year old Albert Fitzgerald has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**FORD, Peter John (#6915)**

Peter Ford was born in Buttewant, County Cork, Ireland, on June 29, 1874, the son of W.J. Ford, of 151 Emma Street, Sarnia. Peter enlisted September 22, 1914 in Valcartier Camp, Quebec with the 1st Battalion. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a locomotive engineer. He also recorded that he had previous military experience with Dorsetshire Regiment, Royal Garrison Regiment and Foreign Service. Peter Ford would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, as a Sergeant. On June 15, 1915, Peter Ford would lose his life while fighting in France. Peter Ford would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported wounded and missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died. At Calonne*. Forty-year old Peter Ford has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**GILES, George Thomas (#124381) – Photograph page 380**

George Giles exact birthdate is unknown. He lived on Confederation Street, later Campbell Street, Sarnia with his wife and four children. George enlisted November 9, 1915 with the 70th Battalion. He was later transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 58th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On October 7, 1916, George Giles would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme in France. George Giles would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. At the trenches at Courcellette. No record of burial*. George's wife and four children were living in Ottawa at time of his death. Twenty-nine year old George Giles has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**GORE, George (#844493)**

George Gore was born in Mound City, U.S.A, on April 18, 1880. George was living in Sarnia at the time of his enlistment. He enlisted on May 15, 1916 with the 149th Battalion. Single at the time, he recorded his next of kin as George Gore, cousin, Mound City, USA., and his occupation as a cook. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Forestry Corps, 57th Company, as a Private. On May 1, 1918, George Gore would lose his life in France. George Gore would later be officially listed as, *Died (Haematuria cerebro haemorrhage) at Canadian Forestry Corps Hospital La Joux Jura*. Thirty-eight year old George Gore is buried in Champagnole Communal Cemetery, Jura, France, Grave A.12.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**GRAY, George (#81334)**

George Gray was born in Sarnia, Ontario on November 30, 1888, the son of Donald Gray and Mary Gray, of Plympton township. George had two brothers and two sisters, who at the time of his death were: James (born 1876) of Camlachie; Daniel A., (born 1879) of Sarnia, a Grand Trunk engineer; and sisters Euphemia (born 1881) of Sarnia; and Jessie, of Milburn, Ontario. George resided in Sarnia until he finished his schooling, then moved to the Canadian Northwest. He enlisted on December 12, 1914 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Single at the time of his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a farmer, and his next of kin was his brother, Daniel Gray of 327 Russell Street, Sarnia. George Gray became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 2nd Battalion, No. 12 Platoon, #3 Company, with the rank of Private. On May 30, 1915, he would lose his life while fighting in France. George Gray would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action in the field, trenches in vicinity of Festubert*.

In early June 1915, George's brother Daniel in Sarnia would receive a letter informing him of the circumstances of his brother's death. The following is that letter:

*France, June 2nd, 1915 D.A. Gray, Esq, 327 Russell Street, Sarnia*

*Dear Sir,*

*I am sorry to have to advise you of the death of your brother George who was killed in action on Sunday night, the 30th of May. He, with a party of men from my platoon, was detailed to complete a communication trench from our own to that of our No. 4 company, which was 100 yards ahead of us.*

*Suddenly, without warning a big German shell struck the side of the trench and exploded almost beside him. I was close by, and immediately had him lifted out of the trench. Pieces of the shell had struck him in the back and his death was painless and virtually instantaneous. We did what was possible before he passed away and I then took his papers, which I am sending through our orderly room, who will forward them through the regular channels.*

*Four of his chums carried him back behind our lines and laid him decently in a grave which they had dug. I have marked this with a cross, giving his name and regiment number and stating that he was killed in action on the 30th of May, 1915. George was a very fine man and most popular with his companions. I have had a very high opinion of him since I took command of the platoon, and I feel his loss very keenly. There is little I can say to make the blow easier for you to bear, but a man can ask no finer end than death met in the service of his country and though the toll is heavy it must be paid to prevent German savagery overrunning the world. Please accept my sincere sympathy in your bereavement and believe me I share the sorrow with you.*

*Yours sincerely, T.C. Biggar*

*Lt. No. 12 Platoon, No.3 Co., 2nd Batt.,*

*C.E.F.*

Twenty-six year old George Gray has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. His name is also inscribed on the Camlachie Cenotaph.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**GUERTIN, Percival Edward (#649389) – Photograph page 382**

Percival Guertin was born in Chatham, Ontario, on September 29, 1886, the son of Alexander Napoleon Guertin (born in U.S.A.) and Julian (nee Turcotte) Guertin, of 352 Maxwell Street, later 143 Elgin Street, Sarnia. Percival's many siblings included: Herbert Joseph (born 1882); Florence Adelaide (born 1884); William John (born 1885); Clyde Alexander (born 1888); Mary Stella (born 1892); Norman Peter (born 1893); Charles Edmond (born 1895); and Rena Margaret (born 1900). Father Alexander would be a long-time worker of the Dominion Salt

Company, employed there for 40 years. Alexander's grandfather was a veteran of the Civil War, and his great-grandfather a veteran of the War of 1812. Four of Alexander's sons, William, Clyde, Norman and Percival, would fight with Canadian regiments during the First World War. During the Second World War, three of Alexander's grandsons would follow the family tradition: Lt. T.J. Forlan, son of Florence Forlan (nee Guertin) would be a flight commander overseas with the American Air Force; Sgt. William Guertin, son of Norman Guertin would serve with the R.C.A.F. becoming a prisoner of war in an Italian prison camp; and Pte. Vincent Guertin, the son of Percival Edward Guertin would serve in the Canadian Armored Car Division. Patriarch of the family, Alexander Guertin would reside in Sarnia for 53 years, dying at the age 85 in June of 1943, interned at Our Lady of Mercy Cemetery, Sarnia.

Percival Guertin would marry Maud Grace (nee Noel, of Bay City, Michigan) Guertin. Maud Grace Noel came from a family of nine children. One of her brothers, younger than her by eight years, was Urban Joseph Noel. Urban Noel would also serve in the Great War, losing his life in action at the age 22, on August 8, 1918 in Somme, France. He is included in this Project.

Percival and Maud Grace Guertin were married on September 27, 1908 in Sarnia. The couple resided at South Porcupine, later 214 Parker Street, and then 109 Collingwood Street, Sarnia. Percival and Maud Grace had four children together: Vincent (as mentioned, would serve in WWII); Percy Edward (born 1909); Francis Alexander (born 1911); and Genevieve Laura (born 1913). Percival enlisted May 23, 1916 in South Porcupine, Ontario with the 159th Battalion. At the time, he recorded his occupation as a moulder, and that he had prior experience in the 97th Regiment. Percival Guertin became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 24th Battalion, with the rank of Private.

Percival's brothers William John and Clyde Alexander, would both also serve in the war. Both would receive wounds later in the war (in August 1918): William with gunshot wounds in his right hand; and Clyde a scalp wound. In August 1916, Clyde sent a letter home from France to their sixteen-year old sister, Miss Rena (Margaret) Guertin of 351 Maxwell Street. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Sister,*

*We have just been over a few days, and its pretty much like England. I guess they took me for a Scot for I am in the 78th (a Scotch Battalion) from Winnipeg.... There isn't many more of my old Battalion in it. I am well and happy and hope all at home are the same. Do your best to keep mother cheered up. I know she worries like the mischief having four sons out of five in the army, but the only thing to do is to look on the bright side. I am glad I'm here, and the other boys are in it..., if it should happen that I am one of the ones that don't come back, don't feel sorry, as I'll give a good account of myself over here. You can bet your sweet life on that.... Well dear, be a good girl and I'll bring you back a lock of the Kaiser's hair – or at least a German helmet. With lots of love and kisses, I will say goodbye to the dearest sis in the world.*

*PS. Give my best to everyone at home.*

*Your brother Clyde.*

Brothers Clyde and Percival were able to meet-up for a brief time prior to Percival's death. On April 11, 1918, Percival Guertin would lose his life while fighting in France, less than two years after he had enlisted. He would officially be listed as, *Killed in action. At trenches east of Neuville Vitasse*. In late April 1918, Percival's wife Maud, living at 109 Collingwood Street, would receive the following telegram:

*Ottawa, Ont., April 23*

*Mrs. Maud Guertin, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you that 649389 Private Percy Ed. Guertin, infantry, officially reported killed in action, April 11th.*

*Director of Records*

Percival would leave behind his wife Maud and four children. Thirty-one year old Percival Guertin has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Four months later, Percival's wife Maud Grace would lose her brother Urban Joseph Noel, who was killed in action in Somme, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **HALL, George (#189862)**

George Hall was born in Highgate, Ontario, on September 4, 1883, the son of Henry Hall, of Highgate,

Ontario. George enlisted January 14, 1916, in Ridgeway, Ontario, with the 186th Battalion. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a bricklayer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. Private George Hall would fight in France for sixteen months, and was wounded once. On August 28, 1918, George Hall would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. He would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. During operations in front of Vis-en-Artois on the afternoon of August 28th, 1918, he was instantly killed by enemy shell fire.* George Hall's brother Harry, of Sarnia, would receive a telegram informing him of George's death in mid-September 1918. Thirty-four year old George Hall has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **HANNA, Neil William**— Photograph page 382

Neil Hanna was born in Sarnia, on January 18, 1895, the only son of William John Hanna (born 1862, of Adelaide Township, Ontario) and Jean Neil (nee Gibson) Hanna, of Sarnia, who were married in 1891. After Jean Neil Hanna passed away, father William would remarry. His new wife was Maude (nee MacAdams) Hanna. William and Maude would have two daughters, sisters for Neil: Margaret (born 1897), and Katherine (born 1900). Father William was an influential force in the community and beyond. He was a local lawyer, represented Lambton West in the Ontario Legislature as a Conservative cabinet member, a director with several companies including Imperial Oil and the Imperial Bank of Canada, and served as one of Prime Minister Robert Borden's advisors after war broke out.

Neil Hanna was educated in Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate, then St. Andrew's College and Victoria College Delta Upsilon, University of Toronto, 1913-1915. He intended to pursue a career in law. In the spring of 1915, single at the time, he enlisted and became a member of the Army, Royal Field Artillery 26th Battery, Gunner. He went overseas in September 1915. He obtained his commission in England in the Royal Field Artillery, and went to France with his unit early in 1916. He was severely wounded at Mametz Wood in July 1916, and for some months was under treatment and came home on leave to recover.

On rejoining his unit, Neil was unable to continue in the Artillery. He applied to be transferred to the British Air forces, and when the request was granted, he took a course of training in a British aviation camp. After passing successfully, he was appointed to service with the British Air forces in Italy, Royal Flying Corps, 36th Training Squadron, where he attained the rank of Lieutenant. He returned to the French front in January 1918, and in October went to Italy, where he was engaged in flying over the Austrian front. Shortly after his arrival in Italy, the Austrian armies surrendered. When the Armistice Treaty was signed on November 11th, his parents were looking forward to his early return after Neil had experienced several years of fighting and had survived being wounded severely once. On November 20, 1918, more than a week after Armistice, while observing the Austrian retreat, Neil Hanna was accidentally killed in a flying accident in Italy.

In late November 1918, Neil's parents William and Maude, had left Toronto a few days prior for New York. A cable message to them was received in Toronto, then forwarded to New York. The message informed Neil's parents that their son, *Lieut. Neil William Hanna, of the British Royal Air Force, serving in Italy, had been reported killed on the 20th of November.* They were given no particulars about how the fatality occurred. Twenty-three year old Neil Hanna is buried in Montecchio Precalcino Communal Cemetery Extension, Italy, Plot 9, Row A, Grave 6.

The loss of his only son Neil was devastating for William Hanna, who had become president of Imperial Oil but was suffering from ill health. He travelled to Georgia that winter for warmer weather and died there on March 20, 1919, only four months after Neil's death. Father William Hanna is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia. Neil's mother Maude became a celebrated philanthropist in Sarnia. She contributed half of the money the city needed in 1932 to purchase the land for Canatara Park and donated land on Mitton Street for Hanna Park. Shortly after Maude Hanna's death in 1946, Hanna Memorial School in Sarnia opened, and was named in her honour.

SOURCES: A, B, D, E, L, N, 2D, 2G

#### **HARRIS, George Henry** (#123570)

George Harris was born in Brockley, Kent, England, on November 30, 1890, the son of Benjamin Harris (a brickmaker) and Eliza (nee Bates) Harris, both originally of Middlesex, England, living at 278 Bright Street, Sarnia. George's siblings included Benjamin (born 1880); Matilda (born 1882); Mary Ann (born 1885); John W. (born 1887); Emma E. (born 1889); Ernest (born 1889); and Ellen Rosina (born 1892). In 1911, at the age of 20, George

was residing in Lewisham, London, England, employed as timekeeper. Sometime after that, he would move to Sarnia. On March 7, 1914, George would marry Alice (nee Savage, of Lewisham, London, England) Harris, at St. George's Church in Sarnia. The newlywed couple would reside at 264 Cameron Street, Sarnia. The couple had one child together, a daughter, Renee May, born January 1915. George enlisted September 20, 1915 in Sarnia with the 70th Battalion. At his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a pumpman, and that he had 154 previous days experience with the West Yorkshire Regiment. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 73rd Battalion, as a Private. On March 1, 1917, George Harris would lose his life while fighting in the area of Vimy Ridge, France. George Harris would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing, now killed in action. Near Vimy*. He would leave behind his wife of less than three years and his two-year old daughter. Twenty-six year old George Harris has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **HAZEN, Thomas Douglas (#2265916) – Photograph page 383**

Thomas Hazen was born in Forestville, Norfolk County, Ontario, on March 13, 1896, the son of John William (a farmer) and Lydia (nee Martin) Hazen, of 123 Proctor Street, Sarnia. His siblings included Elizabeth Marsh (born 1889); Frances Edith (born 1891); and Olive Ester Louise (born 1898). Thomas enlisted July 4, 1917 with the Divisional Signal Corps Canadian Engineers in Sudbury, Ontario. Single at the time of his enlistment, he was living in Matheson, Ontario, and recorded his occupation as a school teacher. Thomas was later transferred to the Air Force, Royal Flying Corps, 56th Squadron, with the rank of Lieutenant. He would receive his air force training in Texas.

On August 19, 1918, Thomas Hazen would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. He was killed in action at Bapaume, France. In late August 1918, his mother Lydia Hazen in Sarnia, would receive a brief telegram informing her that her son Thomas, had been reported missing on August 19th, and that a letter would follow later, and until then, the details would not be known. In early September 1918, several weeks after Thomas' death, father John William Hazen would receive a telegram that his son, *Flight Lieutenant Thomas Douglas Hazen, who had been reported missing some time ago, was now officially reported as a prisoner of war in Germany*. Twenty-two year old Thomas Hazen has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as G.D. Hazen.

SOURCES: A, B, D, E, F, L, N, 2D, 2G

#### **HICKEY, Frank (#402759)**

Frank Hickey was born in Clifford, Ontario, on December 24, 1882, the son of James Hickey (a R.R. foreman) and Bridget (nee O'Donnell) Hickey. His siblings included Katie (born 1876); Dell (born 1883); John (born 1886); and Wilfred (born 1888). Single at the time, Frank enlisted January 27, 1915 in Sarnia recording his occupation as an RR switchman. He also recorded that he had prior experience with 27th Regiment. Three years later, Frank would marry Sarah Jane (nee Patterson, born in Belfast, Ireland, living in Brooklyn, New York at time of marriage) Hickey. The couple were married in London, Ontario on August 28, 1918.

Frank would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, as a Private. The Armistice that ended the Great War was signed on November 11, 1918. Approximately ten months later, on September 1, 1919, Frank Hickey would lose his life, the result of his service. Frank Hickey's Circumstances of Casualty was officially listed as, *Death due to Service. Cause: Renal Calculus Left Kidney (nephritis). At Hotel Dieu Hospital, Windsor, Ontario*. His funeral was held from the residence of his mother, Mrs. James Hickey, of 312 Vidal Street. Thirty-seven year old Frank Hickey is buried in Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Cemetery, Sarnia.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **HOWARTH, John Lewis (#844551)**

John Howarth was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, England, on June 25, 1889. He would marry Emma Howarth, and the couple would reside at 296 Queen Street, Sarnia, (later Rochdale, Lancashire, England). John enlisted September 14, 1915 and again on December 9, 1915 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion, in which he recorded

*HE SLEEPS BESIDE HIS COMRADES, HIS GRAVE I MAY NEVER SEE.  
MAY SOME KIND HAND LAY A FLOWER FOR ME.*

his occupation as a labourer. John became a member of the Army, Canadian Machine Gun Corps, 3rd Battalion, with the rank of Private. On November 6, 1918, he would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Only five days later, the Armistice agreement was signed ending the Great War. In late November 1918, his wife Emma would receive a telegram informing her that her husband, *844551, Pvt. John Lewis Howarth, Machine Gun Corps, has been officially reported killed in action on November 6th*. John Howarth would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action. He was killed by enemy shell fire on the morning of November 6th 1918, while taking part with his Battalion in operations in the vicinity of Onnaing*.

In January 1919, Emma would receive a letter from Private Allen Kirk, L Battery, Third Canadian M.G.C., France, a companion of her husband. In the letter, Private Kirk expressed his sympathy on the death of Private Howarth, who had been instantly killed. Private Kirk stated that they had received parcels since the death of the young soldier. Private Kirk was a Hamilton, Ontario man, with a wife and two children. He extended an invitation to Emma Howarth to visit their home in Hamilton when he returned, when he would give her the particulars of her husband's death. In closing his letter, Private Kirk said of the dead hero, "He was a straight-forward young man, obliging, and a good soldier, and often spoke of his wife to me." Twenty-nine year old John Howarth is buried in Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery, Nord, France, Grave II.E.19.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **HOWE, Charles (#A/2753)**

Charles Howe was born in Boston Spa, Yorkshire, England, on June 21, 1886, the son of Joseph Howe, of Yorkshire, England. Charles enlisted January 11, 1915 in Sarnia with the 1st Battalion. A bachelor at the time, he recorded his occupation as a farmer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 22, 1916, Charles Howe would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Charles Howe would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported Missing, believed killed, now Killed in Action. While taking part with his Battalion in an attack in the vicinity of Courcellette, he was hit by a bullet and instantly killed*. Thirty-year old Charles Howe is buried in Adanac Military Cemetery, Miraumont, Somme, France, Grave II.B.26. On Charles Howe's headstone are inscribed the words, *Until the day break and the shadows flee away*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **ILIFFE, Roy Spencer (#6927)**

Roy Iliffe was born in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, England, on July 6, 1886, the son of George Iliffe (a pharmaceutical chemist) and Caroline Laura (nee George) Iliffe, both of Warwickshire, England. His siblings included Laura Marion (born 1876); Oliver George (born 1878); Gwendolen Mary (born 1881); Kathleen Margaret (born 1882); and Gladys Myfanwy (born 1884). In 1911, at the age of 24, Roy was living in Warwickshire, England, employed as a bank clerk. He had also lost his mother by this date. Sometime after that, he came to Canada, enlisting September 22, 1914 at Valcartier Camp, Quebec. Single at the time of his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a clerk. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, as a Private.

Approximately eight months after the start of the war, Roy Iliffe would lose his life in the Great War. On April 22, 1915, he would be killed while fighting, on the first day of the Second Battle of Ypres, in Belgium. According to *Sarnia Observer* reports, Roy Iliffe was the first man from Sarnia to lose his life in the Great War. Roy Iliffe would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Vicinity of St. Julien*. Twenty-eight year old Roy Iliffe has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 10-26-28.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **IVERSON, Amos (#844603)**

Amos Iverson was born in Drobak, Norway, on February 27, 1887. Amos enlisted March 14, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a sailor, and listed his next of kin as Mary Iverson, mother, of Drobak, Norway. Sometime after enlisting, Amos married Ada Iverson, of Courtright, Ontario. Amos became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On August 27, 1918, Amos Iverson would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. He was initially reported as wounded and missing in action. Amos Iverson would later be

officially listed as, *Previously reported Wounded and Missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died. When last seen he had been wounded in the arm by shrapnel from an enemy shell, while taking part with his Company in an attack near Vis-en-Artois in front of Arras.* Thirty-one year old Amos Iverson has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

NOTE: On the CWGC and CVWM websites, his name is listed as Amos Iveson. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as A. Ireson. The spelling used in this project is based on Amos Iverson's own signature on his attestation papers.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**JANES, G.J.** – No information found in searched records links this name to Sarnia.

**JOHNSON, Frederick (#124029)**

Frederick Johnson was born in London, Ontario, on September 24, 1888, the son of James Johnson and Amelia (Julia, nee Cahill) Johnson, of 278 Rose St., Sarnia. His siblings included; Clifford, Charlotte May (born 1890) and Edward Norman (born 1895). Frederick enlisted October 9, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 70th Battalion. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a labourer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 24th Battalion, as a Private.

In December 1916, Frederick mailed a letter from France to his brother Clifford, at 516 Christina Street. The following is that letter:

*Well, I suppose you heard all about the Canadians down on the Somme. We had some hard fighting and we beat the Huns at every turn and I came out with the best of luck. We were a hard looking lot of fellows. We were mud from head to foot, but we don't mind that as long as we are beating the Huns and taking his trenches. They won't stand and fight with us for they don't like the bayonet. I suppose old Sarnia is just the same old place.*

*Your loving brother, Pte. Fred Johnson*

On April 9, 1917, Frederick Johnson would lose his life while fighting on the first day of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, France. Another Sarnian, David Kerr, would also lose his life in the same battle on the same day (also included in this project). Frederick Johnson was officially listed as, *Killed in Action. At Vimy Ridge.* In late May 1917, Frederick's mother in Sarnia, would receive a letter from the 24th Battalion Chaplain, Captain C. Stuart. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Madam,*

*I am sorry to have been so long in writing to express my sympathy with you in the loss of your son, Pte. F. Johnson, No. 124029, of this battalion, who was killed in action on April 9th.... Your son as you know, was killed in the advance at Vimy Ridge and was buried there in a forward cemetery on the Ridge itself, side by side with his comrades. One can only express to you our deep sympathy and appreciation of the life and the noble example of your son. He was always so cheerful in his work and in his whole life as a soldier that he won a feeling of respect and esteem with both officers and men. His loss is one which we all feel, and yet how better can a man die than in defence of a cause which defends his home, his country and his God.*

*I always feel so strongly that these lads are continually in the presence of God, that when the end comes, he goes to meet them with hands outstretched, saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord." For it is a good faithful service they have rendered, the same sort of service which Jesus Christ himself offered in His life, and death on the Cross. But one knows the sadness his loss must bring into your heart, and one can only pray that these may be also a pride and solace in the thought that he has lived and died as a Christian soldier... May God send you His Holy Spirit to comfort you in these sad days.*

*Yours faithfully, C. Stuart, Chaplain, 24th Can. Bn.*

Twenty-nine year old Frederick Johnson has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as F. Johnston.

NOTE: Some sources spell his last name as "Johnston", with the "t". The spelling used in this project is based on Frederick Johnson's own signature on his attestation papers.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G



**JOHNSTON, George Charles (#2006885)**

George Johnston was born in London, Ontario, on March 25, 1881, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Johnston, of 182 Napier Street, Sarnia. George would marry Isabella Johnston, and they would be residing in Detroit, Michigan at his enlistment. George enlisted December 28, 1917 in Windsor, Ontario with Canadian Engineers Railway Construction. At the time of his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a woodworker and carpenter. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Engineers, 5th Battalion, with the rank of Sapper. On October 6, 1918, George Johnston would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In mid-October 1918, George's brother Harry Johnston of the Wanless Grocery store in Sarnia, would receive a telegram informing him of his brother George's circumstances of death—George had lost his life at the 22nd Clearing Station, as a result of wounds that he received, a gunshot wound in the thigh. Less than one month later, the Armistice was signed ending the Great War. George Johnston would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. At No. 22 Casualty Clearing Station*. Thirty-seven year old George Johnston is buried in Bucquoy Road Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. Grave IV.E.2.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**JONES, George Andrew (#334403)**

George Jones was born on December 12, 1898, the son of William Andrew Jones and Georgie Ella (nee Ford) Jones, of 167 Cameron Street, Sarnia (the Jones family were of the "black race", as noted in his attestation papers). George's siblings included: sisters Ellen (born 1891) and Carrie (born 1893); and brother Austin (born 1895, who would also serve with the Canadian Forces in France during the war, as a Private). George enlisted May 14, 1917, in Sarnia with the 63rd Depot Battery. Single at the time, he recorded his occupation as a painter. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Artillery, 4th Light Trench Mortar Battery, with the rank of Gunner. On October 8, 1918, George Jones would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In mid-October 1918, George's parents in Sarnia would receive a telegram from England and Ottawa informing them that; 334403, *Pvt. George Andrew Jones, artillery, previously reported dangerously wounded, now reported dangerously ill at the 20th General Hospital, Dannes, Camieres*. Approximately one month after George Jones death, the Armistice was signed ending the Great War. George would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds (shrapnel wound, right buttock). At No. 29 General Hospital, Camiers*. The following is the October 17, 1918 *Sarnia Observer* report of his death:

*Local Man Dies of Wounds*

*The citizens of the city will regret to learn of the death of another of Sarnia's war heroes in the person of Private George Andrew Jones, of the artillery, a message arriving to that effect. The young man was a son of Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Jones, 167 Cameron Street, and was known as a quiet, unassuming young fellow and well liked by all who knew him. He went overseas a couple of years ago with an artillery draft of the 63rd battery. He was in his 20th year, and is survived by his parents, two sisters, and a brother Private Austin Jones, now with the Canadian forces in France.*

Nineteen-year old George Jones is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave LXVI.H.17. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as A. Jones.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**KERR, David (#402653)**

David Kerr was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, on September 5, 1881, the son of Alexander Kerr and Ellen (nee Hare) Kerr, of Scotland. His siblings included Thomas Harwell (born 1883); Euphemia Hare (born 1885); Jane (Jennie) Meek (born 1889); and half sibling Alexander (born 1905). In 1901, at age 19, David was living in Musselburgh, Scotland, and was working as a coal miner. One year later in 1902, his mother Ellen would die. In July 1903, David would arrive in Canada (at the port of Montreal) from Glasgow, Scotland. Two years later, David married Agnes Druscilla (nee Siddall, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Siddall of Wellington Street, Sarnia) Kerr on August 18, 1905 in Lambton County. They would later reside at 136 N. Brock St., Sarnia. David and his wife Agnes would have four children together: Sandy (born 1906); twins Florence May and Helen (born 1910); and Angus Stewart (born 1911). David Kerr was a well-known singer in Sarnia who sang on special occasions in connection with the different churches of the city. He was, for a few years, connected with the Prudential Life Insurance Company and was a member of the old Concert Band.

David enlisted on January 15, 1915 in Sarnia. At the time, he listed his occupation as a labourer, and he

recorded that he had prior militia experience with the 27th Regiment. He left Sarnia on August 17th, 1915 with the "B" company of the 18th Battalion, as a Private. Shortly after arriving in Guelph camp, David was made Sergeant. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, The Royal Canadian Regiment, Sergeant. On arriving overseas, he was promoted again to instructor in bombing and was noted as an expert bomb thrower. In mid-December of 1915, the *Sarnia Observer* printed a letter that David Kerr had mailed to them from East Sandling Camp, Shorncliffe, Kent, England. At the time, he listed himself as part of 9th Reserve Battalion, "B" Company. An excerpt of that letter reads as follows:

*To Sarnia Observer, Sarnia, Ontario*

*Dear Mr. Editor*

*Allow me a small space in your valuable paper to let you know how the Sarnia boys are faring in England. We left Canada on August 17, and had a very good trip overseas until we came into the danger zone, then we had to sleep on deck all night, so as to be ready for the life boats in case the German subs were near, but luckily for us they let us pass, but the Hesperian was doomed on her return trip to Canada. She landed us at Devonport on the 26th of August, and was sunk on Sept. 4th, so when we heard about the mishap to her we said: "God bless the Germans", but we thought of other words which would look bad on paper.*

*Now start with our camp life here. The first is the weather, which is very bad. It rains every other day, and the mud is supreme. Salisbury was no worse than Shorncliffe. The mud is ankle deep, but the boys shut their eyes and plough, which is the only way to do, as we have come too far to kick now.... Now for our training, which finished Saturday, December 4, after 14 weeks pretty hard drill. We get up at 6 a.m., fall in at 7:30, physical drill till 8, breakfast 8:15, fall in at 9, inspection by company officer, then we have an inspection by the colonel, which takes about an hour, and we have to stand at attention all the time; but thank God, the Brigadier put a stop to that. You had to shave, clean your buttons and shoes, and if he couldn't see his face in your buttons it was Orderly room at 4 p.m. The boys call him some funny names. We have three route marches a week, from ten to fifteen miles, and full marching at that.... One thing we miss here is the brown shoes which were issued to us in Canada. We have the black ones here, with heel plates and hob nails, but they are good shoes for marching with, though when we go up town you would think it was a team of Clydes we make so much noise on the pavement....*

*We are attached to the 9th Reserve Battalion and they come from Edmonton, but the most of them have either been wounded, killed or taken prisoners, and we are filling up the gaps. They are coming and going all the time. I will give you an instance, it is hard to believe but is nevertheless true. I shool hands with a Sergeant going out on draft on Thursday morning and I was in Folkestone on Saturday evening watching the hospital ship come in, and the same Sergeant was the second man to come ashore, wounded, shot through the left shoulder. We are only six hours journey from the trenches. We can hear the big guns bombarding the Belgium coast, so you see it doesn't take long to get put out of commission over there. All the boys here are ready for the fray. I don't think it will be long till they get their wish, as the quartermaster sergeant has everything ready for them. I don't think I will get away with them, as I am instructing in bomb throwing. I was at school for a month for instruction and I got through with a first class certificate. I go to London next week to finish my course in explosives.*

*The scenery around here is lovely. We have lots of old land marks, such as the oldest house in Kent, and that makes the route marches more agreeable to the boys, and they enjoy them. The people have always a cheery word for the Canuck's wherever we go, and the roads are good, which makes it better for us.*

*Now about the food; the most important factor of all. Well, it is wholesome and we get plenty of it.... The men have porridge, bacon and tea, bread and butter for breakfast and it is changed from time to time. For dinner they have roast, spuds, stew, at times it is always changed. Supper, tea and different kinds of fruit. I pay six cents for extras in the sergeant's mess, and we feed good. I have to see the rations we are getting, and I know I never felt better in my life.*

*Well, Mr. Editor, all the Sarnia boys join me in wishing you and your staff and readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and tell the young men of Sarnia that they are needed here to do their bit. We don't want Sarnia the Imperial City to have the name of having "Slackers" in its boundaries. From the boys of the Second draft of the old 34th Battalion, C.E.F. I remain one of the boys,*

*Sergt. D. Kerr*

NO GREATER LOVE HATH ANY MAN THAN THIS.  
HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY.

In September of 1916, David was admitted to the hospital at Etaples, France, after he suffered from an attack of rheumatism. Seven months later, on April 9, 1917, David Kerr, aged 35, would lose his life while fighting on the first day of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, France. Another Sarnian, Frederick Johnson, would also lose his life in the same battle on the same day (also included in this project). David Kerr would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack at Vimy Ridge*. Thirty-five year old David Kerr is buried in La Chaudiere Military Cemetery, Vimy, Pas de Calais, France, Grave IX.B.12. David would leave behind his widow Agnes Kerr and their four small children (ages 6-11), who were residing in Windsor, Ontario at the time of his death. He would receive the citation: The 1914-15 Star.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**KETCH, Albert Harold Willsea (#405569) – Photograph page 383**

Albert Harold Ketch was born in Oil Springs, Ontario, on June 16, 1893, the son of Albert Edward Ketch (of Lancashire, England, editor of the *Oil Springs Chronicle*, and later the editor and proprietor of the *Alvinston Free Press*) and Helena Pamela (nee Willsea, of Avon, Ontario) Ketch. His siblings included Lyla Marilla (born 1896) and Clara Hazel (born 1897, would later reside in London, Ontario, employed at the London Free Press). As a young boy, he was an enthusiast in baseball, football and hockey. In November 1903, when Harold was 10 years old, his father Albert Edward would die in Alvinston. Two years later, in July of 1911, his mother Helena married James N. Dodd and they moved to 108 Durand Street, Sarnia.

Harold left high school at the age of 15 and took charge of the *Alvinston Free Press*. Realizing the importance of an education, he returned to school two years later and obtained his second class certificate. He had experience in several well-equipped offices, such as *The Montreal Herald* and the *Simcoe Reformer*. He then returned to once again take charge of the *Alvinston Free Press*. He was a member of the St. Clair Press Association and the Canadian Press Association. Harold enlisted with the 48th Highlanders in Toronto on May 10, 1915. At the time, he listed his occupation as printer and his marital status as single. Harold came from a military family. His father having first-class certificates from Military College and from London and his uncle, Robert Ketch, was an officer who was killed in the trenches of France in March 1915. A cousin, Henry Ketch, was also killed at the Dardanelles. There were only 35 soldiers left out of 1,000 who were trying to land at that time. After Harold completed his course as a signaler, he was transferred to the 35th Battalion of Toronto and then later the 24th Battalion.

Harold went overseas in October of 1915, and was in France by March of 1916. In early March of that year, Harold would write the following letter home to his mother:

*My dear mother,*

*I have just finished telling Hazel (his sister) some news that I consider the best of news, and that is by the time you receive this letter, I will likely be somewhere in France. Two others and I volunteered to reinforce the signal section of the 24th Battalion, which is at the front. We volunteered this morning when Lieut. Woods called for volunteers. We were lucky to be in the front rank and in a jiffy we were out in front. We have had medical examination, and our rifles have been inspected, our bayonets sharpened and we had also had our kit inspected. We have identification discs about our neck on a string. On it is "No. 405569, Pte. A.H.W. Ketch, 24th Batt., Inf., Canadians". On Monday, the 6th, we have a final inspection and then I suppose we leave. The two fellows who go with me, are good chaps and as we have three of our signalers with the 24th now, it won't be like going to a strange bunch by any means. You should see the big black English army boots I have on, No. 10, and I have two pair of socks on. When I get back to civis again I sure won't be able to wear freak shoes. We take the Oliver equipment with us and the Ross rifle. We also take two suits of underwear, three pairs of socks, one rubber sheet, one blanket and a few necessaries issued by the army. The rest we pack in our kit bags and they are stored away for us till we claim them. I got the papers you sent to Hettie. Don't worry about me. Buck up and assist in anything you can to help us win the war. Be cheery under all circumstances. Regards to my Sarnia friends and acquaintances.*

*Harold*

On June 8th of 1916, Harold would send his mother another letter from Flanders, France. The following is an excerpt from Harold's second letter:

*Dear mother,*

*I am going to write several letters today as there is no telling when I'll get the chance again for as you are aware already by the papers, we are in the thick of things now. I will let you know how I make out at every opportunity. Our*

*regiment has a distinctive hat badge now. It is very bright and is the shape of a star surmounted with a crown. It has the letters V.R.C. on it (Victoria Rifles of Canada)...*

*Well, we are likely to be in the heat of things so what is in store for me is uncertain. What we want is more help from Canada in the way of willing men. We have a hard fight yet ahead before we beat Fritz, and all the men are needed. If the fellows at home would just stop to realize fully where their duty lay. If they were over here a few minutes just to see what noble sacrifices our fellows are making for the glory of the old empire, I'm sure they would enlist by the thousands. Well Mother, be cheery and don't worry about me. If anything happens to me you'll know I did my best in a good cause and work hard all the time for more recruits and assistance to those over here....*

*Well, be cheery and send me a parcel of eats and newspapers.*

*Lovingly, Harold*

In France, Harold was a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 24th Battalion, with the rank of Lance Corporal. One year after writing the above letter, Harold would be wounded at Vimy Ridge and would be awarded the Military Medal on May 17, 1917. The Military Medal award reads: "*For conspicuous bravery at VIMY RIDGE on April 9th, 1917, when as a Lineman attached to BN. Report Centre, he showed great courage and determination in laying lines and keeping them in repair under heavy artillery fire, thereby enabling communication to be maintained throughout the operation. Although wounded he carried on with his duties for over twenty-four hours, when he was ordered out by his Officer. His action was indeed a most excellent example to his comrades.*"

On August 15, 1917, Harold Ketch would lose his life while fighting on the first day of the Attack on Hill 70, France. His mother Mrs. J.N. Dodd would receive the following short telegram informing her of her son's death in early September of 1917:

*Ottawa, Ont. September 3*

*Deeply regret to inform you 405569, Lance Corporal Albert Harold Willsie Ketch, infantry, officially reported killed in action, August 15, 1917.*

*Director of Records*

Only a day or two before receiving the above telegram, Mrs. Dodd had received a letter from Harold, dated August 12th, 1917. In it, he described how he was in England on leave visiting his cousin and uncle George and that he was that day leaving to return to France. Harold Ketch would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack north of Lens. He was buried on the roof of a bomb store between two deep dugout tunnels, back of Lens, between St. Elio or St. Emile and another small place. Grave cannot be located as bomb store and dugouts have been blown up.* Twenty-four year old Albert Harold Ketch has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calasi, France. Harold Ketch's name is also inscribed on the Village of Alvinston's Memorial.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **KNIGHT, Charles Edwin (#654629) – Photograph page 384**

Charles Knight was born in Sarnia, on July 27, 1896, the son of William Russell Knight (of Simcoe County, a barber) and Catherine Jane "Jennie" (nee Saunders, of Goderich) Knight, of 158 North Brock Street, Sarnia. His siblings included Alberta Louise (born 1883); William Ernest (born 1885); Harry Wallace (born 1887); Arthur Russell (born 1889); Oliver Saunders (born 1891); James Abraham (born 1893); Jennie Mae (born 1895); and Clarence (born 1899, died at 6 months). Charles' older brother William Ernest enlisted in the Army Medical Corps in January 1915 and arrived in England in April 1915. Once there, William served on hospital ships *Letitia*, *Araguay* and *Llandoverly Castle*, making 24 round trips across the ocean. William had made many trips on the *Llandoverly Castle* except, ironically and fortunately, its last ill-fated trip. The *Llandoverly Castle* was torpedoed by a German submarine, in June of 1918, killing two hundred thirty-four, including Private David Smuck of Sarnia. Just prior to the last fateful voyage of the *Llandoverly Castle*, William Knight had reverted to the rank of private and went to France as a stretcher-bearer with the 13th Field Ambulance. William would serve overseas for four years in the War, returning to Sarnia in June of 1919.

Charles Knight enlisted with the 161st Huron Battalion at Goderich, on March 20, 1916, where he was living at the time. He listed his occupation as a factory hand and his marital status as single. He was later transferred to the 58th Battalion, leaving Canada and arriving in England in October 1916. As a member of the Army, Canadian

**DEAR OLD PAL, HOW WE MISS YOU. WE ARE LONELY TONIGHT.  
MOTHER AND DAD.**

Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 58th Battalion, with the rank of Private, Charles arrived in France in December 1916.

Charles Knight would take part in fighting in the engagements at Vimy and at Passchendaele. On October 26, 1917, Charles Knight would lose his life while fighting on the first day of the Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. Another Sarnian, James Millar Pirrie, would also lose his life in the same battle on the same day (also included in this project). Charles Knight would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack west of Passchendaele*. Charles was awarded the Allied Mothers Badge and the Memorial Cross, which was presented to his mother Catherine Jennie Knight by the Canadian Government. She would wear it the remainder of her life, passing it on to her grandson, Fred. Now, it is treasured by her great-grand-daughter Jodi. Twenty-one year old Charles Knight has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 18-24-26-30.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **KNOWLES, Thomas Neville (#226125)**

Thomas Knowles was born in Point Edward, on January 28, 1891, the eldest son of John Knowles (a locomotive fireman and retail shoe merchant) and Hughmina Elizabeth (nee Mooney) Knowles, of 335 London Road, Sarnia. His siblings included Sarah (born 1887); John William (born 1890); Mina (born 1892); and Bernice (born 1909). Born in Point Edward, Thomas spent his boyhood days in that village, and later in Sarnia, where he was a popular young man with many friends. Prior to enlisting, he was employed with the Mooney Biscuit Company of Stratford. Thomas enlisted on October 6, 1915, in Stratford, Ontario with the Depot Regiment, Canadian Rifles. A bachelor, Thomas was living in Stratford at the time and listed his occupation as candy maker. Thomas' brother, John William, would also leave Sarnia in October of 1915, for London, Ontario to take a course at the Military school there in preparation to enlist for active service.

Thomas Knowles went overseas in April of 1916 and crossed over into France in November of 1916. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Cavalry, Royal Canadian Dragoons, 1st Armoured Regiment, with the rank of Lance Corporal. On March 30, 1918, Thomas Knowles would lose his life while fighting in the significant battle of Delville Wood, France. While taking part in a Cavalry charge near the Bois de Moreuil, he was hit just below the heart and "instantly killed by a bullet from an enemy rifle." Thomas Knowles would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. In April of 1918, Thomas' father, John, would receive the following telegram in Sarnia:

*Ottawa, Ont. April 18th*

*John Knowles, 335 London Road, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Sincerely regret to inform you 226125 Private Thos. Neville Knowles, Cavalry, officially reported killed in action March 30th 1918.*

*Director of Records*

In May of 1918, the *Sarnia Observer* published a review of the engagement in which two Sarnians participated: Private Thomas Knowles lost his life and Private Leonard Galloway received serious injuries. Both men were attached to the Royal Canadian Dragoons. Following is the article:

#### *Review of Great Battle in Which Sarnia Boys Played a Big Part*

*The commander in chief has mentioned the splendid work of the British cavalry in the recent fighting and I am now able to write things which I wanted to write before because in the first days of this battle I saw cavalry riding out to meet the enemy round about Ham and Guiscard, and afterward on patrol work below Delville Wood and Pozieres. From March 22 onward they fought mounted and dismounted, helped to stop gaps in the line and stem the German tide, charged Germans on foot and Germans on horseback, cleared woods and roads with machine guns and rifles, rode out in patrols to reconnoiter the enemy's position, chased German advance guards out of villages and acted as rearguards to the British infantry. Their losses were not light but light for all the service they did on the hours and days and nights of grave peril.*

*On March 22 they dismounted and held the Ollezy-Ham line when the enemy was bearing down in vast numbers, and some dragoons fought all night, covering the withdrawal of the tired troops. They could leave only a few men to look after the horses and it was the men of a labor battalion who one night led their horses to the next position, each man with 15 horses tied together on one rope, which was not an easy job on a dark night, with poor, frightened beasts.*

*The British cavalry had hard fighting around Guivry, and on the 26th they moved up to help the French, who were meeting the enemy hordes bearing down on Noyon. The British squadrons had their left flank exposed when they*

*were ordered to hold Porquericot Ridge, on which the enemy was moving. They went at full speed, pressing their horses forward to something like a gallop, and the infantry soldiers cheered at the sight of this living tide of fine men and fine beasts streaming over the slopes. The enemy was already on the ridge, but the cavalry held the southern side of it, stopping the enemy from gaining the height.*

*When the allied line withdrew to the Driette river it was necessary for the cavalry to conform to this movement which they did with the enemy again on their left flank, so that the Lancers, Hussars and Canadian cavalry were under furious machine gun fire. After supporting the British infantry near Marcelcave, the dismounted cavalry with one mounted squadron, made a gallant attack through Moreuil Wood and cleared out the enemy. Afterward, however, it was again filled with Germans who had many machine guns and the cavalry were again asked to clear it. It was a perilous task, for two battalions of the enemy held the wood, and their machine gun fire swept through the glades; but in this wood of Moreuil on the morning of April 1 British cavalry performed a feat as fine as the Balaklava charge, and this also should be made into a ballad and learned by heart.*

*Twelve hundred men who had been riding all through the night went forward in three waves and charged that dark wood next morning at a hard gallop. The first wave rode to the edge of the wood, and the second to the centre, and the third wave went right through to the other side, riding through the enemy and over his machine guns and in the face of a hail of bullets from hidden machines. They cleared the wood of Moreuil and brought back prisoners and thirteen machine guns, but there were many empty saddles, and many men and horses fell.*

*That was the finest exploit of the British cavalry, but elsewhere it did splendid work, and everywhere the men were gallant and cool, as when some of the dragoons came under a heavy shrapnel fire near Gentille, and many men had to shoot their wounded horses to put them out of their agony.*

Twenty-seven year old Thomas Knowles has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calasi, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as N. Knowles.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **LECKIE, Norman Chester (#472813)**

Norman Leckie was born in Sarnia, on May 7, 1889, the son of Robert Leckie (a farmer from Saskatchewan) and Margaret (nee McVicar) Leckie, both originally of Scotland. His siblings included Elymer Robert (born 1881); Christie Ann (born 1883); and Sarah Ethel (born 1886). The Leckie family moved to Sarnia Township at some point, and would later move to Saskatchewan where, in 1911, Norman was living in Battleford, Saskatchewan with his brother Elymer (and his wife and their daughter). Two years later, while living in Unity, Saskatchewan with his parents, Norman enlisted on December 13, 1915 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with the 65th Battalion. A bachelor, Norman listed his occupation as farmer. He was later transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 54th Battalion, with the rank of Private.

Sometime in the latter half of 1917, while fighting in France, Norman was wounded at the Somme, France. He was sent home to Canada and placed in the Davisville Military Hospital in Toronto. He would lay there for over a year with an open wound in the hip after undergoing several operations. On October 10, 1918 at 4:20 p.m., while still in Davisville Hospital, Norman Leckie would lose his life, the tragic result of that injury which was over a year old. The poison and infection from the German shell that had lacerated his hip could not be stemmed by medical operations. Norman Leckie's Circumstances of Casualty was recorded as, *Gun shot W left buttock and thigh. Admitted to hospital on May 25th, 1917, operated on for sequestrum. Three other operations for the same condition.*

Norman's body was returned to the home of his sister, a Mrs. Levi Fair who lived on the 2nd Line in Sarnia township. His funeral with full Military Honours took place on October 13, 1918. It was one of the largest military funerals seen in the City at that time. It began with a very solemn service at the deceased sisters' house, with his comrades as pallbearers and members of the Great War Veteran's Association as guard of honour. The cortege then departed for the deceased's final resting place. Accompanying the hearse in the full military funeral parade were comrades, infantry veterans, relatives, family members and friends, who travelled in a procession of automobiles and buggies, in a line over half a mile in length. The parade made its way into Sarnia, down Mitton, Davis, and Christina Streets to Exmouth Street on its way to Lakeview Cemetery. At the cemetery, the funeral party was met by a military band, firing party and wreath bearers. After the burial, a service was read by Rev. Morrison and the Band played "Nearer My God to Thee". The firing party then took its place over the grave and fired three volleys, which was

followed by the playing of the "Last Post" by the band. When the military parade left, the parents and relatives remained to view for the last time on earth their son and brother Norman Leckie who paid the supreme sacrifice. One month after Norman Leckie's death, the Armistice agreement was signed, ending the Great War. Twenty-nine year old Norman Leckie is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **LUMLEY, Roy Henry (#123137)**

Roy Lumley was born in Wheatley, Essex, Ontario, on March 4, 1894, the son of Richard Henry Lumley (labourer) and Sarah Elizabeth (nee Brown) Lumley, of 241 Exmouth Street, later Water Street, Sarnia. His siblings included William Albert (born 1880); May C. (born 1884); Ida May (born 1885); Frank (born 1888); George (born 1890); Laura Jane (born 1892, died in 1904); Mabel (born 1896); Dewey Admiral (born 1901); and Ella (born 1906). Prior to enlisting, Roy was an employee of the Cleveland Sarnia Saw Mills Company. Roy enlisted September 7, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 70th Battalion. At the time, he listed that he was a labourer and that he was single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 21st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On April 15, 1917, Roy Lumley would lose his life, the result of fatal wounds he had received while fighting at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, France. Roy Lumley would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. At No. 23 Casualty Clearing Station.*

In early June of 1917, Roy's mother Sarah in Sarnia would receive a letter written by the nurse who was caring for her son the day after Roy entered the hospital. At the same time, Sarah received a second letter from a comrade of her son, which he penned only the day before the young hero died. The writer apparently had been at the hospital only a short time and, on leaving, was hopeful of his Roy's recovery. The letter reads as follows:

*France, April 14th, 1917*

*Mrs. R.H. Lumpley, 241 Exmouth St., Sarnia*

*Dear Madam,*

*I am droppig you a few lines at your son's request as I know him quite well. I saw him after he was wounded and he was alright then, and likely he is in England by this time. He went through the hospital on the 11th and I dropped you a card at that time. I hope Madam that you will take no offence at me writing, for your son and myself were in the same battalion in London, Ont., and you don't need to worry for he is all O.K., and hopes to be alright soon. He was very cheerful when I saw him and we had quite a chat together while they were dressing his wounds. He can thank his knife for saving his life. I hope you get a letter soon from him and hope he gets well.*

*One of his chums, Pte. W.C. Hopwood, B.E.F. France*

(Note: the reference in the letter to Roy's knife was taken by his friends to mean that it was used to cut him out of wire entanglements).

In mid-June of 1917, Roy's parents, Richard and Sarah, living on Exmouth Street at the time, received a personal letter of sympathy from Hon. A.E. Kemp, minister of Militia and Defence for Canada. Twenty-three year old Roy Lumley is buried in Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave III.D.11.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **MAJOR, Charles Robson (#231712) – Photograph page 386**

Charles Robson was born in Sarnia, on October 31, 1883, whose parents, Charles Hedley Major (an engineer) and Catharine Alice (nee Dodds) Major resided at 273 Davis Street, Sarnia. Charles Robson had one brother, Melvin Willis (born 1886). Seven years after his first marriage, father Charles Hedley would remarry, to Chestina Jesse Moffat in September of 1889. They would have three children together, half siblings for Charles Robson: Herbert Earl (born 1890); Grace Pearl (born 1894); and Edna May (born 1898). The family continued to reside at 273 Davis Street, Sarnia.

Charles Robson enlisted July 13, 1916 in Calgary, Alberta with the 202nd Edmonton Sportsman Battalion. He was living in Camrose, Alberta at the time, listing his occupation as clerk and his marital status as single. After being transferred, Charles became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, 31st Battalion, with the rank of Private. The 31st Battalion arrived in France in the spring of 1917 and a few months later, on August 21, 1917, Charles Major would lose his life while fighting during the Attack on Hill 70, France. Charles Major would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. West of Lens, France.*

In early September of 1917, Charles' father, still residing at 273 Davis Street would receive the following official telegram:

*Ottawa, Sept. 5th*

*Deeply regret to inform you 231712 Pte. Charles Robson Major, infantry, officially reported killed in action August 21st.*  
*Director of Records*

Thirty-four year old Charles Major has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**MANNING, Daniel Edward Vincent (#401650)**

Daniel Manning was born in Marylebone, Middlesex, England, on December 25, 1883. Daniel enlisted August 27, 1915, in Sarnia with the 70th Battalion. At the time, he recorded his next of kin as Mrs. E. Swift, of London, Ontario, his occupation as a clerk, and his marital status as single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 11, 1916, Daniel Manning would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Daniel Manning would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. Was wounded by shrapnel in the stomach while on a working party on the night of September 10th, 1916. He was taken to a dressing station, from there evacuated to No. 21 South Midland Casualty Clearing Station where he died the following day.* Thirty-two year old Daniel Manning is buried in Warloy-Baillon Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France, Grave VI.A.10.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**MANNING, Herbert John (G/9457)**

Herbert was the son of Henry Samuel Manning and Marion Manning (both originally from England), of 4 Grand Trunk House, Point Edward, Ontario. Herbert's mother, Marion, had five brothers, and thirteen brothers-in-law (two of whom were killed) who served in the Great War. Showing her patriotism, Mrs. Manning was quoted as saying, "I would enlist myself if I could." Herbert's father, Henry, had seen 12 years of service in the British army and enlisted in December 1915, with the 149th Battalion. He attained the rank of Sergeant and was on special service in London but was unable to go to France on account of his age.

Parents Henry and Marion would have four sons. Herbert was the eldest Manning son, with brothers Cecil, Harry, and Alfred. Along with their father Henry, sons Herbert, Cecil, Harry and Alfred would all serve in the Great War. Henry, Cecil, Harry and Albert would all enlist with the Lambton 149th. Herbert would enlist with the British Forces. The second eldest was Cecil, who was employed as a chauffeur in the city, enlisting on June 15th, 1915, with the 1st Canadian Contingent, becoming a Corporal. Cecil was wounded at Ypres on June 15th, 1915, after having been through many of the hard fought engagements such as St. Julien, Langemarck, Armentieres and Ypres. He was discharged and declared unfit for further service in 1916, and would return to England to reside. The third eldest son was Harry Manning, who enlisted in 1915 with the 34th Battalion. He would become a Corporal, and was wounded on July 25th, 1916, where he then did light duty at the Canadian Record Office in London, England. The youngest son was Alfred Manning, enlisting in January of 1916 with the 149th Battalion, later transferring to the Forestry Battalion, going over to France in October 1917.

Herbert Manning the eldest son, enlisted in 1915 in Sarnia, with the British Army. Herbert would become a sergeant (#9457) with the 10th Battalion, Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. He would spend two years in the trenches before losing his life on March 27, 1918, during the Battle of Arras, France. In early May of 1918, Herbert's mother Marion in Point Edward would receive a cablegram advising her that her son Herbert had fallen while in action. Herbert would be the only one of the family of five Mannings fighting in the Great War to pay the supreme sacrifice. Twenty-seven year old Herbert Manning is memorialized on the Arras Memorial, Bay 2, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, N

**McDONALD, Albert Alexander (#3131667) – Photograph page 387**

Albert McDonald was born in Thedford, Ontario, on January 5, 1894, the son of Alexander McDonald (a farmer) and Mary (nee Perkins) McDonald, of 216 Essex Street, and later 237 Bright Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting,



Albert was employed for two years in the butcher shop of W.J. Laughlin, North Front Street. He enlisted in the Western Ontario Regiment on January 9th, 1918 and became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On August 28, 1918, Albert McDonald would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Albert McDonald would later be officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Was hit in the body by shrapnel and killed, during military operations near Vis-en-Artois in front of Arras*. In mid-September of 1918, his mother, Mary McDonald of 216 Essex Street, Sarnia, would receive a telegram informing her that her son, *Pte. Albert McDonald had been killed in action on August 28th*. Twenty-four year old Albert McDonald is buried in Vis-En-Artois British Cemetery, Haucourt, Pas de Calais, France, Grave I.B.33.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **McGIBBON, David Hegler**

David Hegler McGibbon was born in Sarnia, on November 4, 1897, the son of David Christie McGibbon (of Halton, Ontario) and Agnes Ada (nee Ferguson, of Ingersol, Ontario) McGibbon, of 366 Christina St., Sarnia. His siblings included Finlay Ferguson (born 1895) and Kenneth Charles (born 1901). At the age of 12, David would lose his father, David Christie McGibbon, who died in August of 1910. David Hagler would enlist in mid-1917 and would become a member of the Air Force, Royal Flying Corps, 42nd Training Squadron, with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

Only in England for about two months, on September 15, 1918, David would lose his life in a flying accident. In late September of 1918, the sad news of Flight Lieutenant David McGibbon's death was received in Sarnia via two telegrams: one from the Secretary of Air Ministry, London, England; the other from Major James G. Merrison. Besides expressions of sympathy, the messages contained very little information beyond the fact that David had been killed in an airplane accident on September 15th. Twenty-year old David McGibbon is buried in St. Gregory and St. Martin Churchyard, Wye, Kent, United Kingdom, Grave 125. On David McGibbon's headstone are inscribed the words, *In Loving Memory of 2nd Lieut. D.H. Mc Gibbon, R.A.F. Sarnia, Canada. Killed in a flying accident Sept 15th 1918. Aged 20 years & 10 months*.

On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as H. Mc Gibbon.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, L, N, 2D, 2G

### **McINTOSH, Andrew (#124472)**

Andrew McIntosh was born in London, Ontario, on September 30, 1883, the son of Andrew McIntosh and Sophie McLarren (nee McPhee) McIntosh, both originally from Scotland, but having immigrated to Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. Andrew's siblings included Maggie (born 1879); Thomas (born 1880); Mary (born 1886); Isabelle (born 1890); Raymond (born 1890); and Alexander (born 1893). At the time of his enlistment, Andrew was living in Sarnia. Enlisting on November 16, 1915 in Sarnia with the 70th Battalion, Andrew, single at the time, listed his occupation as an R.R. Conductor. Andrew would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 58th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 17, 1916, he would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Andrew McIntosh would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. While taking part in an attack at Courcelette, he was instantly killed in the early morning of September 17th, 1916, by the explosion of a heavy caliber shell. No record of burial*. Thirty-two year old Andrew McIntosh has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **McKENZIE, Walter Wake**— Photograph page 387

Walter McKenzie was born in Point Edward, Ontario, on April 28, 1891, the only son of Thomas McKenzie (of Ireland, a locomotive engineer) and Alice Emily (nee Wake) McKenzie. The McKenzie family was originally from Sarnia and would later reside in Toronto. Walters had one sister, Frances Alice (born 1896). After receiving an education in Sarnia public schools, Walter then attended Parkdale Collegiate, Toronto, and University of Toronto Medicine (1909-14). He would become Vice President, Medical Society, Staff, of the Hamilton Asylum. On September 8, 1915, while living in Toronto, he enlisted (completing the Officers' Declaration Form) in Niagara with the 83rd Overseas Battalion. At the time he listed his occupation as a physician and that he was single. In August 1915, he was appointed Medical Officer to the 83rd Battalion which went overseas in April 1916. Walter became a

*WE'RE PROUD OF YOU, DADDY. WE LOVE YOU AND NEED YOU.  
YOUR TWO LITTLE BOYS AND MUM.*

Captain in the Canadian Army Medical Corps. In October of 1916, he was transferred to Shorncliffe Military Hospital, where he attended to the wounded. Four months later, while on duty, he took ill on February 17th, 1917 with cerebrospinal meningitis to which he succumbed after two days. Walter would later be officially listed as, *Died. (Epilepsy) Helena Officers Hospital, Shorncliffe*. Twenty-five year old Walter McKenzie is buried in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Kent, United Kingdom, Grave M.506. On Walter McKenzie's headstone are inscribed the words, *His name liveth forever*.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **McMULLIN, Leonard Calvin (#844831)**

Leonard McMullin was born in Bradshaw, Ontario, on November 28, 1898, the only son of William Charles McMullin and Irene (nee Tiderington) McMullin, of 418 S. Vidal Street, later 466 Davis Street, Sarnia. Leonard enlisted February 4, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. A bachelor, Leonard listed his occupation as a labourer. He would go overseas in the spring of 1917 and became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. He would be in France for just over seven months. On May 25, 1918, Leonard McMullin would lose his life while fighting in France. He was instantly killed by concussion of a German trench mortar shell. Leonard McMullin would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. While sleeping in his funk hole in a front line trench, near Neuville Vitasse in the early morning of May 25th, 1918, he was killed by an enemy 'fish tail' bomb that dropped near him*. In June of 1918, Leonard's mother in Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*Ottawa, June 6th*

*Mrs. Irene McMullin, 466 Davis St., Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you that 844831, Pte. Leonard Calvin McMullin, infantry, is officially reported killed in action on May 25th, 1918.*

*Director of Records*

Not long after learning of the news of her son's death, Mrs. Irene McMullin wrote the following poem:

#### *Somewhere in France*

*"Somewhere in France," so weary, so faithful! "Innocence," dreaming whilst shells scream overhead;  
Dreaming of Home and the Land of the Maple; Knapsack his pillow, the clay for his bed.*

*"Somewhere" in No Man's Land! God grant that mother, Never shall dream what we're bibben to do!  
Stake we our life's blood, but leave for no other. Strenuous deeds which a soldier must do!*

*"Somewhere," a mother so lonely is waiting, Craving good tidings from over the sea;  
Praying, "O God, should it be Thy good pleasure, Send my darling in safety to me."*

*"Somewhere," in Heaven, past troubles and tears, For a voice, "Come, thou blessed," in mercy he heard,  
'Neath his cross, khaki clad, fitting garb for our heroes, His dearly loved form now lies undisturbed.*

*"Somewhere in France" his life work has ended, As o'er parapets gleam the first rays of sun.  
'Twixt boyhood and man, not a score yet of summers! Now peace, grand, eternal – a living "Well done."*

*Tho' poppies may fade, or the lark's wing grow weary, Mother love – oh so boundless – no living, no end!  
Sleep well son! Dear Heart, we ne'er shall forget thee, For thy life thou hast given, for country and friends.*

Nineteen-year old Leonard McMullin is buried in Wailly Orchard Cemetery, France, Grave II.F.15. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as L.C. McMullen.

At the end of the Great War, debates ensued in Sarnia as to how the city would pay tribute to the fallen soldiers. Several suggestions for some form of memorial were discussed: the planting of oak trees with inscribed metal plates of the fallen; building some sort of Community memorial building; and erecting some form of a monument. In late November of 1918, Leonard's mother Irene McMullin, wrote a letter to the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* expressing her preference. Her heartfelt letter is included in this project, in "The Story Behind the Sarnia Cenotaph" section.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **McMUTRIE, John A. (#53602)**

John McMutrie was born in Manchester, England, on July 3, 1875, the son of William Arnold McMutrie, of

Salford, Lancashire, England. John enlisted November 2, 1914 in Sarnia. At the time, he recorded that he had 3 years prior militia experience, that his occupation was a labourer, and that he was single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On October 3, 1916, John McMutrie would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. John McMutrie would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Trenches at Courcelette*. Forty-one year old John McMutrie has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **MONTGOMERY, David Chester (#782092) – Photograph page 388**

David Montgomery was born in North Gower, Carleton, Ontario, on August 1, 1893, the youngest child of James Montgomery and Harriet Irene (nee Lee) Montgomery, of North Gower Twp, Carleton, Ontario. His many siblings included John Simpson (born 1878); James Howard (born 1880); Laura Eva (born 1881); Ida May (born 1883); Violet Mabel (born 1884); William Bower (born 1888); and Robert Henry (born 1889). When he was only two years old, David would lose his father, James, who died in October 1895. Eleven years later, thirteen years old David would also lose his mother Harriet, who passed away in March 1907.

David was living in Avonlea, Saskatchewan when he enlisted February 9, 1916 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan with the 128th Battalion. He recorded his next of kin as James H. Montgomery, his brother, in Chaplin, Saskatchewan. Documents indicate David's occupation was a hardware salesman and that he was single. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, 49th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On April 26, 1917, David Montgomery would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of Vimy Ridge, France. David Montgomery would later be officially listed as, *Prev rep 'td 'Dangerously Ill', now 'Died of Wounds'. (Gunshot wound fracture base skull) at No. 24 General Hospital, Etaples*. Twenty-three year old David Montgomery is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave XVIII.A.3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **NASH, Harold (#123209)**

Harold Nash was born in Buckinghamshire, London, England, on August 3, 1893, the son of Alice Nash, of Buckinghamshire, England. Harold enlisted with his brother Frank, on September 10, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 70th Battalion. Both Harold and Frank had emigrated from England to Sarnia and, after a little over two years here, they both gave up good positions in the Imperial Oil Company, to enlist and to serve their country. Their widowed mother, Alice, now had four sons serving in the Great War. Beside Harold and Frank, two others were already fighting in the trenches in France.

Records indicate that Harold was a stationary engineer and that he was single. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 73rd Battalion, with the rank of Private. A little over one year after he enlisted, on December 28, 1916, Harold Nash would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Harold Nash would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported dangerously wounded, now 'Died of Wounds' (Gunshot wounds right arm, and abdomen) at No. 23 Casualty Clearing Station*. Twenty-three year old Harold Nash is buried in Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave II.A.4.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **NICHOL, Donald Lee (#1045461)**

Donald Nichol was born in Sarnia, on March 31, 1898, the son of Rev. Frank Orunston Nichol and Margaret Shaw (nee Brown) Nichol, of Amherstburg, Ontario. He had three siblings: Arthur, Frances and Ewart. Donald was living in Walkerville, Ontario at the time of his enlistment. He enlisted November 3, 1916 in Windsor, Ontario with the 241st Battalion. A bachelor, Donald recorded his occupation as a clerk. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 241st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On May 6, 1917, Donald Nichol would lose his life at Victoria Hospital, in London, Ontario. The circumstances of Donald Nichol's death were officially listed as, *Pneumonia – Admitted to Hospital 15-2-17 from Wolseley Barracks Hospital where he had been admitted 9-2-17 for Otitis Media. Received every care and attention*. Nineteen-year old Donald Nichol is buried in London (Woodland) Cemetery, London, Ontario, Grave 194. Section N.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**NOEL, Urban Joseph (#226970)**

Urban Noel was born in Bay City, Michigan, on August 3, 1896, the son of Francis Noel (born in Quebec) and Maud (nee Bondroitt, born in Canada) Noel, of 156 Cotterbury Street, Sarnia. His siblings included Maud Grace (born 1888); Francis (born 1889); Bertha (born 1892); Laura (born 1894); Eva (born 1898); Dela (born 1899); Rita (born 1902); and Mary H. (born 1907). Urban's older sister, Maud Grace, would marry Percival Guertin in September of 1908 in Sarnia, and Noel's brother-in-law, Percival, would also serve in the Great War, later losing his life during fighting in the trenches of France in April of 1918. Percival Guertin is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial and on the Sarnia cenotaph, and is included in this Project.

In May of 1910, the then thirteen-year old Urban Noel was confirmed at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Sarnia. When Noel enlisted, his parents were living in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, USA., while Noel was living in Peterborough, Ontario. Urban enlisted May 29, 1917 in Hamilton, Ontario with Depot Regiment, Canadian Mounted Rifles. At the time, Urban listed his occupation as a machinist and his marital status as single. He would later be transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 102nd Battalion, with the rank of Private. On August 8, 1918, Urban Noel would lose his life while fighting in France at the Battle of Amiens, on the first day of Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Urban Noel would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. He took part with his Company in an attack and when emerging from Beaucourt Wood he was hit in the head by a bullet and killed, between the first and second objective.*

In September of 1918, Urban's parents, Francis and Maud on Cotterbury Street in Sarnia, would receive a letter from the Battalion Chaplain. The following is an excerpt from that letter:

*102nd Can. Inf. Battalion, France, Aug. 15, 1918*

*My Dear Mr. Noel,*

*It is my sad duty to announce to you the death of your son U.J. Noel, No. 226970 which occurred on Aug. 8th while he was in action with the enemy. I was with your son, but a few hours before he met death, and heard his confession and gave him Holy communion. In paying the supreme price for the cause of right your son merits a martyr's crown in Heaven and an inestimable debt of gratitude from mankind. He was a noble soldier and a good devout Practical Catholic.*

*Your son was buried in the 11th Can. Inf. Batt. Cemetery at Beaucourt en Santerre on Aug. 10th with Military honors and Catholic services.... His personal effects will be forwarded to you in due time through proper channels. Accept my heartfelt sympathy and assurance of prayers for the repose of your son's soul.*

*Very Sincerely, Chas. A. Fallon, R.C. Chaplain*

For Urban's sister, Maud Grace, she had lost her husband Percival Guertin four months earlier. Twenty-two year old Urban Noel is buried in Beaucourt British Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave B.18.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**NORWOOD, James Hamilton (#53605)**

James Norwood was born in Belfast, Ireland, on November 5, 1893, the son of Samuel Norwood and Alice Norwood, of Belfast, Ireland. James enlisted November 3, 1914 in Sarnia. At the time, he listed his occupation as a farmer and his marital status as single. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Corporal. On September 15, 1916, James Norwood would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. James Norwood would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported Missing now Killed in Action. Attack at Courcellette.* Twenty-two year old James Norwood is buried in Serre Road Cemetery No. 2, Somme, France, Grave XXXV.C.4. He was awarded the: Canadian Memorial Cross Medal.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**PIRRIE, James Millar (#602739)**

James Pirrie was born in Paisley, Scotland on June 26, 1897 (on his enlistment form, however, he recorded his place of birth as Sarnia). He was the son of John Alexander Pirrie and Marion Harkness (nee Wylie) Pirrie. Both his parents were originally from Scotland, but were later residing at 304 Campbell Street, Sarnia. James' siblings included John (born 1891); Annie (born 1894); Catherine (born 1900); and Ferguson Stewart (born 1907). James enlisted July 12, 1915 in Sarnia with the 34th Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as a labourer and his marital status as single. He would later be transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, 4th

Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, 2nd Central Ontario Regiment, with the rank of Private. On October 26, 1917, James Pirrie would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of Passchendaele, Belgium. Another Sarnian, Charles Edwin Knight, would also lose his life in the same battle on the same day (also included in this project). James Pirrie would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack west of Passchendaele*. Twenty-year old James Pirrie has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 30, 32. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as J.M. Pierrie.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**PLAYNE, Leslie** (#6985) – Photograph page 392

Leslie Playne was born in Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire, England on September 15, 1894, the son of Alexander Whateley Playne and Florence Elizabeth (nee Field) Playne, of Bedford, England. His sisters included sisters Nora (born 1888), Violet (born 1889), and Doreen (born 1906); and brothers Penderel (born 1894), Osman (born 1898), Norman (born 1900), Vernon (born 1902), and Courtenay (born 1903). In 1911, at the age of 15, he was a student residing in Sussex, England at the Christ Hospital School West Horsham. In February of 1912, sixteen year-old Leslie left Liverpool, England aboard the passenger ship *Corsican* and arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with his final destination listed as Toronto. Prior to enlisting, he was an employee of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. He enlisted on September 15 of 1914, in Sarnia, indicating he was a bank accountant and was single. At his enlistment, he recorded that he had three years previous experience, in the Officers Training Corps, England. He became a member of the Air Force, Royal Flying Corps, 16th Squadron, with the rank of Second Lieutenant. He embarked for France with the 1st Canadian Division, Infantry, C.E.F.

Leslie Playne would lose his life on March 27, 1918. In May of 1918, the *Sarnia Observer* received a letter reporting that the former Sarnia man was missing. Following is a portion of the *Observer* article:

*Former Young Sarnia Bank Clerk Is Reported Missing  
Lieut. Leslie Playne Pouring Shot and Shell into Enemy When Last Seen*

*A letter has been received in this city, reporting that a former young Sarnia man was missing... He was reported missing March 27th. The following message was received by his parents: "Regret to inform you that Second Lieutenant Leslie Playne, R.A.S., reported missing March 27th." Lieut. Playne, prior to his enlistment, was on the staff of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, in Sarnia, and was one of the first to respond to the call, going to England with the First Canadian Contingent, and has been in active service since the early days of the war. He returned to France on March 23rd, after a fortnight's leave to England and had been on the firing line four days, when he was reported missing. From information received, the last seen of the heroic young officer, he was attacking German infantry with bombs and machine gun. Since then he has failed to return. There is a slight chance that he was taken prisoner and in the hands of the Germans. What ever his fate, the young man did his work nobly and fought to the last. While in Sarnia, he made a host of friends for his manly and gentlemanly ways and was esteemed by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He was a lover of sports, and was actively engaged in the organization of an athletic association in Sarnia when the war broke out.*

Twenty-three year old Leslie Playne has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2D

**POTTER, Albert Edwin** (#845109)

Albert Potter was born in Point Edward, Ontario, on July 9, 1896, the son of Albert Victor Potter (born in England) and Flora Louise (nee Beasley) Potter, of 173 Brock Street, Sarnia. His siblings included William Olive (born 1894) and Gordon G. (born 1899). Albert came from a family that had a long military background; for example, his father, Albert Sr. a firman, also tried to enlist but was not allowed to join. His maternal grandfather ran away at the age of seventeen to fight his country's battles, going through the Crimea and other wars in Europe. After serving for fifteen years, he immigrated to Canada. Years later, Albert would train at Aldershot, the same site in England where his grandfather had trained more than half a century before.

Albert Potter was a young man who got to the front through sheer determination, for he had been rejected three times for active service. He first enlisted in No. 3 Stationary Hospital Corps on February 4th, 1915 and stayed with that unit four months. His first rejection occurred when he was discharged following a severe attack of

pneumonia. When his strength returned, he offered himself with a reinforcement draft of his old unit, No. 3 Stationary Hospital Unit in July of 1915. He was in uniform barely twenty-four hours when he was again stricken with pneumonia. After his recovery, he was discharged, his second rejection. When the Lambton 149th was organized, he enlisted with the Lambton Battalion Band in Sarnia on February 9th, 1916. At the time, he listed his occupation as clerk and his marital status as single. He also recorded that he had prior military service at #3 Stationary Hospital C.E.F. He trained with the Battalion at London and Camp Borden and finally went overseas as a member of the band.

In England, he stayed with the band until drafts for active service in France dissolved the band. He offered his services but was again rejected as unfit, his third rejection, and was transferred to the 156th Battalion Band. He went with that organization on a tour of all the hospitals, giving musical programs in all the different hospitals in England, cheering up the wounded soldiers and sailors of the British and colonial troops. He stayed with that organization until February 1918, when he at last was successful in getting on a draft of reinforcements for the Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 21st Battalion, going to France as a member of that unit, with the rank of Private.

Albert and his unit were immediately rushed to the front line, where he would remain until the time of his death. He saw two of his best chums killed, one on the 1st of April of 1918, and another on the 31st of May. This was a sad blow to the young soldier but, despite his troubles and heartaches, his letters home were never anything but cheery and optimistic. In his last letter to his parents in Sarnia, he told them not to worry, that he was enjoying himself, and that he hoped to be back home with them in the near future.

On August 6, 1918, Albert Potter would lose his life while fighting in France, just prior to the Battle of Amiens and the start of Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Mrs. Flora Potter at 173 South Brock street, Sarnia would receive a telegram in early-September of 1918, informing her of the circumstances of her son Pte. Albert Potter's death:

*Madam,*

*I beg to transmit herewith a copy of the report setting forth the circumstances under which the late soldier marginally noted (A.E. Potter 845109) killed 6-8-18, met his death: "On the morning of August 6-18, the 21st Can. Bat. moved forward to occupy new positions and while passing one of our ammunition dumps an enemy shell hit the dump, causing explosion, and killing the above mentioned soldier and several others belonging to this unit.*

*Director of Records*

His Battalion had been moving forward of Villers Bretonneux to occupy new positions in the front line trenches. Albert Potter would officially be listed as *Killed in action*. Two days after Albert met his death, the last of the quartet of chums, Sergt.-Major Traynor, "went West." This was also a blow to the Potter family, as Sgt.-Major Traynor was the one upon whom the Potter family depended for all particulars of their soldier son. Back in Sarnia, his mother Flora would receive the following letter of condolence from the 21st Canadian Battalion chaplain in October of 1918:

*Dear Madam,*

*Our Colonel has asked me to express the sorrow of the whole battalion for the death of your gallant son, Albert Edwin Potter who was killed in the Battle of Amiens on August 8th. He died instantly and suffered no pain. His effects will be sent to you in due course. He was a good soldier.*

*Yours lovingly, Rev. Renison*

Twenty-two year old Albert Potter is buried in Longueau British Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave I.A.I. Following is a portion of the *Observer* newspaper article reporting on Albert Potter's death:

*What a price we are paying for liberty? Sarnia and Lambton sons a few years ago in the schools of this city or district – many of them are to-day sleeping in Flanders – because at the sound of the bugle which sounded the call of the Motherland, they went to stop the advancing hun....*

*The youngsters are the ones who are paying the toll in this great carnage. Albert was just a boy, barely twenty-two, with his whole life before him. He tried twice to do his bit and could have stayed in Canada with honor, but his was a spirit that would not stay down. His ambition to do his best to the full, and while his passing brings a tear to the eye*

LOVING MEMORY OF MY DEAR SON WHO FREELY GAVE HIS LIFE SERVING HIS COUNTRY.  
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.

*of all who knew him, they have the consolation of knowing that they had a MAN to call a friend. His parents mourn the heroic passing of a noble son as "One more gone for England's sake, Where so many go, Lying down without complaint."*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**POWELL, Thomas Edwin (#6948)**

Thomas Powell was born in London, England, on February 22, 1892, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Powell, of 192 Lochiel Street, Sarnia. At the time of his death, Thomas had one sister, living in Petrolia, and two brothers: Edward who lived in Windsor and Henry who resided in Utterson, Muskoka. Prior to enlisting, Thomas was employed at the Imperial Oil Works and boarded with Mrs. Cameron, of 194 Lochiel Street, Sarnia (the *Observer* recorded his address as the Union Hotel, Sarnia). He had many friends in Sarnia as well as Forest, where he formerly lived. Among the first to do so, Thomas enlisted September 22, 1914 in Valcartier Camp, Quebec with the 1st Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as an ironworker and his marital status as single. Thomas became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On April 30, 1915, Thomas Powell would lose his life while fighting during the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium. Thomas Powell would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack at St. Julien. No record of burial.* Twenty-three year old Thomas Powell has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 10-26-28. Thomas Powell's name is also inscribed on the Village of Camlachie's Memorial.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**PRINGLE, Albert Stuart (#2356439)**

Albert Pringle was born in Sarnia, on June 18, 1881, the youngest child of William Elliot Pringle (of Scotland, a tailor) and Sarah Jane (nee Williamson) Pringle, of Sarnia. His siblings included Elizabeth (born 1871); Thomas Edward (born 1872); Margaret (born 1875); and George (born 1877). In 1901, twenty-year old Albert was living in Sarnia with his mother Sarah and his siblings. At the time, his occupation was a clerk.

Albert would marry Elizabeth Marie (nee Block, of Michigan, USA) Pringle. Together, Albert and Elizabeth would have six children together: Albert Elliot (born 1907); Elmira (Beatrice) May (born 1909); Marion Lorraine (born 1911); Dorothy Jane (born 1912); James Stewart (born 1913); and Virginia Jean (born 1915). In 1914, Albert would lose his mother Sarah Jane, who would die in April, and four years later Albert decided to enlist. He did so on February 26, 1918 in London, Ontario, with the 1st Depot Battalion. At enlistment, he and his family were living in Detroit, Michigan. He listed his occupation as a pipe fitter and recorded that he had two years prior experience in the 27th Regiment, in Sarnia.

Albert became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 47th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 27, 1918, Albert Pringle would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In mid-October of 1918, Albert's sister, Mrs. Hugh Oliver, formerly of Sarnia and now living in St. Thomas, would receive the news of her brother Albert's death in action. Albert Pringle would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Whilst taking part in the advance from North West of Moeuvres to Bourlon Wood he was instantly killed by enemy shell fire.* One and a half months after Albert Pringle's death, the Great War would end. Thirty-eight year old Albert Pringle is buried in Quarry Wood Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave II.B.30.

SOURCES: C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**REID, George Alexander (#403181) – Photograph page 393**

George Reid was born in Scotland (exact birthdate unknown), the son of Robert Reid and Jeanie Reid, of Petrolia, Ontario. George would marry Margaret Jane (nee Bissett) Reid, and the couple would reside at 136 Dundas St., Sarnia. For a time, George was employed as a bartender in Petrolia. George enlisted in London, Ontario with 34th Battalion on September 28, 1915. At the time, he listed his occupation as clerk. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 34th Battalion, with the rank of Private.

Only a few days after enlisting, George Reid would lose his life in bizarre circumstances. On October 5, 1915, George was accidentally killed by a Grand Trunk train while he was doing training exercises in London, Ontario. He had become delirious as a result of being inoculated for typhoid fever earlier in the day, and in a

demented condition had wandered away from the camp and out of the city. George Reid would officially be listed as, *Accidentally killed by train. Body found on G.T.R. tracks a mile east of Fairfield Station. Was badly mangled. Actions had been noticed to be rather strange just before the accident.*

A full military funeral was held for Private George Reid in Petrolia. Prior to the funeral, his body lay in uniform in the Steadman undertaking parlor, guarded by two of Pte. Reid's friends and fellow soldiers. During the evening prior to, and in the morning of the funeral, nearly one thousand friends, men, women and children viewed the remains. The funeral was held at the Presbyterian Church by Rev. Mr. McGillivray, with a procession headed by the citizen's band, followed by members of the Masonic Order, of which Pte. Reid was a member. The coffin was draped with a Union Jack, and the "Last Post" was sounded over the grave. Thirty-one year old George Reid is buried in Petrolia (Hillsdale) Cemetery, Petrolia, Ontario. George Reid's name is also inscribed on the Petrolia Memorial in the Town of Petrolia. For George's wife Margaret Jane Reid, tragedy would come again almost three years later. Margaret's brother, Cameron Robert Bissett (included in this project), would lose his life during fighting in Amiens, France in September of 1918.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **REYNOLDS, William Henry (#845197)**

William Reynolds was born in Kent County, England, on October 9, 1892. He came from England to Canada when he was a small boy and was raised at Vyner, Ontario. He would later come to Sarnia, making his home with Mrs. Frederick Sproule at 115 Mitton Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, William, an active worker in the Salvation Army, was promoted to Lieutenant, and stationed at Leamington and Goderich. William enlisted April 11, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. He recorded his next of kin as "Mrs. Frederick Sproule, guardian." He also listed his occupation as Officer in Salvation Army and his marital status as single. He would later be discharged at Camp Borden from the 149th, but enlisted as a stretcher bearer with the 18th Battalion. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private, only three days before it left for overseas.

On August 9, 1918, William Reynolds would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting in France at the Battle of Amiens, during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. William Reynolds would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. While taking part in operations east of Amiens, on August 8th, 1918, he was severely wounded in the chest by enemy machine gun bullets. His wounds were dressed and he was taken to No. 5 Casualty Clearing Station where he died the following day.* In August of 1918, his next of kin in Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*Mrs. Fred Sproule, 115 Mitton Street, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you 845197, Pte. Wm. Henry Reynolds, Infantry, officially reported died of wounds, 5th Canadian Clearing station August 9th, 1918 gunshot wounds to chest.*

In late August of 1918, over 400 local citizens joined the Salvation Army in a packed memorial service at the citadel for William Reynolds. The following is an excerpt of the address given by Captain Ashby, commander of the Sarnia Salvation Army Corps:

*Sarnia's first Salvationist, William Reynolds has fallen in the fight for liberty and freedom "Somewhere in France." 'Billie' died of wounds on August 9th, 1918, from gunshot wounds in the chest, and there is no doubt he would be trying to help some mother's boy when he received the fatal shot. He enlisted during 1916 in the 149th Battalion but was rejected for further service in the fall of the same year as medically unfit, but on returning here again felt that God had special work for him to do. "If only I could get into the trenches as a stretcher bearer just think of how much I could do for Jesus", was a frequent saying of his and so he tried again and proceeded overseas as a stretcher bearer in the 18th. As a man in khaki, he took every opportunity to work for his Master and there are many who will thank God that he enlisted. The writer would like to bear witness to his work when at Camp Borden, open air services were conducted at every chance that came his way and it was not a matter of entertaining the boys but always the leading of them to his Saviour and many sought and found Jesus in that camp, thank God....*

In mid-November of 1918, a special service was held at the Salvation Army, in which a memorial tablet was unveiled by Colonel John Rawling, Divisional Commander for the London division, in memory of Private William Reynolds. The tablet commemorated William's death on August 9th, 1918 and, by then, more details of his death had



been released:

*A young man named Billings found young Reynolds lying in a shell hole badly wounded and asked him if there was anything he could do for him. Willie's last reply was, "Yes, write to my mother and tell her I was not afraid of death and I was game to the last."*

Twenty-five year old William Reynolds is buried in Crouy British Cemetery, Crouy-Sur-Somme, Somme, France, Grave VI.A.13. William Reynolds was the first member of local Sarnia Salvation Army Congregation to lose his life in the War.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **ROBINSON, Frederick John (#542328)**

Frederick Robinson was born in England, on October 23, 1898. He was recorded as the ward of Mrs. John Courtney, of 294 Devine Street, Sarnia. Frederick enlisted with the 149th Battalion on October 12, 1916 in London, Ontario. He recorded his next of kin as Les White, his friend at the boarding house at 109 Brock Street, in Sarnia where both young men were currently residing. Frederick, a bachelor, listed his occupation as a tinsmith. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 27, 1918, Frederick Robinson would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In late October of 1918, his next of kin, Mr. White of Brock Street, received a telegram informing him that, *Pte. F.J. Robinson, infantry, was officially reported killed in action on September 27th*. Frederick Robinson would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Attack west of Haynecourt*. One and a half months after Frederick Robinson's death, the Great War would end. Nineteen-year old Frederick Robinson is buried in Ontario Cemetery, Sains-Les-Marquion, Pas de Calais, France. Grave I.B.4.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **RODBER, Albert (#845157)**

Albert Rodber was born in England, on June 9, 1896, the son of Mrs. Rodber, of Arkona, Ontario, who initially resided in Arkona and later at 212 Durand Street, Sarnia. In 1911, fifteen-year Albert was living with the family of Margaret Armitage (age 84), Laman Armitage (age 39), and Mary Wells (age 58) in Bosanquet District, and working as a "servant boy." Prior to enlisting, Albert was residing in Forest, Ontario. On December 20, 1915, Albert enlisted in Arkona with the 149th Battalion. Records indicate that Albert's occupation was a farmer and that he was single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Manitoba Regiment, 44th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On August 22, 1918, Albert Rodber would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Albert Rodber would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. In early September of 1918, Albert's mother Mrs. A. Mitchell of 212 Durand street, Sarnia would receive an official telegram, informing her that her son, *Private Albert Rodber had been killed in action on August 22nd*. Twenty-two year old Albert Rodber has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **ROGERS, Archibald (#2005528)**

Archibald Rogers was born in London, Ontario, on June 6, 1892, the son of Edward Rogers (a car builder) and Alice (nee Harwood) Rogers, of London, Ontario. On December 16, 1910, Archibald would marry Annie (nee Gauld) Rogers, in Petrolia. The couple would initially reside at 408 Cromwell Street, Sarnia, but the following year, Archibald and Annie Rogers, along with her 17-year old brother, John Gauld, had moved to 317 Maxwell Street, Sarnia. Archibald enlisted on February 23, 1917 in Sarnia. At the time, he listed his occupation as an electrician. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Engineers, 7th Battalion, with the rank of Sapper. On July 8, 1918, Archibald Rogers would lose his life in France as a result of the conditions of war. Archibald Rogers would later be officially listed as, *Died (pneumonia), at No. 42 Casualty Clearing Station*. Twenty-six year old Archibald Rogers is buried in Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France, Grave IV.J.39.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **SALSBURY, John Reginald Sergeant (#803168)**

John Salsbury was born in Northampton, England, on January 19, 1897, the son of Thomas Salsbury and Mary Anne Salsbury, of Northampton, England. At his enlistment, John was living at R.R.#5 Strathroy, Ontario. He

enlisted April 18, 1916 in Strathroy, with the 135th Battalion. He recorded his next of kin as Mrs. M.J. Salsbury, of Ringstead Cottage, England. A bachelor, John listed his occupation as a labourer. John became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 15th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 27, 1918, John Salsbury would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. John Salsbury would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. Whilst acting as a stretcher bearer with his Platoon in an attack at Mill Copse, south of Marquion, he was shot through the head by a bullet and instantly killed.* One and a half months after John Salsbury's death, the Great War would end. Twenty-one year old John Salsbury is buried in Sains de Marquion British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. Plot I.A.30. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as J. Salisbury.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **SCOTT, Walter Frank**– Photograph page 393

Walter Scott was born in Brussels, Huron County, Ontario, on August 11, 1893, the son of Peter Scott (a blacksmith) and Margaret (nee Brine) Scott, of Brussels, Ontario. His siblings included Joseph Brine (born 1884); Donald Stewart (born 1886); Margaret Aileen (born 1889); and James Cline (born 1892). Walter's nephew, Archie Scott, and a cousin, Mrs. Bolt Reid resided in Sarnia as well. After being educated at Brussels' public school and Seaforth Collegiate, Walter began teaching at Auburn and Colinville. He then attended the University of Toronto Faculty of Education 1913-14 and became Assistant Principal at Earl Grey School, Toronto the following year. Having taught school at Colinville and being employed by the Reid Wrecking Company for around a year, Walter was well known in Sarnia and the vicinity.

Walter enlisted on December 23, 1915 in Clinton, Ontario with the 33rd Regiment, listing his occupation as school teacher. At the time of his enlistment, he was teaching in Toronto. From the 33rd Regiment, he was later appointed Lieutenant of the 161st Huron County Battalion and went overseas in November 1916. In March of 1918, Walter was transferred to the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 47th Battalion, with the rank of Lieutenant. On August 10, 1918, on the third day after the Battle of Amiens, during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign, Walter Scott would lose his life while fighting in France. Walter Scott would later be officially listed as, *Killed in Action. While leading his platoon in the attack upon the village of Fouquescourt about noon on August 10th, he was struck by a machine gun bullet and although his wound was immediately dressed, he died half an hour afterwards.* Twenty-five year old Walter Scott is buried in Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave II.N.15. His name is also listed on the "Roll of Honour of the Ontario Teachers Who Served in the Great War."

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **SIMMONS, Melville James** (#845299)

Melville Simmons was born in Petrolia, Ontario, on March 10, 1889, the middle son of Charles Solomon Simmons (of Stratford, Ontario, a machinist) and Ellen Jane (nee Cleland, of Adelaide, Ontario) Simmons, of 257 South Christina Street, Sarnia. His siblings included John Edward (born 1885, who would later be employed with Mueller Manufacturing Co.) and Sylvester Earl (born 1894). His younger brother would also join the Canadian Infantry, 1st Battalion (see below).

In 1911, twenty-two year old Melville was living with his parents and brother Earl, at 112 Euphemia Street, Sarnia. At the time, Melville's occupation was a machinist. Later in that same year, Melville would marry Rhoda Jane (nee Clark, of Woodstock, Ontario) Simmons. The couple married on September 4, 1911 in London, Ontario and would reside at 175 Christina Street, Sarnia. By that time, his parents Charles and Ellen Simmons were residing at 257 Christina Street. Melville was a resident of Sarnia for nineteen years and, prior to enlistment, was an employee of the Sarnia Fence Company. Melville, along with his brother Sylvester, enlisted on January 26, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. At that time, Melville listed his occupation listed as a mechanic. He later transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Engineers, 11th Field Company, with the rank of Sapper. He would be in France for a year and a half. On April 6, 1918, Melville Simmons would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting in France. Melville Simmons would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. Wounded by a bomb dropped from an enemy aeroplane at about 1 p.m. on April 6th, 1918, and died about half an hour later.* In April of 1918, Melville's father, Charles, would receive the following telegram in Sarnia:

ALWAYS WILL YOUR NAME, HONOUR AND GLORY REMAIN.  
WE MISS YOU, SON. LOVE, MOTHER AND DAD.

Ottawa, Ont., April 19

Chas. Simmons, 257 South Christina, Sarnia, Ont

Deeply regret to inform you that 845299 Private Melville J. Simmons, Engineers, officially reported died of wounds, April 6, 1918.

Director of Records

At the time of his Melville's death, his widow Rhoda Jane Simmons was residing in Woodstock. Twenty-nine year old Melville Simmons is buried in Roclincourt Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave VI.B.14.

In December of 1918, eight months after Melville's death, his younger brother Sylvester Earl, a former member of the Canadian Infantry, would die in Sarnia of accidental poisoning at the age of twenty-five. Sylvester Simmons was buried in Lakeview Cemetery in Sarnia. On the lower part of Sylvester's headstone in Sarnia, are inscribed the words, *Also 845299 Sapper Mel J. Simmons 11th Field Co. C.E.F Died of wounds in France 6.4.18.* After the war, Charles and Ellen Simmons moved to Fort Madison, Iowa, U.S.A.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **SIMMONS, Sylvester Earl (#845301)**

Sylvester Simmons was born in Petrolia, Ontario, on May 1, 1894, the youngest son of Charles Solomon Simmons (of Stratford, Ontario, a machinist) and Ellen Jane (nee Cleland, of Adelaide, Ontario) Simmons, of 257 South Christina Street, Sarnia. His siblings included John Edward (born 1885, who would later be employed with Mueller Manufacturing Co.) and Melville James (born 1889). The middle brother, Melville James, would also join the Canadian Army, 1st Battalion (see above). In 1911, eighteen-year old Sylvester was living with his parents and brother Melville, at 112 Euphemia Street, Sarnia. On August 12, 1912, Sylvester married Cora Wagner, of Oil Springs, in Petrolia, Ontario.

On January 26, 1916, Sylvester enlisted in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion, along with his brother Melville. At the time, Sylvester recorded that he was employed as a machinist, and that he and his wife Cora were residing at 299 Vidal Street, Sarnia. On July 27, 1918, Sylvester enlisted a second time, with the Army, Canadian Infantry, 1st Depot Battalion, Central Ontario Regiment in Toronto, Ontario. For whatever reason, this time he recorded his birthdate as May 1, 1893 in Sarnia and listed his address as Independence Road, Kansas City, Missouri. Sylvester's occupation was as a machinist and he stated that he was married. His next of kin, Mrs. H. Simmons, his wife, was residing at 257 Christina Street, Sarnia. He also recorded that he had 10 ½ months prior military experience with the 149th Battalion. He would attain the rank of Private.

In mid-April of 1918, Sylvester's parents Charles and Ellen Simmons in Sarnia, would receive news that their middle son, Private Melville James was officially reported dead, having passed away from wounds received in France. Only eight months later, on December 17, 1918, their youngest son, Sylvester Simmons, would lose his life suddenly while in Sarnia. At the time of his death, the *Sarnia Observer* reported that, "he was a returned soldier, having been up and about the city up to almost the time of his death, which resulted from heart trouble". On the official death report, the doctor recorded that his death was the result of accidental poisoning at home.

A few days before Christmas of 1918, the Simmons family would bid goodbye to their second child. Sylvester's funeral was held with full military honors, from the family home on Christina Street. Services were conducted by Rev. George Hazen of the Devine Street Methodist Church, and included members of the Great War Veteran's Association, the Sarnia Citizen's band, a firing party and a bugler playing the "Last Post". Twenty-five year old Sylvester Simmons is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia. On the lower part of Sylvester's headstone in Sarnia, are inscribed the words, *Also 845299 Sapper Mel J. Simmons 11th Field Co. C.E.F Died of wounds in France 6.4.18.* After the war, Charles and Ellen Simmons moved to Fort Madison, Iowa, U.S.A.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **SKINNER, William Bruce (#226164)**

William Skinner was born in St. Thomas, Ontario, on January 2, 1897. He was the grandchild of Angus and Mary McRury (both originally of Scotland), who were living Point Edward, Ontario. William was raised by his grandparents after his own mother and father died when he was an infant. William was also the nephew of Miss Sarah McRury, of 175 North Front Street, Sarnia, and Mrs. George Culley, L. McRury and Mrs. D.J. McRury, of the city of Sarnia. William enlisted October 26, 1915 in Sarnia with the Depot Regiment, Canadian Mounted Rifles. At

the time of his enlistment, William was living with his grandparents in Point Edward. He listed his occupation as machinist and that he was single.

William went overseas with the Mounted Rifles, became a member of the Army, Canadian Light Horse, with the rank of Trooper, but was later transferred to the artillery. On November 7, 1917, William would lose his life while fighting in Belgium and has no known grave. William Skinner would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. Twenty-year old William Skinner is memorialized on the Menin Gate (Ypres) Memorial, Belgium, Panel 10. William Skinner's name is also inscribed on the plaque on the Memorial in the Village of Point Edward.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**SMITH, Harry (#3131723) – Photograph page 394**

Harry Smith was born in Burton-on-Trent, Stafford, England, on June 11, 1889, the son of William Smith and Minnie Smith, of 492 Confederation Street, Sarnia. Harry was drafted to service on January 9, 1918, in London, Ontario in the 1st Depot Battalion. A former employee of the Imperial Oil Company, Harry listed his occupation as letter carrier and his marital status as single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Depot Battalion, Western Ontario Regiment, with the rank of Private. On February 15, 1918, Harry Smith would lose his life, dying in the service at Wolseley Barracks, London, Ontario. The circumstances Harry Smith's death were officially listed as, *Acute Tuberculosis – admitted to hospital Jan. 20th, 1918 – had had previous attacks of lung trouble. Nursed by special nurse. Died from exhaustion*. His remains were brought back to Sarnia where a funeral was held from his late residence. Twenty-eight year old Harry Smith is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario. On Harry Smith's headstone are inscribed the words, *Until the day break and the shadows flee away*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**SMUCK, David Radcliffe (#03676)**

David Smuck was born in Sarnia, on May 18, 1893, the son of Mrs. Emily Smuck, of 202 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. His many siblings included George (born 1876); twin sisters, May and an unknown female (born 1884); Peter (born 1886); Blanche (born 1888); John (born 1891, who would serve four years in the War, with the Army Medical Corps and later the 48th Highlanders); Bertha (born 1895); and an unknown female (born 1898). David enlisted June 28, 1915 in Sarnia where records indicate his occupation was a barber and he was single. He would become a member of the Canadian Army Medical Corps, with the rank of Private. By the end of July of 1915, David Smuck would be in England.

In early September of 1915, David would write a letter to his mother Emily in Sarnia. In it, he described for her his travels so far aboard ship, as it travelled from England, up the English Channel out into the North Sea, passing along the coast of Spain and Portugal, through the Straits of Gibraltar ("but I did not see the rock as it was about 2:00 a.m. in the morning"), into the Mediterranean Sea, along the north coast of Africa, and then by Algeria. Following is a portion of the letter he wrote, while his ship was anchored in the harbor of Malta:

*My Dear Mother,*

*Just a few lines to let you know we are this far on our trip, and I am feeling fine, hope everybody is well at home. We had a fine trip so far, excepting last Monday, and it was very rough coming through the Bay of Biscay, and I guess I know now what sea sickness is. We left Southampton a week ago today about 2:30 p.m., and we are still on board ship. I hope we soon get off as I am tired of travelling. We have No. 1 stationary hospital from France on board with us. From what I hear they are going to put all the Canadians down in the Dardanelles. They expect to have Constantinople in three months, but you can never tell.....*

*The weather here is awfully warm, 110 to 114 in the shade, so that is going some. They are going to give us all a new outfit of clothing, something like overalls with big helmets. We do not hear much about the war at all. I haven't seen a paper for over a week, so I do not know what is going on. When in Shorncliffe all we could see was men in khaki. There seems to be great numbers of them, and signs up "Enlist Today." I saw young "Wireless" Smith since I have been over here, from Sarnia, and he said it was something awful in the trenches last winter for a couple of weeks. The water was up to his knees, and you had to half stand up, and if you stood straight up you would get a bullet....*

*Well, mother, I think I have told you all for the time. Give all at home my very best.*

*From your loving son, Dave*

In mid January of 1916, David's mother Mrs. Emily Smuck on Mitton Street, Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*Ottawa, Jan. 17*

*Sincerely regret to inform you No. 3676, Pte. David Radcliffe Smuck, No. 3 Stationary hospital, officially reported seriously ill. Jaundice. Will send further particulars when received.*

*Adj.-General*

David would survive his bout of jaundice. On June 27, 1918, David would lose his life during an enemy attack, while on board the Canadian Hospital Ship *Llandoverly Castle*. Initially listed as, *Missing*, David Smuck would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing believed drowned now for official purposes presumed to have died on or since 27-6-18. Lost at sea on 'Llandoverly Castle.'*

The *HMHS Llandoverly Castle* was an 11 000 ton Canadian Hospital Ship. It had been chartered by the Canadian Government and had been in the service of carrying wounded and sick from England to Canada for many months. The attack and sinking of the ship was not only one of the most controversial events during the War. It was also the most significant Canadian naval disaster of WWI, and its sinking became the rallying cry for the Canadian troops during the Last 100 Days offensive. In June of 1918, the ship was returning to Liverpool, England after having brought 644 Canadian casualties back to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Being a Hospital Ship, it was, in accordance with international law, clearly identified as such. On each side of the *HMHS Llandoverly Castle*, a brightly illuminated Red Cross was displayed with full strings of electric lights. The ship was unarmed and was sailing without escort. On board, the crew comprised one hundred and sixty-four men, eighty officers and men of the Canadian Medical Corps, and fourteen nurses, for a total of two hundred and fifty-eight persons. According to the Hague Convention, an enemy vessel had the right to stop and to search a Hospital Ship, but not to sink it.

On the night of June 27th, 1918, at about 9:30 p.m., German submarine U-86 made no attempt to search the Hospital Ship and, without warning, it torpedoed the *Llandoverly Castle*, about 114 miles south-west of the Fastnet Rock (Ireland). The *Llandoverly Castle* sank within ten minutes; however, a number of lifeboats were lowered successfully. Those who survived the blast proceeded to attempt to rescue many of the survivors struggling in the water. They were interrupted by the commander of the surfaced German submarine, who started interrogating crew members to obtain proof that the *Llandoverly Castle* was also an ammunition carrier or was sheltering American airmen on board. When the German commander could secure no proof, he prepared for diving and ordered his crew below deck.

The German commander, two officers and the boatswain's mate stayed on deck. The U-boat did not dive, but started firing with machine guns at the life boats to kill all witnesses and to cover up what had happened. When the submarine did leave, it attempted to ram the lifeboats in the water, and once clear, launched shells into the area of the survivors. To further conceal this event, the commander extracted promises of secrecy from his crew and faked the course of U-86 in the logbook. Only one lifeboat survived the attack. Thirty-six hours after the attack, twenty-four survivors were rescued in the remaining lifeboat. In total, two hundred and thirty-four persons lost their lives in the sinking of the *Llandoverly Castle* Hospital Ship, including all fourteen Nursing Sisters who had managed to board one of the lifeboats.

Sarnia's twenty-five year old Private David Smuck also lost his life in the attack. He has no known grave and is memorialized on the Halifax Memorial, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Panel 2.

After the War, the British initiated a War Crimes trial (the Leipzig trials) against the officers of U-86. The German commander could not be found and was never brought to trial. The two officers were tried and convicted, and sentenced to four years of hard labour. On their way to prison, the officers escaped, were never recaptured, and never served any time in prison.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**SOPER, Russell Wright**– Photograph page 394

Russell Wright was born on April 20, 1889, the son of Armon Soper (a merchant) and Eliza Ann (nee Wright) Soper, of Whitby, Ontario. He had one sibling, Clarence Percy, who unfortunately died at age 10, two years before Russell was born. Russell was educated in Port Perry public and high schools and, upon graduating, taught for

two years. He then attended the University of Toronto in the Applied Science Program and obtained a four year degree in Architecture (1909-13). In 1916, Russell would marry Alma Priscilla (nee Nutting, of Cannington, Ontario). The couple married on May 24, 1916, in Uxbridge, Ontario and had one child together, a son Ernest, born in 1917. Russell worked as an architect in Sarnia for several years and had opened his office in the Carter building on Front Street. Rapidly making a name for himself among local builders and contractors, Russell drafted plans for several buildings in the city and vicinity. He was also an active member of the Sarnia Tennis Club.

Russell enlisted in July of 1916, with the Army, 116th Battalion. He took an officers' training course in London, Ontario, and received his commission in November of 1916. He was promoted to Sergeant before going overseas. By the time he was at the front in early August of 1917, a member of the Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 116th Battalion, he had the rank of Lieutenant. Russell would serve through two major battles-- the Battles of Hill 70 and Passchendaele--and during the following winter, he would see action on the Lens Front. On April 2, 1918, Russell Soper would lose his life while fighting in France. When the unit to the left of his was forced to retire near Mericourt, the position of his Battalion was threatened. He was in charge of filling in a communication trench to block the enemy's advance when he was killed.

The following is an excerpt from the records of the 116th Battalion in France, and includes a reference to the death of Russell Soper:

*Towards the end of February the battalion moved back to its old familiar hunting ground around Avion, where, although the trenches and general conditions were excellent, we sustained a series of misfortunes. Patrols went out every night through the ruins of Avion to try and locate enemy posts and whilst engaged in this work we lost two of our officers, Lieutenant C. R. Hillis and Lieutenant R. W. Biggar, within a few days of each other. From this front we moved south and on the 1st of April we were situated in the New Brunswick trench, in front of Mericourt.*

*During the last three months two important changes in our organization took place which it may be wise to record.*

*Major G. R. Pearkes, recently awarded the Victoria Cross for gallant work at Passchendaele with the 5th C.M.R., was appointed Officer Commanding 116th Battalion, to replace Colonel Sharpe, whose illness in England seemed likely to keep him away from France for an indefinite period.*

*Major J. Sutherland, at one time a Company Commander in the 52nd Battalion, but recently an instructor at Ferfay, was appointed second in command to Lt.- Colonel Pearkes.*

*The German grand offensive, which was to land him at the gates of Paris, had commenced, and in consequence the "staff" were showing very distinct signs of nervousness commonly called "wind up."*

*The First, Second and Fourth Canadian Divisions had been, or were being withdrawn from the line to be in readiness for action wherever they might most be needed, and the Third Division was left to defend Vimy Ridge as best it could, with nothing behind it except its own artillery and a couple of labour battalions employed in agricultural work, which had lately become a feature of modern warfare. During the day the Brigadier paid a visit to Battalion Headquarters, and, amongst other things, suggested that we might carry out some kind of raid in order to get identification, and by this means discover the enemy plans.*

*At 6 p.m. a meeting of the Company Commanders was called, and within the hour it was arranged to send out a battle patrol of one officer and twenty-five O.R.s. from each Company, to work independently on given frontages. It was also arranged that whichever patrol was successful in capturing a prisoner, would send up a red flare immediately. The operation was scheduled to commence at 11 p.m., without artillery or machine gun support.*

*At 9 p.m. a message was received from the Divisional Commander stating that identification on our front might be necessary, and at 10 p.m. the Corps Commander wired in saying that it was necessary, so that, all things considered, our preparations were probably well timed.*

*"D" Company patrol, under Captain Baird, was the first to start the quarry, for shortly after setting out it ran into a strong German patrol on its way over to our lines. With the battle cry "Come on Toronto," Captain Baird, followed by his patrol, rushed on the Germans before they had time to move and a regular scrimmage took place, during which Captain Baird lost the use of his right arm, due to the displacement of one of the muscles. He was in the act of capturing the German patrol leader when his right arm collapsed and his revolver dropped from his hand. The German officer immediately seized him round the neck and was giving him a rough time when one of our party shot*

*the German dead. In the meantime the remainder of our patrol had succeeded in capturing two prisoners and put the rest to flight.*

*Red flares were immediately sent up and all parties returned to our lines in high spirits, having obtained the "necessary identification" asked for by the Corps only two hours previously, although this achievement was greatly dimmed by the loss of two officers killed (Lt. J. A. Gibson and Lt. R. W. Soper).*

Lieutenant Soper would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action, on April 2, 1918*. He left behind his wife Alma Priscilla and their one year old son Ernest. Twenty-eight year old Russell Soper is buried in La Chaudiere Military Cemetery, Vimy, Pas de Calais, France, Grave I.C.3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **STEELE, James (#3130337)**

James Steele was born in Shotts, Scotland, on May 6, 1883. His sister, Margaret Steele, was living at 284 Davis Street, Sarnia (and was listed as his next of kin). James was conscripted to service on January 3, 1918 in London, Ontario with the 1st Battalion. At time of his draft, James, a bachelor, was living at 360 Maria Street, Sarnia, and working as a locomotive fireman. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Saskatchewan Regiment, 5th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 1, 1918, James Steele would lose his life the result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In early September of 1918, James' mother Margaret Steele in Sarnia, would receive word that her son, *Pte. James Steele, infantry, had been dangerously wounded and admitted to the 7th Canadian Casualty Clearing Station*. Later, she would learn that James Steele was officially listed as, *Died of Wounds – No. 7 Casualty Clearing Station*. Thirty-five year old James Steele is buried in Ligny-St. Flochel British Cemetery, Averdoingt, Pas-de-Calais, France, Grave III.D.2.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **STOTT, Herbert (#845252) – Photograph page 394**

Herbert Stott was born in Ravensthorpe, Yorkshire, England, on March 1, 1882, the son of John Stott and Annie Stott, of Dewsbury, England. Herbert married Annie Stott (later Hyne), and they would reside, first, at 249 Queen Street, Sarnia, and later 501 Confederation Street, Sarnia. Herbert enlisted December 3, 1915 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as labourer. In early December of 1915, the *Sarnia Observer* reported that the first recruit to be taken on by the Lambton 149th Battalion was Herbert Stott. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private.

On August 17, 1918, Herbert Stott would lose his life as a result of wounds received one week earlier while fighting in France, during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Herbert Stott would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds – (SW.Lt.Side) War Hospital, Exeter*. In August of 1918, Herbert's wife Annie in Sarnia would receive the following telegram:

*Ottawa, Ont. August 19*

*Mrs. Annie Stott, 249 Queen Street, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you 845252, Pte. Herbert Stott, Infantry, officially reported died of wounds at war hospital Exeter, on August 17th, 1918, gunshot wound in side and amputation of leg.* *Director of Records*

Only days prior to receiving the above telegram, Annie Stott had been sent a message that her husband Pte. Stott had been wounded. When Annie Stott received the telegram announcing her husband's death, she and their five children, the youngest child being three years of age, were preparing for a picnic. There would be no picnic that day.

Following is an article taken from a Dewsbury, England newspaper, reporting on the death of Herbert Stott:

#### *Westtown Soldier Buried with Military Honors*

*Another painful local casualty is that of Pte. Herbert Stott, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Stott, of 12 Cemetery Road, Westtown, who has died of wounds. He was a Canadian soldier, joining the Dominion forces in Lambton's Own at the beginning of the war, and a sad feature of the case is that his wife and five young children are left at Ontario, Canada. He was wounded in the trenches in the thigh on the 10th August, and was brought to Exeter. On Thursday last week his parents received a wire saying; "Son seriously wounded, come at once." They immediately visited him and though the amputation of his leg had become necessary and the operation had been performed, when they left*

**HE GAVE HIS LIFE THAT WE MIGHT LIVE FREE FROM WANT AND FEAR.  
REMEMBERED BY MOM AND DAD**

him on the Friday evening he was quite cheerful. Mr. and Mrs Stott reached home on Saturday morning, and at six o'clock in the evening came a wire to say their son was dead.

The internment, with military honors, took place at Dewsbury Cemetery on Wednesday, the Rev. J.J. Baldwin, Vicar of St. Matthew's, Westtown officiating. There was a very considerable expression of public sympathy, and a military escort (with firing party), under the command of Sergt. Major Hemingway. A band with muffled drums was in the procession. The coffin, wrapped in the Union Jack, was borne by the soldiers from the top of the Cemetery road to the graveside, where after the last rites had been performed, several volleys were fired and the "Last Post" sounded.

It was a strange coincidence, which Pte. Stott himself remarked, that when he arrived in Canada several years ago it was on the 28th March, that he sailed from Canada with his unit on that date, and that he went to France from Bramshott this year on the same date. "I wonder," he said, "where I shall be the next 28th of March?"

Herbert wasn't the only member of his family to see action. Robert Stott, Herbert's brother who was a Private with the Northumberland Fusiliers, survived being gassed in France, but was unable to attend the funeral. Herbert's brother-in-law, Pte. Herbert Drake, had his knee-cap blown off and had been discharged. Thirty-six year old Herbert Stott is buried in Dewsbury Cemetery, Yorkshire, United Kingdom, Grave K."U".340.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**SUMMERS, M.J.** - No information found in searched records links this name to Sarnia.

Possibly Earl Summers. No confirmed information from a number of sources.

**SUMNER, Ira William** (#54320)

Ira Sumner was born in London, Ontario, on September 10, 1893, the son of Ira Austin Mills Sumner (of Middlesex, Ontario) and Mary Ann (Minnie) Sumner (nee Beasley, of Windsor). Father Ira Austin was living in Sarnia, and mother Mary Ann was living in Point Edward prior to the couple's marriage. Father Ira Austin and mother Mary Ann would marry in September of 1890 in Point Edward. Mary Ann's mother, Mrs. Wm. Beasley, who would be Ira William's grandmother, resided in Point Edward. After getting married, the newlyweds resided in Point Edward for a time where Mr. Sumner supported his family by working as a painter. In 1901, the family was residing in London, Ontario. Ira William's siblings included Reginald Earl (born 1901) and Frank Westbury (born 1904).

Ira William enlisted in London, Ontario on April 10, 1915. At his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as clerk and his marital status as single. He also recorded that he belonged to the 7th Company, Canadian Engineers. Ira would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry (Western Ontario Regiment), 18th Battalion, "D" Company, with the rank of Private. Seven months after enlisting, on November 25, 1915 Ira Sumner would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting, in Belgium. Ira Sumner would officially be listed as, *Died of Wounds, France*.

In December of 1915, Ira's mother Mrs. Mary Ann Sumner would receive a letter from the captain of "D" Company. The captain stated that Ira was a young man of faultless habits, with not one black mark registered against him and that he was exceptionally well liked by the men with whom he was associated. Rev. Arthur Carslyle, chaplain of the 18th, also wrote to Mrs. Sumner offering his heartfelt sympathy for the loss of her highly esteemed son. It was also stated that Capt. G.C. Hale, medical officer of the 18th Battalion, had, at the risk of his life, stayed in the trench with Sumner, who was shot in the forehead, from 10 o'clock in the morning, the time that he was wounded, until 9 p.m. when they were able to convey him to the field hospital in the rear. Ira died shortly after arriving in the field hospital.

Mrs. Mary Anne Sumner also received the following letter from Sir Sam Hughes, dated December 8:

*Dear Mrs. Sumner,*

*Will you kindly accept my sincere sympathy and condolence in the decease of that worthy citizen and heroic soldier, Pte. William Ira Sumner. While one cannot too deeply mourn the loss of such a brave comrade, there is consolation in knowing that he did his duty fearlessly and well and gave his life for the cause of liberty and the upbuilding of the empire. Again extending to you my heart felt sympathy. Faithfully yours,*

*Sam Hughes, major-general, minister of militia and defence for Canada*



Mrs. Sumner would receive another letter, dated November 27, from Peter Fraynor, a friend of Ira's, who was attached to "C" Company of the 18th Battalion:

*Dear Mrs. Sumner,*

*By the time you receive this letter you will have been notified of the death of your son Ira, by the government. He was shot in the forehead yesterday morning about 9 o'clock, while out with a working party at ----. I saw him last night at the advanced dressing station, just about half a mile behind the firing line, his death taking place at 9 o'clock. Wrapped in his blanket, we laid him at rest beside several other heroes of this battalion.*

*I have his personal belongings, his watch, ring, regimental badges and several other things, and will send them to you. Do not grieve too much Mrs. Sumner, as Ira was a lad to be proud of, well liked by all the boys in his company, and above all, he died for his king and country, a soldier and a man.*

*Your friend, Peter Fraynor*

Mrs Sumner would receive still another letter, also dated November 27, from Leslie Bolton of "C" Company. The letter reiterated the above details in the manner, time and place of Ira's death. He added that Ira was killed about 300 feet up the trench, when Leslie heard a call for the stretcher-bearers. Upon inquiring who was hurt, Leslie Bolton was informed that it was Sumner of "D" Company, and he immediately hastened to his side, but Ira was unconscious from the moment he was struck until he died. Twenty-two year old Ira Sumner is buried in Ridge Wood Military Cemetery, Heuvelland, Begium, Grave II.J.12. On his headstone are inscribed the words, *He died fighting for God and Right and Liberty.*

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **THOMSON, Daniel Alexander Edward (#845352)**

Daniel Thomson was born in Alvinston, Ontario, on June 24, 1894, the son of Daniel Thomson and Ellen (nee Gunn) Thomson (later Ellen Roberts), of Dawn, Ontario. His siblings included Alvin Ernest (born 1891); William James (born 1892); Mary Margaret (born 1896); and Kathleen (born 1899). When Daniel was only four years old, he would lose his father, Daniel Senior, who died in March of 1899, five months before Daniel's sister Kathleen was born. Daniel's mother, Ellen, re-married in December of 1902 to Larry Roberts. Ellen and Larry Roberts were blessed with two daughters Hattie and Annie, stepsisters for Daniel and his siblings. On December 7, 1915, Daniel enlisted in Sarnia, with the 149th Battalion. A bachelor, he was living in Sarnia at the time, listing his occupation as a labourer. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, British Columbia Regiment, 47th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 3, 1918, Daniel Thomson would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Daniel Thomson would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. Twenty-four year old Daniel Thomson has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **TIMPSON, Edward Arthur (#602317)**

Edward Timpson was born in Great King's Hill, Buckshire, England, on August 25, 1893, the son of Edward Osborne Timpson and Hester Augusta Timpson, both of England. His many siblings included Charles Edward (born 1881); Lillian, Frank, and Harry; Mary and Lucy; William Herbert (born 1894); and Isabel. Prior to enlisting, Edward was employed by A. Macklin, florist, of Sarnia. Edward enlisted January 14, 1915 in Sarnia with the 34th Battalion where he recorded his occupation as a gardener and his marital status as single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, 10th Battalion, with the rank of Corporal. He would serve in the trenches two and a half years as a bomb thrower.

Ten days before his 25th birthday, on August 15, 1918, Edward Timpson would lose his life, the result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Edward Timpson would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds – No. 47 Casualty Clearing Station*. Edward's brother, Charles Timpson of 142 Penrose Street, Sarnia, would receive news of his brother Edwards' death in mid-September of 1918. Edward was the second Timpson son to lose his life in the war. Their brother, Pte. William Herbert Timpson, had been killed on September 15th, 1915. A third brother, Harry Timpson, had enlisted when the war broke out. It is worth noting that Edward's mother, Hester, and her sister, Mrs. Nash, both residing in England, had 10 sons in their families, eight of whom enlisted. Of the three Timpson boys who enlisted, two would lose their lives in war. Twenty-four year old

Edward Timpson is buried in Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, Somme, France, Grave VI.AA.10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **TOWERS, Norman Ewart**– Photograph page 395

Norman Towers was born in Sarnia, on October 7, 1887, the youngest son of Thomas Ford (born in Scotland) Towers and Mary Ann (nee Huggart) Towers, of 231 College Avenue, Sarnia. His siblings included Alfred Clair (born 1875); Robert Irwin (born 1876); James Crawford (born 1878, died 1910); and Thomas Logan (born 1884). Norman's brothers, Logan and Robert, would both serve overseas during the War. After Norman was educated at Sarnia's public and high school, he attended the University of Toronto, first receiving his Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) 1905-08 and then his law degree. Norman became a barrister and practiced law in Port Arthur, Ontario with the firm of Keefer, Keefer & Towers.

Norman, a bachelor, enlisted on April 15, 1915 in Port Arthur, Ontario. At enlistment, he recorded that he had four years prior experience in the 1st Hussars, Canada. Just prior to going overseas, Norman returned to Sarnia to visit his parents. Appointed to the Army, 52nd Battalion, Norman went overseas with a special draft of 250 men from that unit in June of 1915. He was then appointed to the Royal Canadian Regiment and proceeded with it to France in September of 1915.

On November 15th of 1915, Norman wrote a letter from France to his mother and father in Sarnia. The following is a portion of that letter:

*Dear Father,*

*I presume that by now mother will have received my letter and also post card. At present we are comfortably settled at billets. Each company billets by itself and there are seven of us in one room no larger than our sitting room at home and there we eat, and sleep and live, and also do our own cooking, but it is surprising what one can get used to when you try, and it is warm at night, which is a big consideration. Yesterday we saw a wonderful sight, aeroplanes dodging the anti-aircraft guns and on a tremendous scale it reminds one of trying to shoot hawks at a great height.*

*This country is an awfully pretty one, more so than England, and is just like the pictures one sees – particularly the long rows of tall trees laid in absolutely straight lines. Naturally, I can't tell you anything of our position or movements, etc., but as yet we have not been in the front trenches, though we may be soon. Persistent rumors of peace negotiations are circulating, but I daresay you people at home know more about that than we do. The mail service is excellent and last night I got yours and mothers letters, and some others... I was the most envied man in the company that night, for letters are the main thing over here.*

*I find that I have brought over practically everything that I need, although my boots have shrunk a bit with the continued wet and I have come to the conclusion that the only way to do it is to buy boots at least two sizes too large – they are one of the main troubles over here, as there is lots of marching to do. In spots the mud is fearful, but nothing to what it would be if this war were round Oil Springs. Do you remember some of our trips out there and in particular the one when you and I and Rob and mother got lost coming home at night – it is still fresh in my memory.*

*Where we are just now, although the enemy were at one time in possession of it, there are no signs of war. Perriman and I were out for a walk today and it was just like one at home in the country. We both wished it might have been. From now on my letters will have to be shorter as the opportunities for them are few and as a rule we are dog-tired. I am enjoying the life immensely and will continue to do so for a time anyway – every moment there is something new. Be sure to write often as letters are doubly welcome now, and even if I only send a card, it will serve to let you know that I am well and going. Much love as ever, to you both, and you are constantly in my thoughts, as I am sure I am in yours.*

*Yours lovingly, Ewart*

*Lt. N.E. Towers, "D" Company, R.C.R. Canadian Corps*

Norman Towers served in command of a platoon and as Machine Gun Officer through the winter of 1915 through the following spring of 1916 on the Front south of Ypres and in the Salient and through the Battle of Sanctuary Wood.

Norman was then promoted to Captain and appointed to the command of the Royal Canadian Regiment, 7th Canadian Light Trench Mortar Battery. On the evening of September 16, 1916, during the Battle of the Somme,

while directing the operation of some captured trench mortars against the enemy at Courcelette, Norman was wounded but refused to go back. Shortly after, he was again wounded. He and all the members of his crew became casualties at the same time. Norman was taken back to hospital at Rouen and died the day after his admission on September 20, 1916. Norman Towers would officially be listed as, *Died of Wounds No. 2 Red Cross Hospital, Rouen.*

On September 20, 1916, Norman's parents in Sarnia would receive two telegrams, both from the official war records office at Ottawa. The official telegrams read as follows:

*Thos. F. Towers, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Sincerely regret to inform you Captain Norman Ewart Towers, artillery, officially reported dangerously ill at Red Cross Hospital, Rouen, Sept. 20th. Gunshot wounds. Will send further particulars when received.*

*Signed, Officer in Charge, Record Office.*

and

*Thos. F. Towers, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you Captain Norman Ewart Towers, artillery, officially reported died of wounds, Sept. 20 at No. 2 Red Cross Hospital, Rouen. Signed, O.I.C.R.O.*

Twenty-nine year old Norman Towers is buried in St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Seine-Maritime, France, Grave Officers, A.101.5. On Norman Towers' headstone are inscribed the words, *Born in Sarnia, Canada.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **TURNER, George (#47966)**

George Turner was born in London, Ontario, on January 25, 1888, the son of Mrs. Robert V. Harrison, of Corunna, Ontario. George enlisted May 31, 1915 in Niagara Camp, Ontario, with the 37th Battalion. At the time, he recorded his next of kin as Mary Jane MacArthur (mother), of Sarnia, Ontario. A bachelor, George also listed his occupation as a blacksmith. He became a member the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 42nd Battalion, with the rank of Private. On January 11, 1916, George Turner would lose his life while fighting in Belgium.

The following is from the War Diary of the 42nd Battalion for January 1916, which records the death of George Turner along with five other soldiers:

*The efforts of the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade during three weeks in 1st Brigade area earned the following letter from Major Currie, C.B., Commanding 1st Canadian Division:*

*"It gives me a great deal of pleasure to inform you that during the stay of the 7th Infantry Brigade in the 1st Brigade area, they behaved at all times most gallantly. Besides, they did a great deal of very necessary and useful work.*

*"At the time they took over the line, the trenches, owing to the very bad weather, were not in the best of shape but your fellows have made a great difference. I went over the line last Saturday morning and was delighted with what I saw had been done and so expressed myself to Brigadier General MacDonell. I asked him to convey my thanks to all the ranks of his Brigade: I know he will, but I want you to know as well how I have appreciated them. They were active in their patrolling, did a lot of wiring, greatly improved the front trenches, worked hard on supporting points and were aggressive always. While I deeply regret their casualties I do not think they were excessive.*

*"Brigadier General Hughes has written me in warm terms of praise of what has been accomplished by MacDonell's Brigade."*

*7th Brigade total casualties during three weeks were 13 O.R killed, 2 Officers 69 O.R. wounded, of these 42nd Battalion total casualties were 3 O.R. killed (Ptes Matthews, E., **Turner, G.** and Ward G.) 39 O.R. wounded of whom 3 O.R. died of wounds (Ptes Wells, W.B., Belhumeur, J., McKillop, A.).*

George Turner would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action.* In late January of 1916, the telegraph company in Sarnia received the following telegram from the Adjutant-General at Ottawa:

*Mrs. Mary Jane MacCarthur, Sarnia, Ont.*

*Deeply regret to inform you that No. 47966, Private George Tuner, of Sarnia, of 42nd formerly 37th Battalion, officially reported killed in action. Signed, Adj.-Gen.*

The telegraph company officials could not immediately deliver the telegram, for Mrs. Mary Jane MacArthur, George's mother and next of kin, was no longer living in Sarnia. Shortly after, Mrs. MacArthur was located in Hamilton, and the telegram was forwarded to her.

Twenty-seven year old George Turner is buried in R.E. Farm Cemetery, Heuveland, Belgium, Grave III.A.12. In May of 1921, George's mother, Mrs. Robert V. Harrison of Froomfield, would receive the Mother's Cross in memory of her son, Private George Turner, who was killed in action on the Battlefield of Flanders. His mother also received the Mons Star and Military Medal from the war office.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **VALLIS, Clifford George (#264281)**

Clifford Vallis was born in Pimlico, London, England, on March 10, 1893, the son of William George Vallis and Kate (nee Fanner) Vallis who, like her husband, was from England. George had one brother, Herbert William (born 1897). On September 29, 1910, at the age of seventeen, Clifford immigrated to Canada, arriving from London, England to the Port of Quebec aboard the passenger ship *Lake Erie*. In 1911, Clifford and his brother Herbert were living with their mother Kate in Toronto and lodging with George and Esther McBride. One year later, Clifford's father, William, would pass away in March of 1912 in Toronto.

Clifford enlisted at Camp Borden on July 17, 1916, with the 218th Battalion. At the time, he was living with his mother Kate at 253 Devine Street, Sarnia. He listed his occupation as shipping clerk; his marital status as single. He also recorded that he had prior militia experience, four years (1910-1913) with the Queens Rifles, Toronto. Clifford became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Eastern Ontario Regiment, 213th Battalion, with the rank of Private.

On December 20, 1917, Clifford Vallis would lose his life. He died at Wolseley Barracks Hospital, in London, Ontario. The circumstances of his death were officially listed as, *Nephritis – Discharge at Quebec, 15-4-17 but re-attested with M.H.C.C. for further medical treatment May 10th, 1917. Given every care and attention.* Twenty-four year old Clifford Vallis is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, London, Ontario, Plot Section X.R.1. On Clifford Vallis's headstone are inscribed the words, *At Rest*. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as H. Wallis.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **WADE, Robert (#124061)**

Robert Wade was born in Borroughbridge, Yorkshire, England, on August 24, 1890, the son of William Alfred Wade (a labourer) and Mary Ann Wade, of 301 Cameron Street, Sarnia. In March of 1914, Robert would marry Vanny Louisa (nee Twiner) Wade. The couple were married in Sarnia on March 31, 1914 and would reside first at 317 Maxwell Street, and later at 128 Essex Street, Sarnia. Robert enlisted on October 8, 1915 in Sarnia with the 70th Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as a grocery clerk. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Quebec Regiment, 24th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On September 16, 1916, Robert Wade would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Robert Wade would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported Missing now for Official purposes presumed to have died – now Killed in Action.*

Twenty-six year old Robert Wade is buried in Adanac Military Cemetery, Miraumont, Somme, France, Grave II.B.2. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### **WALTERS, Joseph John**

Joseph Walters was born in Sarnia, on September 26, 1894, the son of Jacob D. Walters and Anna K. Walters, of London, Ontario. Joseph enlisted April 22, 1916 in St. Thomas, Ontario with the 91st Battalion. On his Officer's Declaration Paper, he recorded that he was living in London, Ontario at the time, and his occupation was a journalist. He also recorded that he had prior experience with the 25th Elgin Regiment, St. Thomas, Ontario. Joseph became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 20th Battalion, with the rank of Lieutenant. On May 10, 1917, Joseph Walters would lose his life while fighting in France. Joseph Walters would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. At the time, his next of kin (mother) was living in Rochester, New York. Twenty-one year old Joseph Walters is buried in Lievin Communal Cemetery Extension, Pas de Calais, France, Grave III.A.16.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WATSON, Edward Phillip (#3131744)**

Edward Watson was born in Flint, Michigan, USA, on July 8, 1895, the son of Edward Proctor Watson and Ella S. (nee Barron) Watson. Both his parents were Ontario born and resided at 147 Watson Street, Sarnia with Edward and his brother, Harold Barron (born 1893). When Edward was conscripted to service on January 9, 1918 in London, Ontario, he listed his occupation as hammer operator and his marital status as single. He became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On October 1, 1918, Edward Watson would lose his life while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. In mid-October of 1918, Edward's parents in Sarnia would receive information from the War Office that their son, *Edward Watson, has been officially reported missing*. Approximately one month after Edward Watson's death, the Great War would end. Edward Watson would later be officially listed as, *Reported from base Missing. Now Killed in Action*. Twenty-three year old Edward Watson is buried in Sancourt British Cemetery, Nord, France, Grave I.C.5. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WEATHERILL, Bertrand Peter (#123146)**

Bertrand Weatherill was born in Oil City, Lambton County, on November 8, 1895, the son of Robert Weatherill (born in Toronto) and Laura Louisa (nee Keating, born in Oil Springs) Weatherill, of Wyoming, Ontario. His siblings included Helen Eskelly (born 1888) and Robert James (born 1889). Bertrand's father Robert was a merchant in Oil City before engaging in a brokerage business and still later in fruit farming. Father Robert died on his farm in 1899 from the effects of food poisoning. Mother Laura would remarry in December of 1907, to John Palmer Jarman.

Bertrand, a bachelor, left his job as a banker and enlisted on September 7, 1915 in London, Ontario. His enlistment papers also recorded that he had one year prior experience with the Queen's Own Rifles, Toronto. Bertrand became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 58th Battalion, with the rank of Corporal. One year after enlisting, on September 17, 1916, Bertrand Weatherill would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Bertrand Weatherill would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported Wounded and Missing now for Official purposes presumed to have died*. Twenty-three year old Bertrand Weatherill has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France and was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal. Bertrand's name is also included on a World War I memorial tablet in St. Paul's Anglican Church, in Toronto, along with the names of 75 other men of that church who died during the Great War. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as C. Weatherill. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WESTON, Alfred (#603167) – Photograph page 395**

Alfred Weston was born in Birmingham, Warwickshire, England, on August 14, 1893, the son of Thomas Weston and Harriet Weston, both from England. His siblings included Frank J. (born 1895) and Leonard T. (born 1897). In 1911, the Weston family was residing in Worcestershire, England and, if nothing else, had diverse occupations. Father Thomas was a fitters labourer; Alfred was an apprentice blacksmith; Frank was an apprentice lithographer; and brother Leonard was a confectionary sugar boiler.

In 1915, Alfred married Jennie (nee Baker, of Harrowgate, England) Weston. After the couple was married in Sarnia, Ontario on August 25, 1915, they resided at 337 Mitton Street, Sarnia. Alfred enlisted on September 7, 1915 in Sarnia, with the 34th Battalion. At the time, he listed his occupation as electrician. He would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, 10th Battalion, with the rank of Private. On July 31, 1916, Alfred Weston would lose his life as a result of wounds received while fighting during the Battle of the Somme, France. Alfred Weston would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds. No. 3. Can. Casualty Clearing Station*. Twenty-two year old Alfred Weston is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium, Grave VII.D.16. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WHEATLEY, George (#101577)**

George Wheatley was born in Sarnia, on June 28, 1880, the son of Thomas Corson Wheatley (a farmer) and Jennie (nee Campbell) Wheatley, of RR #3 Sarnia. His siblings included Florence (born 1875); Margaret (born 1889); and twins Charles and Addison (born 1890). George enlisted first on December 20, 1915 in Edmonton, with the 66th Overseas Battalion, Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force. On December 7, 1916, he enlisted with the

102nd Battalion, Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force. His enlistment papers revealed that he was a farmer and a bachelor. George would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Central Ontario Regiment, 102nd Battalion, with the rank of Private. At some point during the War, George Wheatley was wounded at the Front, and upon recovery, he served with the Royal Engineers. On January 16, 1917, George Wheatley would lose his life in France, killed in the Somme section, during artillery action. George Wheatley would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. Thirty-seven year old George Wheatley is buried in Villers Station Cemetery, Villers-Au-Bois, Pas de Calais, France, Grave VI.A.17.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WILKINSON, W.** – No information found in searched records links this name to Sarnia.

**WILLIAMS, Frederick James (#2448462)**

Frederick Williams was born in Sarnia, on December 6, 1874, the son of David A. Williams (a farmer) and Malissa (nee Finch) Williams. Frederick's parents were married in September of 1871, in Port Huron, Michigan, and their union blessed them with a large family: Frederick would have six brothers and two sisters. Frederick would marry Eva Williams but, tragically, in June of 1917, Frederick and Eva would lose their son. A month later, Frederick enlisted in Windsor, Ontario with the Western Ontario Reserve, 21st Battalion. At the time, he and his wife Eva were living in Detroit, Michigan. He listed his occupation as assembler. Frederick became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 18th Battalion, with the rank of Private. In July of 1917, Frederick would be in England and in France in May of 1918.

On August 9, 1918, Frederick Williams was wounded during fighting in France. Five weeks passed before Eva Williams of 189 College Avenue, Sarnia, received a telegram informing her that her husband, *Pte. Fred James Williams, infantry, is seriously ill at Sixteenth General hospital, Le Treport*. On October 3, 1918, Frederick Williams lost his life, the result of wounds received while fighting in France during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign. Frederick Williams would later be officially listed as, *Died of Wounds – No. 16 Gen. Hosp. Le Treport*. In mid-October of 1918, Eva Williams received a telegram officially informing her that her husband, *Private Fred James Williams, infantry, was officially reported as having died of wounds at the 16th General hospital, wounds in his right leg*. Approximately one month after Frederick William's death, the Great War would end.

Frederick was survived by his widow Eva Williams, his mother Malissa, and brothers George and Charles in France, Frank in Sarnia, Elmer in New York, Gordon of London, and Lieut. Arthur D. Williams, who saw service in the Spanish-American War and WWI, and his two sisters, one in Detroit and one in the northwest. Forty-three year old Frederick Williams is buried in Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Seine-Maritime, France, Grave VIII.G.10B.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WILSON, C.B.** - No information found in searched records links this name to Sarnia.

Possibly Charles B. Wilson. No confirmed information from a number of sources.

**WILSON, John Alexander (#402865 and A/2865) – Photograph page 396**

John Wilson was born in Oil Springs, Ontario, on January 27, 1893, the son of John Wilson (an oil operator) and Dinah Jane (nee Smith) Wilson, of Oil Springs, Ontario. His siblings included sister Mina (born 1895) and William Allan (born 1898). His brother William would also serve and survive World War I, as a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry. John, a bachelor, enlisted in Sarnia on January 27, 1915 and listed his occupation as a labourer. He also recorded that he had prior military experience in the 27th Regiment. John would become a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Western Ontario Regiment, 1st Battalion, Number 3 Company, with the rank of Private. On May 19, 1916, John would lose his life while fighting in Belgium and would officially be listed as, *Killed in Action*. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal. Twenty-three year old John Wilson is buried in Chester Farm Cemetery, Belgium, Grave II.A.3 and his name is also inscribed on the Oil Spring's Memorial in the Town of Oil Springs.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

**WRIGHT, Thomas William (#845567) – Photograph page 396**

Thomas Wright was born on the Isle of Guernsey, England, on April 15, 1881, the son of John Albert Wright (a shoemaker) and Julia Elizabeth (nee Le Noury) Wright, both parents of Guernsey, Channel Islands, England. Thomas's siblings included Flora (born 1876, died in 1904); Albert Ernest (born 1878); Maud Mabel (born 1879); Walter Edward (born 1882); Harriet (born 1883, died in 1884); Julia (born 1885); and John Albert (born in September of 1886, three months after the death of his father). When Thomas was only five years old, his father died from heart disease in June of 1886. After the passing of the patriarch John Albert, the family broke apart. Maud and Julia went to an orphanage on Guernsey, the two oldest Florence and Albert lived with relatives and John Jr. went with his mother. Thomas and his brother Walter ended up in the Leopold House, in London, England. Both Thomas and Walter (ages 13 and 12) were sent to Canada as British Home Children, arriving in the summer of 1894, where they were placed on nearby farms in Forest, Ontario. Thomas remained at his placement for at least three years, earning a Good Conduct Medal from Dr. Barnardo's Homes in recognition for his hard work. Thomas would also lose his mother years later, Julia Elizabeth, who would die in 1914.

Thomas married Harriet (nee Wisby, living in Toronto) Wright in February of 1905, in York County, Ontario. Harriet had left the UK with plans to marry and to reside in Forest, and the two were married just five days after Harriet arrived. Thomas was living in Forest, Ontario at the time and was working as a clerk. Thomas and Harriet had three children together: Herbert Wisby (born 1906); Ellis John (born 1910); and Florence (born 1911). Tragedy, however, struck the Wright family and Thomas in particular. Harriet died of tuberculosis in February of 1912, and a few days after Harriet's death, their infant daughter Florence would also die, of meningitis. Two years later, Thomas' mother, Julia Elizabeth, passed away.

Two years after Harriet's death, Thomas married Margaret Kershaw (nee Wisby), the older sister of Harriet, in Forest, Ontario. Margaret had come to Canada around 1905 from Cambridgeshire, England and resided in Forest, Ontario. Margaret Wisby (Kershaw) had been previously married to Charles Kershaw in June 1910. Charles and Margaret Kershaw would have one child together, a daughter, Mary Kershaw. Margaret Kershaw would lose her husband Charles Kershaw, who died in August 1911, right around the time that Mary was born.

When Thomas married Margaret in Marh 1914, he listed his residence as Port Huron, Michigan. Thomas Wright and Margaret Wright would have three children together: Clifford (born 1914), and twins Edith Selena (born 1916) and James LeNoury (born 1916). Their son James would years later serve and die in World War II. His information is included in this project in the World War II section. \*Thomas and James Wright were the only father and son combination from Sarnia to both lose their lives while serving Canada in two different World Wars. Thomas' younger brother Walter Edward would also enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, going overseas to France later in the War. Thomas' older brother Albert Ernest enlisted in the British Army at the age of fourteen and would also go on to serve until after the war.

Prior to enlisting, Thomas Wright operated a grocery store on Christina Street in Sarnia (it would later become Glaab's barber shop). Thomas was a member of Sarnia Lodge No. 126, I.O.O.F. and also a member of the Sarnia Citizens Band and the Forest Band. Thomas enlisted February 18, 1916 in Sarnia with the 149th Battalion band. At the time, Thomas, Margaret and their children were living at 128 Penrose St., Sarnia. Later she would reside at 240 Bright St., Sarnia. At his enlistment, Thomas listed his occupation as grocer. Once overseas, Thomas would be transferred, becoming a member of the Army, Canadian Railway Troops, 11th Battalion, "C" Company, with the rank of Lance Corporal, and serving in France.

After her husband had been overseas for a little over two years, in early November of 1918 Margaret would receive a telegram at their house on Penrose Street informing her that her husband, Private Thomas Wright, was dangerously ill with influenza. On November 9, 1918, during Canada's final Hundred Days Campaign and two days before the Armistice was signed, Thomas Wright would lose his life while serving in France. Almost two weeks after the Great War ended and after her husband had died, Margaret would officially receive the sad news that her husband *845567 Pte. Thomas William Wright had died of broncho pneumonia at a Casualty Clearing Station on November 9th.* Thomas Wright was officially listed as *Died (Influenza & Broncho-pneumonia) No. 56 Casualty Clearing Station.*

In late November of 1918, the secretary of Sarnia Lodge No. 126, I.O.O.F. received a letter written by Thomas Wright prior to his death. Thomas was proud to be a member of the order and had been anxiously awaiting

the time of his return, so he could attend the meetings of his beloved order. Here is that letter:

*Somewhere in France, Oct. 6, 1918.*

*Wm. Batten, Sec'y I.O.O.F. Sarnia*

*Dear Sir,*

*A few lines to let you know I have not forgotten Sarnia Lodge No. 126, I.O.O.F. I am very proud of being an Odd Fellow and, moreover, I must thank the lodge for the kindness tendered to my wife and family during my absence. I am very sorry to hear the sad news of the death of the late James Galbraith. He was always ready with a helping hand to help any brother in need no matter who he was. So Sarnia loses a good brother. I am very sorry not to have written a few lines before but I trust we shall meet again. The boys out here in France have learned some good lessons and you can count on having a good number of our boys once we are permitted to return home. I am looking forward to being able to meet again in 126 lodge room. How good it would be to be there. Yet we must wait a while longer. We are very cheerful and the news at present one can hardly wait to see the paper. May it continue and then victory. Germany is certainly in a very bad position. The sooner he gives in the better for him and us all. I am writing this few lines on a German field letter card, having picked it up on the battlefield along with the enclosed iron cross ribbon and needle found in one of the German trenches. I can't tell you where, but some day I hope to. Kindest regards to all the boys of 126 lodge.*

*Yours, in F.L. & T. Thos. Wright*

Thirty-seven year old Thomas Wright is buried in Grevillers British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave XVII.E.8. Harriet (who died in Forest in 1912) and Margaret (who died in Sarnia in 1964) are both buried in Beechwood Cemetery in Forest. An empty spot still lies between them, for their husband Thomas Wright. That spot will always be there, as Thomas was buried in France with his fallen brothers in arms.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

#### **WYSEMAN, Andrew (#811870)**

Andrew Wyseman was born in Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland, on August 7, 1879, the eldest child of Robert Wyseman and Agnes (nee Gibb) Wyseman, of 130 South Brock Street, Sarnia. The Wyseman family was originally from Scotland. Andrew's siblings included Richard (born 1886); Robert (born 1888); William (born 1891); James (born 1898); and Mary (born 1900). In 1911, the Wyseman family was living in Falkirk, Scotland. At that time, Andrew's occupation was an iron moulder.

Andrew enlisted February 1, 1916 in Edmonton with the 138th Battalion. He was single, occupied as a mail carrier and living in Edmonton at the time of his enlistment. He also recorded that he had seven months of prior military experience with the 101st Militia. Andrew became a member of the Army, Canadian Infantry, Alberta Regiment, 31st Battalion, with the rank of Private. On May 3, 1917, Andrew Wyseman would lose his life while fighting in France in the vicinity of Vimy Ridge.

In June of 1917, Andrew's mother, Mrs. R. Wyseman in Sarnia, would receive the following letter from one of her son's comrades, conveying that her son was missing;

*Dear Mrs. Wyseman,*

*I am sorry to inform you that Andy is missing. I don't know if you have been informed through the War Office or not, but before we went into the line, Andy gave me his address, and I gave him mine, and we promised each other if anything should happen, we would write home after several days. There is a great possibility of him being taken a prisoner, for the day we went over the top, Andy and myself were together and we were surrounded by Germans, but we drove them back and in the excitement, I lost Andy. He is reported missing and I have been waiting this last week thinking I might hear news of him. As I have not heard anything, I thought I would let you know. My address is Pte. Maurice Kew, No. 811605, 31st Canadian Battalion E.F., France. My home address is Kidmore, Reading Berks, England. I joined up with Andy, being in the 138th Band with him, and have been with him right along. Therefore I miss him very much, and I am awfully sorry this has happened. We must hope for the best. If you should hear of him as a prisoner or otherwise, you might let me know and I will certainly do the same, therefore, wishing you the best of luck will close. I am yours very truly.*

*Maurice Kew*



Andrew Wyseman would later be officially listed as, *Previously Reported Missing now for Official purposes presumed to have died on or since 3-5-17*. Thirty-seven year old Andrew Wyseman has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as A. Wiseman.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 2G

### *Canada's Men*

*From the Grand Old Home of the Maple Leaf,  
That lays o'er the Rolling Sea;  
In response to the Call – come Canada's Men,  
These Sons of the Empire – Free.  
Boldly they stand for the Cause of Right,  
And Britain's Might – uphold;  
Sons of the Grand Imperial Race,  
They can Fight as in Days of Old.  
From the Days when Wolfe scaled High Quebec,  
That overlooks the Plain;  
The Gallant Deeds of Canada's Men.  
Shall Ring through the World again.  
From City, and Prairie, and Distant Farm,  
They Respond to their Empire's Call;  
To avenge their fallen Comrades,  
True Patriots – one and all.  
We are proud to-day of Canada's Men,  
And very good reason to be!  
The Bravest Men – we've seen of late,  
That have crossed the Atlantic Sea.  
And when the War is finished,  
And our Lads go Home once More;  
What a Rousing Welcome shall be theirs,  
On their fine Canadian Shore!*

*From a post card written by a Canadian soldier  
to his mother, 1916  
Author unknown*

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## ANECDOTAL NOTES ON SARNIA'S FALLEN SOLDIERS (of WORLD WAR II, KOREA and AFGHANISTAN)

**AIKEN, Douglas Earl** (#J/85822) – Photograph page 371

Douglas Aiken was born in Petrolia on June 9, 1921, the son of Norman Russell Aiken and Loretta Mae (nee Hillier, born in Lambton, Ontario) Aiken, of 214 Proctor Street, Sarnia. His father was a C.N.R. employee in Sarnia. Douglas had one brother, Laverne Russell (born 1919). Parents Norman and Loretta were married in February of 1917 in Sarnia. Douglas' father, Norman Russell, died in 1937, when Douglas was sixteen years old. A graduate of Sarnia Collegiate Douglas was a carrier boy for the *Canadian Observer* while attending SCITS. He was employed with the Sarnia Bridge Company until his enlistment. Douglas, single at the time, enlisted in October of 1940 and the next month was transferred from No. 1 Manning Pool, Toronto to the Dunnville Aircraft school of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Douglas Aiken would receive his wings April 6, 1943 at No. 9 S.F.T.S. (Service Flying Training School) at Centralia (near Exeter, Ontario). By mid-April of 1943, after spending a brief furlough in Sarnia with his mother and friends, Douglas left for duty in Halifax. He would arrive overseas at the end of May in 1943.

Douglas went overseas as a member of RAF #44 Rhodesia Squadron "Fulmina Regis Lusta" (The King's thunderbolts are righteous), in June 1943. Approximately one year later, Loretta Aiken received the news that her son, Douglas Aiken, had been promoted to the rank of Pilot Officer-Pilot early in the month of June 1944. He had written to his mother the week before, mentioning that he had been engaged in missions over enemy-held territory in Europe.

One year after arriving overseas, on June 25, 1944, the Lancaster aircraft ND751 which Douglas Aiken was piloting on a bombing mission was lost during operations against Pommereval, France, during the Battle of Normandy. It was his 18th operational sortie. In late June of 1944, Loretta, still in Sarnia, received a telegram from the R.C.A.F. casualty officer at Ottawa informing her that her son, *Pilot Officer Douglas Aiken was reported missing in action after air operations overseas on June 25*. No other details were provided, but the message said further details would be forwarded when available. It was not until one year later that Loretta received another message from Ottawa about her missing son. In late June of 1945, a telegram from Ottawa informed her that her son, *Pilot Officer Douglas L. Aiken, is now for official purposes presumed to have been killed in action June 25, 1944*.

Douglas Aiken would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purpose, presumed dead, overseas (France)*. Perishing with Douglas Aiken were WO. R.A. Riddoch; P/O A.M. Simmons, Sgt. J. Hare (RAF), H.A. Lewarne (RAF), and J. Lewis (RAF); and FS. F.S. Rawson (RAF). Twenty-three year old Douglas Aiken is buried in Criquetot-Sur-Longueville Churchyard, France British Plot, Joint grave 2.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, 2O

**ALEXANDER, Robert Wilfred** (#J/2833) – Photograph page 372

Robert Alexander was born in Norwich, Ontario on August 20, 1920, the eldest son of Wilfred and Isabel Johnstone (nee Hagan, born in Ireland) Alexander. He had two brothers, James William and Howard John, and one sister, Catherine May. Robert received his education at Norwich Public and High Schools, and the London Normal School, graduating as a teacher. Prior to enlisting, Robert was as a public school teacher at New Durham.

Robert enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in October 1939. He was a member of the first classes in the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, reporting for duty on April 12, 1940. He trained at Toronto, Malton, Jarvis and Trenton, receiving his observer's wings and commission at Trenton early in November of 1940. He was then transferred to England and went on active operational duty over Europe. In March of 1941, he was stationed in Egypt and made more than 50 sorties from North African bases. In April of 1942, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroic service in the Middle East. He was at the time with the R.A.F. Headquarters Staff in the Middle East and served there until posted home for a special navigational course at Port Albert.

In September of 1942, Robert married Milfred Florence Armstrong, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wellington Armstrong of Alvinston, Brooke Township. At the wedding ceremony, Muriel Craven, cousin of the bride, served as bridesmaid, and James Alexander, brother of the groom, served as the best man. After a brief wedding trip, the couple moved to Goderich. Robert and Mildred Alexander would later have one child, a son, James

Robert, and the family resided in Alvinston, their address listed as R.R. #4, Norwich.

Also on his return to Canada in 1942, Robert took a pilot's course, graduating at #5 SFTS, Brantford, Ontario and receiving his pilot's wings in July of 1943. He was then posted to the R.A.F. Transport Command at Dorval, Quebec. He then returned overseas for another tour of operations, flying in a Dakota from Dorval on January 26, 1944. He was a member of RCAF #437 Husky Squadron "Omnia Passim" (Anything anywhere), attaining the rank of Squadron Leader-Pilot. He was promoted to squadron leader only one week before his death.

On September 21, 1944, he was part of a crew aboard Dakota aircraft KG387 that was shot down while dropping supplies for paratroopers at Arnhem. Robert Alexander maintained control of the aircraft long enough for most of his crew to bail out. Both Robert Alexander and Flying Officer W.S. McLintock went down with the aircraft and were killed on a farm near Son, Netherlands. Approximately one week later, Milfred Florence Alexander in Alvinston would receive a telegram informing her that her husband, *Squadron Leader Robert Alexander, R.C.A.F., is missing in action overseas.*

Robert Alexander, would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now presumed dead, overseas (Holland).* Robert left behind his wife Milfred and their young son, James. Twenty-four year old Robert Alexander is buried in Bergen-op-zoom Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave 24 C.1-3. He also has a memorial headstone at Norwich Village Cemetery. For his service and bravery, Robert was awarded the following citations: 1939-45 Star; Africa Star; France and Germany Star; General Service Medal; Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp; Air Observer Badge earned on October 24, 1940; Pilots Flying Badge earned on January 9, 1943; and Operational Wings awarded posthumously on January 28, 1947. Alexander Bay and Alexander Point, in the Northwest Territories were named after Robert Alexander.  
SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **ANDERSON, William John (#V/19542)**

William ("Bill") Anderson was born on May 20, 1921, the youngest son of Edward James and Mary R. Anderson, of 111 Alfred Street, Sarnia. William had two brothers and two sisters, who at the time of William's death were Stanley C., serving as a patrolman in the R.C.N.V.R.; Edwin, in St. Thomas; Mrs. Margaret Olenuik of St. Catharines; and Eileen in Sarnia. William attended St. Patrick's High School and Sarnia Collegiate Institute and was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, William was a machine operator employed with Electric Auto-Lite Limited. Single at the time, he enlisted in the Canadian Navy in August of 1941 and trained at Windsor, Ontario and St. Hyacinthe, Quebec. In May of 1942, William would celebrate his 21st birthday at St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, where he was attending naval school. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve aboard the corvette *HMCS Shawinigan*, attaining the rank of Leading Coder. In April of 1944, William would return to Sarnia on a nine-day leave to visit his family and friends, the first furlough he had in 20 months.

The *HMCS Shawinigan (K 136)* was a Flower-class corvette commissioned on September 19, 1941 at Quebec City. It was one of the sturdy little "work horses" of the RCN and was to become the 9th corvette and 19th Canadian warship lost in the war. She was in the navy's convoy escort and patrol fleet. Her sea miles totalled more than 150 000, and she had been one of the busiest vessels of her class, escorting convoy runs in the Atlantic Ocean and off the east coast of Canada. Few ships of her class spent more time at sea during the period when German U-boats were most active in the North Atlantic. During the two years prior to her sinking, she did not lose a ship under her charge. Men who served aboard her had been acclaimed for fighting efficiency, for rescue work and attacks on enemy U-boats. She escorted hundreds of thousands of vital war supplies and shipping to Allied ports.

On November 24, 1944, the *HMCS Shawinigan* and a United States Coast Guard Cutter *Sassafrass* escorted the ferry *Burgeo* from Sydney, Nova Scotia to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland. Ferries on this route were always escorted after the tragic loss of the ferry *SS Caribou* two years earlier. In mid-October of 1942, the passenger ferry *SS Caribou* had been torpedoed on the same route, and 136 lives were lost including ten children. The three ships in November 1944 made an uneventful crossing to Port aux Basques, at which time the *Shawinigan* detached to continue doing an independent anti-submarine patrol in the area. The *Shawinigan* was scheduled to rendezvous with the *Burgeo* the following morning for the return to Cape Breton. But the *Shawinigan* never made it. On that fateful November 24 moonlit night, the *Shawinigan* maintained radio silence while performing anti-submarine patrol, in the

Cabot Strait between Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island. Nearby, German U-boat *U-1228* was trying to repair a faulty snorkel without success and had decided to return to Germany for repairs. As soon as *U-1228* decided to head back into the Atlantic, she sighted and attacked the *Shawinigan* with a Gnat torpedo. It was *U-1228*'s first recorded attack on enemy shipping.

Four minutes later, the *Shawinigan*, with its entire crew, disappeared in a plume of water and a shower of sparks. The ship had no time for any message to be sent. The next morning, the *Burgeo* left Port aux Basques on schedule in the fog but could not find the *Shawinigan*. Keeping radio silence and not informing command of *Shawinigan*'s failure to appear, the *Burgeo* made for Sydney, arriving on November 25 at 6 pm. When *Burgeo* arrived unescorted, the navy knew something had happened to *Shawinigan*. A day or so later, searching ships came upon fragments of wreckage and six bodies, which were all that remained to indicate what had happened to the *Shawinigan*.

Seven officers and 84 crew members, including William Anderson, were lost. There were no survivors. Twenty-six year old Petty Officer Stoker Michael Paithowski, another Sarnian, was also on board and perished. His story is also included in this project. In late November of 1944, parents Edward and Mary Anderson in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Department of National Defence informing them that their son, *Leading Coder William J. Anderson, has been reported missing at sea*. The message contained no other information and intimated that a letter would follow. Mary had received a letter from her son William only one week prior, in which he had stated that he was well and getting along O.K.

On December 7, 1944, in a dispatch from Ottawa, the Hon. Angus L. Macdonald, Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, announced the loss of the *H.M.C.S. Shawinigan*, while on operational duty in the North Atlantic. He gave no details but said the ship's complement had been lost and five bodies have been recovered and identified. It was announced locally that two Sarnia seamen, William Anderson and Michael Paithowski, were members of the crew of the *Shawinigan* and were reported missing. In mid-February of 1945, parents Edward and Mary Anderson in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Leading Coder William J. Anderson, who was reported missing at sea last November is officially presumed lost*. Later, the Navy would inform the Anderson family that William Anderson was officially listed as, *Missing, presumed dead, when the ship in which he was serving, H.M.C.S. 'Shawinigan' was lost while on operational duty at sea*. It was understood that William's mother, Mary, would receive the Memorial Cross in the near future. It was not until after the war ended and *U-1228* surrendered, that the details of what had happened to the *Shawinigan* that night become uncovered. Twenty-three year old William Anderson has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 12.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, 2A, 2C, 2D

#### **ANDREW, George Varnum (#J/19070) – Photograph page 372**

George Varnum Andrew was born on January 11, 1923, the son of ex-Sarnia mayor and harbourmaster George A.C. Andrew and Mrs. Elizabeth Harriet (nee Varnum, born in Moore Township, Lambton) Andrew, of 111 North College Avenue, Sarnia. George's father was a World War I veteran (RCAF mechanic), as well as a City of Sarnia alderman on a couple of occasions and the mayor of Sarnia in 1924.

George Varnum had six siblings: Florence Evelyn (born 1909); twins George Edwin and Ralph Varnum (born 1912, but both died six months after birth); Muriel Eileen (born 1915); William Charles (born 1921); and Robert Barrett (born 1926). His sisters would later marry and be Mrs. John Little (Sarnia) and Mrs. Stephen Endico (Detroit). George's younger brother, Robert B. Andrew, was a member of the Central Century Club and attended the University of Toronto. George's older brother, William C. Andrew, would lose his life while serving in World War II (see below).

George received his education in the public schools in Sarnia and graduated from Sarnia Collegiate as an electrician. During his high school days, George was on the Signalling Team and was an officer in the High School Cadets for one year. He was an active member of Central United Church and, even while serving in war, corresponded with Rev. E.W. Jewitt, pastor of the Church. George enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, when the first recruiting unit came to Sarnia on April 21, 1941. He received his training at Summerside, P.E.I., and Chatham, New Brunswick.

While at Chatham, George married Esther Jones, the daughter of Mrs. Annie Jones of Sarnia, at the United Church manse in Chatham, New Brunswick in September 1941. At the wedding ceremony, Miss Catherine Anne Richards of Newcastle, New Brunswick served as bridesmaid, and Leading Aircraftman Donald Allen of Toronto served as the best man. George's brother-in-law, Glyn Jones, would join the Canadian Army and later be killed during the raid on Dieppe, on August 19, 1942 (see Glyn Jones). After his stint in Chatham, George was transferred to No. 1 Wireless School, Montreal, and then to No. 4 B. and G. School at Fingal, Ontario.

In early November of 1941, LAC George Andrew was home in Sarnia on leave following his transfer from an Eastern Air Command post on Prince Edward Island to the chief training centre at Trenton, Ontario. On November 5, 1941, while at home with his family, he would receive news of the sinking of the *SS Vancouver Island* with no reports of any survivors, including his brother William Charles Andrew.

George Andrew would graduate, receiving his Air Gunner wings and Sergeant stripes at Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School in August of 1942. George Andrew would become a member of RCAF #426 Thunderbird Squadron "On Wings of Fire", attaining the rank of Flying Officer Air Gunner and flying a Lancaster aircraft LL630. In early October of 1942, George's wife, Esther, received a cable in Sarnia from her husband George, informing her that he had arrived safely in England. While her husband was overseas, Esther resided at 114 ½ North Christina Street, Sarnia.

George had his Operational Training in England and would take part in many daring raids over enemy territory, including raids on Berlin, Leipzig and Frankfurt. In September of 1943, while in England, George sent a cable to Esther, informing her that he had been promoted to Flight-Sergeant retroactive to February 3. His wife was living with her mother at 114 ½ North Christina Street during the war. On August 23 and again in early September of 1943, George was part of a group of Halifax and Lancaster squadrons of the R.C.A.F., along with scores of other Canadians flying big R.A.F. bombers that carried out massive night poundings "blitz raids" on Berlin. While taking part in the latter heavy bombing of Berlin, as a rear gunner, he told of seeing numerous flares dropped by German planes in an attempt to light up the attacking bombers.

Twenty year-old George wrote a letter in September of 1943 to his parents George Sr. and Elizabeth Andrew in Sarnia, describing his experiences as a rear-gunner of a Lancaster bomber taking part in Berlin raids. His description could be any air-gunner's typical experience. The following are excerpts of that letter:

*Perhaps you'd like an idea of the feelings that run through us on a trip. First of all we are warned for operations. That is the signal for us to inspect our aircraft and equipment carefully. Then a lot of us write letters home. It helps a lot to build up courage. Next comes briefing, where we are told the target and given all the possible details on hazards, routes, etc., and are given take-off times. We usually spend the rest of our time playing cards, reading or writing more letters. Believe me, we are all thinking very much of home at that stage, for we have been told the target, and having probably been there before, we realize only too well the hell we must go through to reach it.*

*An hour or so before the take-off we go down to the hangers and start dressing for the job at hand. This entails a lot of work, for putting on all our gear is like harnessing a horse, only worse. Now the time for take-off is drawing near and we are watching our watches closely while we smoke a final cigarette and drink a cup of hot coffee. We look out and see the crash wagon and ambulance standing by. We call them "vultures." And here comes Happy. He is our padre, a flight-lieutenant, and a swell guy. He comes down for every take-off, and is always the first one to greet us when we come back. I wouldn't feel right taking off without Happy around. Now the flight commander tells us to get cracking. We all hold our breath until we are safely off the deck, for we are carrying quite a load of cookies for Hitler.*

*Over the target, the crew finds itself in a heavy barrage of smoke and flak. The bomb-aimer has his sight on the target and is directing Freddy along an accurate course. We are all watching the sky closely for fighters who sometimes fly through their own hell to get to us. We are also watching the searchlights to see if they are probing for us or some other poor beggar. Once they get the lights on us, hell breaks loose, for then they pump the flak right at the intersection of the lights, where we are supposed to be. Freddy doesn't care for the stuff any more than we do, and makes sure that we don't park in that intersection for too long at a time.*

*All this time we are drawing near to our aiming point and the bomb-aimer is still giving directions to bring it up to the hair-line of the sight. Now he's got it, the bomb bays swing open and release their tons of explosive, the camera*

*clicks and takes a picture of the target – the aiming point we hope, for it is an honor to bring back a picture showing the exact aiming point. He shouts, ‘Okay, Freddy, bombs gone. Let’s get the hell out of here!’ Freddy sets a new course to get us out of the target area. I can see the target, for we are passing over it now, and it is exposed to my view. The air-gunner gets the last view and is therefore relied upon for a good description of bombing results. The target is blazing brilliantly in many colours, and I can see explosions billowing up thousands of feet into the air.*

*Homeward bound, we cannot relax until we are circling over our base. Now we are down, and Happy is handing out the cigarettes while we talk it all over. We report to intelligence and give him the stuff you read in the papers as well as a lot you don’t see there. Now a meal, then to bed to rest up in case we are on again tonight.*

On the night of October 20, 1943, he took part in a bombing raid of RCAF bombers of the Thunderbird and Goose Squadrons and a heavy force of R.A.F. bombers whose mission was to flatten objectives in Leipzig, Germany. George was flying a Lancaster Bomber nicknamed “D for Donald”. On the way to the target, their bomber was attacked by a German Messerschmitt, which knocked out the mid-upper gunner with cannon shells. Three more attacks and scores of miles later, they shook off the fighter. They could have turned and gone home then, their aircraft being so badly holed, but they kept going to Leipzig. At the target area, they were attacked by a German Ju-88 and were able to shake that attack off too. The bombs had to be released manually, the mechanism having been too shot up. The pilot, in the words of other members of the crew, had “to perform superbly” with his damaged navigating instruments to bring them back to England. In a *Canadian Press* dispatch describing the raid, George Andrew had helped keep the Nazis at a distance, especially over the target where his plane was attacked four times by enemy fighters. The returning fliers described it as one of the toughest nights the Canadians had ever experienced. Ice, rain and lightning all played havoc with the aircraft and heavy clouds sheltered the target. Total bomber losses that night were seventeen. It was George’s 20th raid. When their aircraft arrived back at its base, more than one hundred cannon and machine gun holes were counted in the fuselage. George Andrew was promoted from flight sergeant receiving his commission as Pilot-Officer for exceptional work as rear gunner in the raid on Leipzig. Flying Officer Jimmy Dodge was one of the crew on board the Lancaster aircraft that October 20th night. An extract from a letter that he wrote to his mother in Spirit River Alberta quotes her son as saying, *Too much praise cannot be given to Fred Stuart our RAF skipper and George (Andy) Andrew our rear-gunner. They were the ones mostly responsible for getting us out of the jam we were in, and of course Rod Dunphy (Winnipeg) our navigator, who did a marvellous piece of work.*

On his 22nd raid, on December 20, 1943, his Lancaster aircraft was lost during night operations against Frankfurt, Germany, one of ten Canadian planes among the forty-two which failed to return from the attack. In late December of 1943, his parents George Senior and Elizabeth Andrew would receive a telegram in Sarnia from the air force casualty officer at Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pilot Officer Geroge Varnum Andrew is missing after R.C.A.F. air operations overseas on December 21.* No other details were contained in the message. The Andrews tragically had a second son reported missing in the war, the one previous being William Charles Andrew, who was reported missing in mid-October of 1941 (see below).

In early February of 1944, George’s wife, Esther, residing on North Christina Street, would receive a telegram from the RCAF casualty officer at Ottawa that read, *Regret to advise International Red Cross quoting German information, states your husband, PO. George Varnum Andrew, lost his life December 20, but does not give additional particulars. Pending further confirmation, your husband is to be considered missing, believed killed. Please accept my sincere sympathy. Letter follows.* Perishing with Pilot Officer-Air Gunner George Andrew were P/O T.H. Hastings (RAF); F/O.s R.R. Dunphy, J.W. Flynn (RAF), A.J. Rudman (RAF), and F.J. Stuart (RAF); and Sgt. F.R. Taylor (RAF). George Andrew was later listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany).* For George’s parents, George senior and Elizabeth Andrew in Sarnia, this was their second son that they lost in the War. George senior would also lose a nephew in the war, Sarnia born Leonard Andrew, who was killed during the Dieppe Raid in August of 1942. Twenty year-old George Varnum Andrew is buried in Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany, Coll.Grave 10.E.9-13.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, S, 2C, 2D

**ANDREW, William Charles** (Civilian) – Photograph page 372

William (“Bill”) Andrew was born on March 7, 1921, the eldest son of ex-Sarnia mayor and harbourmaster George A. C. Andrew and Mrs. Elizabeth Harriet (nee Varnum, born in Moore Township, Lambton) Andrew, of 111

North College Avenue, Sarnia. William's father was a World War I veteran (RCAF mechanic), as well as a City of Sarnia alderman on a couple of occasions and the mayor of Sarnia in 1924. William had six siblings: Florence Evelyn (born 1909); twins George Edwin and Ralph Varnum (born 1912, but both died six months after birth); Muriel Eileen (born 1915); George Varnum (born 1923); and Robert Barrett (born 1926). His sisters would later marry and be Mrs. John Little (Front street, Sarnia) and Mrs. Stephen Endico (Detroit). William's youngest brother, Robert B. Andrew, was a member of the Central Century Club and attended the University of Toronto. William's other brother, George V. Andrew of the RCAF, would lose his life while serving in World War II (see above).

William, who was an active member of Central United Church, attended Sarnia public elementary school and graduated in electricity from Sarnia Collegiate. He then took a Radio Operator course at the Canadian Electronic School in Toronto and, upon his return, spent his spare time experimenting with wireless equipment. In the winter of 1940, he applied for enlistment when the RCAF issued a call for radio technicians. He was rejected, however, due to a slight defect in his knee. In the summer of 1941, he answered the call for recruits put out by the British Civilian Technical Corps, headquartered in Washington, D.C. The British Civilian Technical Corps was recruited largely in the United States and Canada and comprised young men not likely for call for actual military service. The British CT Corps' purpose was to assist civilian technicians in Britain by repairing vital equipment used by the British Armed Forces. Salaries ranged from \$24-\$38 per week. Technicians included skilled radio and automobile mechanics, electrical wiremen, instrument repairers, metal workers and other technical trades. William Andrew passed his Civil Service exam as a radio technician and wireless expert in Port Huron with marks of 100% on his examinations. He reported for duty as a radio technician with the British Civilian Technical Corps at Montreal on September 4, 1941. His family was to hear from him for the last time on October 5, 1941.

In September 1940, the Royal Canadian Navy armed merchant cruiser *Prince Robert* was deployed from the British Columbia coast to South America to support Britain's blockade of ships. Britain hoped to prevent German merchant ships in neutral ports from returning to Germany or to be fitted as raiders. On September 25, 1940, the *Prince Robert* captured the 9,500 ton German merchant ship *Weser* off the coast of Mexico, one of the first important Canadian prizes of the war. The *Weser* was brought to the British Columbia coast and renamed the *SS Vancouver Island* for service in the Royal Canadian Navy. It would make several trans-Atlantic crossings until it met its end from a German U-boat.

On October 1, 1941, William Andrew was aboard the *SS Vancouver Island* as it left Cape Breton Island as part of a fifty-two ship convoy on its way to Belfast and Cardiff. On October 15, 1941, the convoy was intercepted by thirteen U-boats that over the next three days sank eleven ships. On the first day of the attack, the *SS Vancouver Island* was sailing behind the main convoy as a straggler when it was spotted by one of the German U-boats. In the mid-Atlantic, at about 10:50 pm, the *SS Vancouver* was struck by two torpedoes fired by German U-boat *U-558*.

Back in Sarnia, word of the attack and possible loss of 19 men of the British Civilian Technical Corps was received by the *Canadian Observer* on November 4, 1941. The British Press Service announced the loss on behalf of the Royal Air Force delegation at Washington. The information released was that the boat was presumed to have been sunk in the Atlantic Ocean but the date was uncertain and no information was available yet of any survivors. Despite the meagre details available, relatives and friends of William Andrew were hopeful that he would be safe. William's parents had been worried about their son, because they hadn't heard from him for so long and they wanted to send Christmas presents to him.

On November 5, 1941, while William's brother, LAC George Andrew of the R.C.A.F. was home on leave from his Eastern Air Command post, the following official news arrived to his parents:

*It is with most profound regret that I have to convey to you, the news that your son is among the list of missing passengers from a ship on which he was taking passage to the United Kingdom as a member of the British Civilian Technical Corps. The ship is missing and is presumed sunk, but the date is unknown and there is no news of any survivors. In expressing their deepest sympathy the Air Council gratefully acknowledges the generous motives which inspired your son to give his services in the defence of human liberty and progress.*  
*W.C.G. Cribbett, R.A.F. Delegation, Washington, D.C.*

Later, it was disclosed that no one survived the attack on the *SS Vancouver Island*. William Andrew and eighteen other members of a detachment of the British Civilian Technical Corps were lost at sea. In total, the sinking

of the *SS Vancouver Island* resulted in 102 deaths, sixty-four crew, six DEMS gunners, and thirty-two passengers. Two years later, George Sr. and Elizabeth would lose a second son in the War. George Sr. would also lose a nephew in the war, Sarnia born Leonard Andrew, who was killed during the Dieppe Raid in August of 1942. Twenty-year old William Charles Andrew is memorialized on the Ottawa Memorial, in Ottawa, Canada, Panel 1, Column 3.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, G, J, N, R, S, U, 2A

**AUBIN, Joseph Leopold (#A/115076)**

Joseph Aubin was born on September 22, 1923, the son of Wilfred Aubin and Stella Aubin, of Cemetery Road, Sarnia. Joseph was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish. Prior to enlisting, Joseph was employed by the Sarnia Bridge Company as a steel-worker. Joseph, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army in the spring of 1943. He became a member of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment R.C.I.C., arriving overseas in October of 1944. Only four months after arriving overseas, on February 24, 1945, Private Joseph Aubin would lose his life while fighting in Italy, at the very end of the Italian Campaign.

In early March of 1945, Joseph's parents, Wilfred and Stella in Sarnia, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. Joseph Leopold Aubin has died in Italy of wounds received in action*. No other details were received. Joseph Aubin would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, Died of wounds received in action, in the field (Italy)*. In mid-March of 1945, a requiem high mass was celebrated in Our Lady of Mercy Church for the repose of the soul of Pte. Joseph Aubin. Twenty-one year old Joseph Aubin is buried in Ravenna War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V.G.4. On Joseph Aubin's headstone are inscribed the words, *Hear my unworthy prayer. Preserve me from all danger. Give my immortal soul a place among the chosen*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

**BANKS, James Keith (#A/50059)**

James Keith Banks was born on May 5, 1921, the son of Fred Rumohr Banks and Ambrose "Doris" Banks, of 221 Tecumseh Street, Sarnia. He had one brother, Lyle, one sister Betty, and a half brother Vern. Growing up in Sarnia, Keith, as he was known, attended London Road and Devine Street public schools and Sarnia Collegiate, and whose hobbies included cooking and playing the guitar and the mouth organ. Before enlisting he worked in a bowling alley. Keith enlisted in the Canadian Army--his mother signed him up--and he left for training in Chatham and later British Columbia. At the time, Keith was only seventeen years old, single and listed his profession as a labourer. His brother Lyle was 16, his sister Betty was 13, and his half brother Vern was only a couple of months old.

After training, Keith went overseas in January of 1943 as a member of the Highland Light Infantry of Canada, R.C.I.C. He would go on to attain the rank of Lance Corporal. Once while on leave in London, England, Keith got to meet his grandfather and his uncle for the first time. Keith and his mother Doris exchanged letters often (they were edited by the military). Doris told him of the coupon books for food, gas rations, and the things that the radio and newspaper were saying about the war. Keith was paid \$1.40 per day, and his first pay cheque sent home was used to pay for his sister Betty's first two wheeled bicycle, where she became the envy of the neighbourhood. Keith's letters told of the deaths he saw and the bad living conditions he endured. In his last letter home, one his mother received the day before Keith was to die, he described how, because his Major was killed, he became a Corporal.

On the morning of September 6, 1944, James Keith Banks and his regiment were on first patrol, a reconnaissance toward the town of Isques, between two of the enemy-defended hills. While making their way toward the objective, the patrol came under heavy fire from the hills and was pinned down. Corporal Keith Banks and Major G.D. Sim were severely wounded at this time. While they were pinned down, a relief was assembled and sent out while the three-inch mortars of the battalion plastered the hills. The patrol was successful in extricating itself, but Cpl. Banks and Major Sim did not survive. Their bodies were not recovered until the following day. When they recovered the bodies, 25 prisoners, badly shaken by the pounding they received, were also brought back.

Fred and Doris in Sarnia would receive a telegram during the third week of September 1944 informing them that their son, *Lance Corporal Keith Banks was reported missing in action, in France*. The next day, they received another telegram, this one informing them that their son Keith was now reported killed in action in France. Keith Banks was later officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Twenty-three year old

FOR KING AND COUNTRY HE DID HIS DUTY WITH A LOYAL HEART.  
ALWAYS IN OUR THOUGHTS.



Keith Banks is buried in Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringen, France, Grave 8.B.7. On Keith Bank's headstone are inscribed the words, *So easily remembered but hard to forget. May God grant you, Keith eternal rest.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, R, 2C, 2D

**BARCLAY, James (#A/99008)**

James Barclay was born July 7, 1923 in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, the youngest son of George (John) and Anne Barclay. He and his family moved to Sarnia when James was two years old. At wartime, George and Anne Barclay and family resided at 512 Campbell Street, Sarnia. James had one brother, Alex, who would also serve in the army during the war. James Barclay attended Johnston Memorial and Russell Street Schools and worked at the Canadian National Railway, listing himself as a labourer. He enlisted in the Canadian army in London, Ontario in September 1941.

Brother Alex, with the rank of Gunner, would arrive overseas in December of 1941, with the Royal Canadian Artillery. James Barclay would arrive overseas in early February of 1943. While overseas, at one time the two brothers, both in the army, would be stationed only four miles apart for six months. On one occasion, the two Barclay brothers, James and Alex, would spend two days together. James would attain the rank of Private with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps.

On September 26, 1943 while overseas, James was involved in a motorcycle accident when his motorcycle crashed into a 3-ton lorry. He died one day later as a result of his injuries. Parents George and Anne Barclay in Sarnia would initially receive a telegram informing them that their son James was involved in an accident. A few days later, they would receive another telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. James Barclay, died in an army hospital overseas, from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident the previous day.* The telegram stated that the cause of James' death was *severe cranial cerebral injury due to motorcycle accident on duty Sunday.* The parents were given no details as to how or where the accident that took the life of their son occurred, nor were they given any word as to the funeral. Parents John and Anne hoped that his brother Alex would be able to attend the funeral services in England. Later, his death certificate would list his cause of death as, *fractured skull, laceration of the brain, severe cranial cerebral injury due to motorcycle accident while on duty.* Twenty-year old James Barclay is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 45.J.10. On James's headstone are inscribed the words, *At peace in Jesus' arms safe and secure from all harms.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

**BARR, William John (#J/92196)**

William Barr was born on May 11, 1924, the son of Joseph William Barr and Edith Isabella (nee Chester) Barr, of 260 Devine Street, Sarnia. William John Barr was a student of Our Lady of Mercy and St. Joseph schools, and was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia. At the age of sixteen, William would lose his father, Joseph William Barr, who would die in December of 1940. William would attend Sarnia Collegiate Institute, graduating at age eighteen.

Single at the time, William enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on May 12, 1942, the day following his eighteenth birthday. At the time of William's death, he had one brother and two sisters: Leona Marie (born 1906, became Mrs. Robert J. Weston), living at 214 Confederation Street; and Pauline Jessie (born 1907), who became Second Lieutenant Pauline Jessie Barr serving with the U.S. Army as a nurse in Port Huron. William also had one brother, Donald Alexander (born 1909) who would also reside at 214 Confederation Street, Sarnia, with his sister Leona. William would train at Toronto, Fingal, and Centralia. In June of 1943, William would spend a brief furlough at home with his mother Edith on Devine Street. Exactly one year after his last leave in Sarnia, William would lose his life overseas. He would complete his training and graduate at Mont Joli, Quebec in October of 1943.

William went overseas in October of 1943 as a member of RCAF #630 Squadron "Nocturna Mors" (Death by Night), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer Air Gunner. During his time in France, he wrote regularly to his widowed mother, Edith, insisting that he wasn't flying combat missions, because she feared for his life. On June 10, 1944, William was part of a crew aboard Lancaster aircraft PB121 when it was shot down over the target during a night trip to target Etaples, France, during the Battle of Normandy. In mid-June of 1944, Edith Barr in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa advising her that her son, *Sergeant William J. Barr has been reported missing after an operational flight on June 10.* In mid-July of 1944, Sgt. William Barr's name would appear on the Department of

National Defense for Air casualty list as, *missing on active service after air operations overseas*.

In early February of 1945, Edith Barr in Sarnia would receive notification from Ottawa informing her that her son, Sergeant William J. Barr, missing since June of 1944, *has been promoted to the rank of pilot officer by the R.C.A.F.* The promotion dated back to June 8. In mid-May of 1945, three months after receiving the promotion notification, and one week after VE Day ending the war in Europe, Edith received a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *PO. William Barr, R.C.A.F. was killed in action over Omerville, France on June 10 last.* Though reported missing shortly after June 10th of 1944, this was the first official word of his death that had reached his family. William Barr would later be officially listed as *Previously reported missing in action after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (France).* Perishing with Pilot Officer-Air Gunner William Barr were P/O R.E. Dennis; C.M. Houghton (RAF); and Sgt.s W.J. Bott (RAF), J.C. Cameron (RAF) and H. Ison (RAF). One of the crew, not Canadian, was taken Prisoner of War. Twenty year-old William Barr is buried in Omerville Communal Cemetery, Seine-et-Oise, France, Coll. Grave 3. On William Barr's headstone are inscribed the words, *Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord; May his soul rest in peace.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

**BELL, Isaac George (#A/50270) – Photograph page 373**

Isaac (Ike) Bell was born on December 28, 1920, the son of George Issac and Sylvia (nee Ellis) Bell, of 467 ½ Nelson Street, Sarnia. Isaac was born on his father's farm in Dawn Township, and the family moved to Sarnia in 1929. When he was born, he had two sisters: Rachael (born 1910) and Alma Eva (born 1913). Isaac attended public schools in Sarnia and, prior to enlisting, he was employed in the Sarnia Fish and Chip Shop and the Park Meat Market. Single at the time, and listing his occupation as a sailor, Isaac enlisted in the Canadian Army, with the Kent Regiment in Chatham on August 16, 1940. He received his training in Chatham, London, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and British Columbia before transferring with other volunteers to go overseas with the Highland Light Infantry, R.C.I.C. in April 1942.

Isaac rose to the rank of Corporal and was part of the invasion force in Normandy, France on D-Day. His father had said that in the last letter he received from his son, his son stated that he had not had his uniform off in 18 days. Corporal Isaac Bell would lose his life in action on July 8, 1944 during the Battle of Normandy in France as part of the Highland Light Infantry army unit. On July 13, 1944, Isaac Bell's name would appear in the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* as "is now with the D-Day invasion forces in France." Approximately one week later, father George Bell in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa with news of his son stating, *The Minister of National Defence deeply regrets to inform you that A-50270, Acting Lance Corporal Isaac George Bell has been officially reported killed in action July 8. If any further information becomes available it will be forwarded as soon as possible.* At the end of July of 1944, George would receive a letter of condolence from the adjutant-general, Department of National Defence that read, *From official information we have received, your son was killed in action against the enemy. You may be assured that any additional information received will be communicated to you without delay. The Minister of National Defence and the members of the Army Council have asked me to express to you and your family their sincere sympathy in your bereavement. We pay tribute to the sacrifice he so bravely made.*

*H.F.G. Letson, Major-General*

Isaac Bell and another Sarnian, Private Frederick Birkinshaw (included in this project), would both lose their lives on July 8, 1944 while fighting with their Canadian Army units in France, during the Battle of Normandy. Isaac Bell would later be listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France).* At the time of his death, he was survived by his father George, an employee of Electric Auto-Lite Limited; his mother Sylvia, in hospital in London, Ontario; and his three sisters: Mrs. Perry Ferns of Cecil Street; Mrs. Edward Cuthbert of South Mitton Street; and Mrs. Murille Reynolds of Devine Street, Sarnia. Twenty-three year old Isaac Bell is buried in Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, Reviere, France, Grave XV.C.1. On Isaac Bell's headstone are inscribed the words, *I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

**BELL, Joseph Griffiths (#V/35750) – Photograph page 373**

Joseph "Joe" Bell was born in Brantford, Ontario on February 18, 1922, the only son of Navy Lieutenant Joe "Griff" Bell and Edith Laura Bell, of 144 Davis Street, Sarnia. Joe received his education at the Brantford and Sarnia

public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. Joe was a member of Central United Church as well as a member of Central Century Club where he played softball and basketball. At Sarnia Collegiate, he was an outstanding all-round athlete starring in high school football, WOSSAA basketball and rugby, boxing and wrestling. He was also on the school's track, shooting and swimming teams, and was a member of the Boy's Athletic Association at Sarnia Collegiate. In addition, Joe wrote Sarnia Collegiate news for the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer*. In October 1940, prior to enlisting, Joe became a banker employed with the Bank of Toronto in the Sarnia and Parkhill branches. The bank granted him a leave of absence for him to enlist.

Prior to joining the navy, Joe had attempted to enlist in the air force. Joe Bell would enlist in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve in May of 1942. Joseph's father, Joe "Griff" Bell, would follow in his son, joining the navy in August of 1943. Griff Bell had been active in marine affairs for years; for example, at the Sarnia Yacht Club during its early history his main hobby was boat building. He built outboards, motorboats and sailboats. His shop was situated in the building known as the H.M.C.S. Repulse, local Sea Cadet headquarters at the corner of Front and Johnston Streets. Prior to coming to Sarnia, Griff Bell was a member of the Brantford Symphony. In Sarnia, he was a drummer and xylophone soloist with the Lambton Garrison Band and a member of the Devine Street United Church Sunday School orchestra. To join the navy, he was granted leave of absence by the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission, where he had been employed for 31 years. Griff Bell would be a lieutenant in the special branch of the Supervising Naval Engineers' Department, Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, stationed at Deep Brook, Nova Scotia.

Joe Bell, the son of Griff Bell, would enlist with the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve on May 4, 1942. After training at Windsor, St. Hyacinthe, Quebec and Halifax, Joe was posted on the Corvette *HMCS Morden (K170)* on the North Atlantic convoy for a short while. Ironically, the *Morden* would later be involved in rescue operations involving the ship on which Joe Bell would lose his life. On December 12, 1942 when he was stationed in Newfoundland, Joe suffered second-degree burns while rescuing several people from a disastrous fire that swept the Knights of Columbus Hostel in St. John's. Ninety-nine lives were lost in the fire, and many more were horribly burned, along with Joe Bell who had to spend some time in hospital recovering from his injuries. The K of C Hostel fire occurred on a Saturday night, and the hostel was crowded, for it was a gathering place for Newfoundland civilians and U.S. servicemen who were based on the island. Wartime blackout regulations meant hostel windows were covered with plywood shutters, thus preventing light from escaping into the inky night. Those shutters would become death traps for the hundreds of people scrambling to get out through the smoke and flames in the auditorium. In the aftermath, it was concluded that the fire had been deliberately set, likely enemy sabotage orchestrated by agents of Nazi Germany, as it was one of a number of suspicious fires in St. John's that winter.

On December 14, 1942, the *Canadian Observer* reported that Joe Bell had been a member of the gallant crew of the Corvette *HMCS Morden* that had recently rescued approximately 200 crew members and passengers of a torpedoed merchant ship. The actual date of attack on the merchant ship was October 22, 1942. On that date, German submarine *U-443* torpedoed the Canadian Pacific Steamships cargo and passenger vessel *Winnipeg II*, en route from Liverpool to St. John, New Brunswick. The *Winnipeg II* sank and the *HMCS Morden* rescued everyone on board, from the crew, the men, and the women to the children, including a 7-month old baby. Though the *Morden* only had living quarters for 60 persons, the crew somehow managed to find space for the 200 survivors before it docked in St. John's Atlantic port. Though Joe's parents in Sarnia were pleased to hear the news that their son participated in the rescue, they were not free of worry at the time. They had been reading the dispatches from St. John's, Newfoundland that described the K. of C. hostel fire that had been destroyed by fire, and that a large number of service men had lost their lives. Mr. and Mrs. Bell in Sarnia anxiously awaited further news about their son Joe, fervently hoping that the West Atlantic port which their son's ship docked was not in St. John's. They would later learn that he had survived the disaster.

While recuperating in hospital, Joe Bell played basketball for the Navy and did not go to sea again until April 16, 1943, when he was posted on the Canadian destroyer *HMCS St. Croix*, attaining the rank of Coder. In a letter to his mother not long after that, Joe told of being transferred to a destroyer, but did not name the boat. He also told of his enjoyable visit to Scotland, a country he spoke of in glowing terms, and his expectation of being home on furlough shortly.

The Canadian destroyer *HMCS St. Croix (181)* operated in the North Atlantic. Aboard the same ship from the Sarnia-Lambton area were Ordinary Telegraphist Robert C. Rigby of Sarnia and Stoker Second class William Norman Roder of Arkona. The *St. Croix* was one of the “four-stacker” destroyers acquired by Great Britain from the United States Navy in September 1940, in exchange for sites for air and naval bases on British territory in the Atlantic area (she was formerly the *U.S.S. McCook*). The *St. Croix* and six other destroyers, transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy at the time, were manned immediately by Canadian crews and performed invaluable service on Atlantic convoy duty. Of note, one of those transferred destroyers was the *St. Clair*. The *HMCS St. Croix* had distinguished herself in the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic, patrolling for German submarines, being credited with two U-boat kills and picking up many survivors of German U-boat attacks on Allied ships. The *St. Croix* was to be the first of the destroyers to be lost.

In mid-September of 1943, the Allies had a plan to merge two convoys (ONS-18 and ON-202), a combined assemblage of 63 merchant ships, in mid-ocean. A newly formed Canadian support group was on its way to reinforce the slower ONS-18 group, located to the south of Iceland. The Canadian escort group included the British frigate *Itchen*, corvettes *Chambly*, *Morden* and *Sackville*, along with the destroyers *St. Francis* and *St. Croix*. As the convoys closed their gap, the escorts were picking up U-boat signals. Undoubtedly, the U-boats were gathering in large numbers and the wolf pack was maneuvering into position for a night attack. They were about to measure the success of their newest “secret weapon”, the Gnat torpedo, an acoustic torpedo that homed in on the propellers of their prey.

On the night of September 20, 1943, the *St. Croix* had detached herself from the support group to investigate an aircraft sighting. At 9:51 pm, the German U-boat *U-305* struck the *HMCS St. Croix* with two Gnat torpedoes near her propellers. The ship listed immediately and uncontrollably. To *Itchen*, a few miles away, she sent the cryptic message, “*Am leaving the office.*” It was the last word from *St. Croix*. Seconds later, a third electrically directed torpedo, the final blow, hit the stern of the *St. Croix*. There was a tremendous explosion, flames shot into the air, and within three minutes, the *St. Croix* was gone.

Two RN ships from the escort force rushed to the area, to see what had taken place and what could be done. The frigate *HMS Itchen* signaled; “*St. Croix torpedoed and blown up. Forecastle still afloat. Survivors in rafts and boats. Torpedoes fired at me. Doing full speed in vicinity. Will not attempt to P.U. survivors until Polyanthus arrives.*” But the RN corvette *Polyanthus* was herself torpedoed by *U-952* just after midnight. *Itchen* then had to become involved in attempting to locate the attacking U-boat. Later, in the foggy daylight of September 21, the *Itchen* was eventually able to pick up one *Polyanthus* survivor and 81 *St. Croix* survivors, but only after they had been in the very cold water for thirteen hours. Most of those lost had perished in the sea after abandoning the ship.

The few hours of rescue came to an ironic and bitter end two days later. On September 23, 1943 at approximately 2:00 am the German U-boat *U-666*, using a Gnat torpedo, struck the *HMS Itchen*. The *Itchen* exploded with an ear-splitting roar and then vanished into the sea. Only three men survived this time: two from the *Itchen* and one from the *St. Croix*, Stoker W.A. Fisher of Black Diamond, Alberta. In total, 147 lives were lost from the *St. Croix*, including twenty-one year-old Joseph Bell.

In late September of 1943, Edith Bell in Sarnia would receive a cable from the Navy informing her that her son, *Joe Griffiths Bell, R.C.N., has been reported missing at sea*. Father Lieut. J. Griff Bell, who was also in the Navy, a member of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve, was away from home in Cornwallis when the news arrived in Sarnia. For parents Griff and Edith Bell, the last thing they knew was that Joe was aboard a destroyer. It was not until October 1, 1943 that the Honourable Angus L. MacDonald, the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services officially announced the sinking of the destroyer *St. Croix*. No details of the sinking were released, other than the list of names of 147 men who lost their lives, which included Sarnians Coder Joseph Griffiths Bell and Ordinary Telegraphist Robert Charles Rigby (included in this Project), and Stoker Second class William Norman Roder of Arkona.

Joseph’s cause of death was later officially listed as, *loss of H.M.C. ship, at sea*. The sinking of the *St. Croix* was the heaviest single loss suffered by the R.C.N. in the war. In early January of 1945, a service was held at a morning service in Central United Church, Sarnia, to honour the memory of Coder Joseph Griffith Bell, lost at sea in September of 1943, and Private Melvin Fisher, killed in action in Italy in December of 1944 (included in this project). Both men were members of the congregation. The Rev. E.W. Jewitt extended the sympathy of all the

congregation to the bereaved parents, and voiced the hope for a just and enduring peace.

Twenty-one year old Joseph Griffiths Bell has no known grave. His name is inscribed is on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 10. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as J.C. Bell.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, S, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **BERGER, Max (#A/56551)**

Max Berger was born on November 6, 1919, the son of Morris Berger and Regina Berger of 167 Davis St., Sarnia. His sister was Laura Berger. The Bergers were a Jewish family--father Morris was born in Geszterid, Hungary about 1862. They immigrated to New York in 1902, moved to Michigan, and then to Sarnia in 1914. Morris was a shoemaker by trade who operated out of his home. Max grew up in Sarnia and attended Sarnia Collegiate. After graduation, he worked for Maidment's Taxi; he was active in Canadian Young Judaea, and he was later employed at St. Thomas, as an electrician. Max, single at the time, enlisted in the army in 1939.

In late October of 1941, Max was part of a force of 1,975 Canadians who left Vancouver, B.C. for Hong Kong to help defend the Crown Colony. While on board the ship to Hong Kong, Max wrote a letter home to his parents in November. It would be the last time Morris and Regina would hear from their son. The Canadian force comprised two battalions--the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada; a brigade headquarters group; and various specialist details (including a signal section, two medical officers, two nursing sisters and three chaplains). The Canadian force would be a part of 14,000 Allied troops (also from the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, China and India) who were tasked to defend the island of Hong Kong and the adjacent mainland areas. The Canadian battalions (with no battle experience) arrived November 16, 1941, and, along with Britain's Middlesex Regiment, were tasked to defend the island. It was felt that the Canadian soldiers would have some time in Hong Kong to get more training. Instead, they became the first Canadian soldiers to fight as a unit in the Second World War when Japan attacked almost simultaneously Pearl Harbour, Northern Malaya, the Phillipines, Guam, Wake Island and Hong Kong.

The Japanese attacked the Colony's mainland positions on December 8 (December 7 in North America), resulting in all mainland troops withdrawing to the island. It was here that the first Canadian infantryman to die in World War II was killed. Private John Gray was captured and executed by the Japanese on December 13, 1941 in Hong Kong. Japan invaded Hong Kong Island on December 18, 1941. The invasion force was overwhelming in strength and backed with a heavy arsenal of artillery and air support. Heavily outnumbered, the Allied troops had no significant air or naval defence and had no hope of being relieved or resupplied. The Canadians performed valiantly and held out for as long as possible.

Max Berger spent the early part of the battle delivering supplies to frontline units with a dwindling pool of motor transport, including local taxis. When it became impossible to continue their supply activities, Max's unit became a part of an adhoc unit of Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. They then joined another scratch force made up of Royal Canadian Army Ordinance troops who were holding the north end of what was called the Ridge position. The Ridge position was the only link between the two main British positions and, if it were lost, the Allied formations would be split in two. The fighting for the position was fierce and, faced with overwhelming odds, on December 18, the British forces tried to pull back. It took them two tries and they succeeded the second time. Sometime between December 19th and 22nd Private Max Berger and Corporal Albert Jackson of the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps were killed, along with Corporal G.G. Desroches, Staff sergeant G. Jackman and Private F.C. McGuire of the Royal Canadian Army Ordinance troops.

On Christmas Day, 1941, after 17 ½ days of fighting, the British Colony was surrendered. Even before the battle had officially ended, Canadians would endure great hardships at the hands of their Japanese captors. On December 24, the Japanese overran a makeshift hospital in Hong Kong, assaulting and murdering nurses and bayoneting wounded Canadian soldiers in their beds. The fall of Hong Kong marked the end of the Canadian Army's first combat action in the Second World War, with significant losses: 290 dead and 493 wounded. Most of the Canadian survivors were held in prisoner of war camps either in Hong Kong or in Japan. Many of them died there; others endured almost four years of suffering until the end of the War. Of the 1,975 Canadians who sailed from Vancouver to Hong Kong, 557 were killed in battle or died in POW camps, and 493 were wounded, a casualty rate of more than 50%. Altogether, over 2000 men and women of the British Commonwealth died in the defence of Hong Kong.

Private Max Berger was not listed as *Missing in Action* until October 1942, and it was not until January 1943 that Max was eventually listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Hong Kong)*. Max Berger's body was never recovered. Twenty-two year old Max Berger is commemorated on the Sai Wan Memorial, Victoria, Hong Kong, China, Column 28. On this white granite memorial are inscribed the names of over 2,000 people, 228 of them Canadian, who died in Hong Kong and who have no known grave. Max Berger, one of the 290 Canadian soldiers killed during the defence of Hong Kong from December 8-December 25, 1941, has his name inscribed on this memorial. Max Berger's name is also inscribed on the Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Wall in Ottawa, Ontario. Unveiled in August 2009, the six-metre granite wall is etched with the names of the 1,978 Canadians who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong.

Max Berger and thirteen other local men had their names engraved on a plaque honouring fourteen Jewish members of the armed services from Sarnia. The plaque was unveiled in the Ahavas Isaac Synagogue, Davis Street, Sarnia on March 30, 1945. The men, all from Sarnia, honoured on the plaque were: M. Berger, S. Bernard, R. Heller, I. Haber, M. Kirk, Dr. I. Mann, A. Rosen, G. Shabsove, M. Skosov, Mitchell Smith, Murray Smith, L. Swartz, I.B. Zierler, Isaac Zierler. Three of the men--Max Berger, Mitchell Smith and Isaac Buck Zierler--made the supreme sacrifice.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D, h

### **BERRY, Charles Edward (#A/20681)**

Charles Berry was born January 1, 1923, the son of Edward Lee Berry and Mary Berry, of 234 Queen Street, Sarnia. He had three brothers who, at the time of his death, were Milton and Harold, both on active service overseas, and Wilfred, in a Nova Scotia training camp. Charles enlisted in the Canadian Army at the age of sixteen. In November of 1942, Mary received a cable in Sarnia from her son Charles informing her that he had arrived somewhere in England safely. Charles would be overseas for several years, and he participated in the Normandy invasion in France during the summer of 1944. He was a member of Royal Canadian Engineers, 6 Field Coy, with the rank of Sapper.

On September 22, 1944, Charles Berry would lose his life while fighting in France. In early October of 1944, Edward and Mary received the news from Ottawa that their son, *Sapper Charles Berry, was killed in action last month*. The telegram did not state where or the circumstances of his death. Charles Berry would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. At the time of his death, his home address was listed as 142 North Brock Street, Sarnia, and his profession as a truck driver. Twenty year-old Charles Berry is buried in Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, France, Grave 4.D.10. On Charles Berry's headstone are inscribed the words, *Our dear son & brother. He lies among the brave. At his country's call his life he gave.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **BIRKINSHAW, Frederick (#A/50051)**

Frederick Birkinshaw was born in England on October 19, 1910, the son of William Birkinshaw and Lucy (nee Sands) Birkinshaw of 275 Rose Street, Sarnia. Both parents were born in Nottinghamshire, England. His family arrived in Canada (Quebec port) aboard the *Metagama* passenger ship from Liverpool, England on June 3, 1919. Frederick was eight years old at the time. His father, William, who was a veteran of World War I, and had been wounded three times, was employed by Imperial Oil Refinery. Frederick had an older sister, May, and two younger sisters, Margaret and Mary. At the time of Frederick's death, his sisters were listed as Mrs. Irene Cooper of Rose Street, Sarnia; Mrs. Margaret McDonald of Shamrock Street, Sarnia; and Mrs. Archie McDonald of Pontiac, Michigan. Frederick also had two half-brothers, who at wartime, were both in the Canadian army: Gunner Donald Phillips in England and Gunner Edward Phillips with the Canadian forces in France.

Frederick and his wife Margaret T. had three sons: Bruce, William and Charles Birkinshaw. At wartime, the family lived at 279 Shamrock Street, Sarnia. Margaret Birkinshaw was an employee of Sarnia Refinery and lady delegate on the Joint Industrial Council for Sarnia Refinery for 1945. Prior to enlistment, Frederick was employed by Imperial Oil Limited, Sarnia refinery, his profession listed as a painter.

Frederick enlisted early in the war with the Kent Regiment and trained in Canada. He left for overseas on April 28, 1942, and after arriving overseas, he volunteered for service with the Highland Light Infantry of Canada, R.C.I.C. Frederick's unit participated in the D-Day invasion of France on June 6, 1944. Two days later, on July 8,

1944, Private Frederick Birkinshaw would lose his life, during the Battle of Normandy while fighting at Caen in Normandy, France.

Frederick Birkinshaw and another Sarnian, Corporal Isaac Bell (included in this project), would both lose their lives on July 8, 1944 while fighting with their Canadian Army units in France. In mid-July of 1944, Margaret Birkinshaw in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa with information about her husband stating that, *Pte. Birkinshaw was killed in action on July 8. Further information would be forwarded when received.* The telegram did not state where Pte. Birkinshaw was killed, but Frederick's father William had several letters from his son recently in which he intimated he participated in the D-Day invasion of France, and had been at Caen.

Frederick Birkinshaw would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France).* Frederick Birkinshaw was survived by his parents William and Lucy, his wife Margaret, his three sons, Bruce, William and Charles, two half-brothers Donald Phillips and Edward Phillips, and his three sisters. Thirty-three year old Frederick Birkinshaw is buried in Bretteville-Sur-Laize War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave XXVI.H.7.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, K, L, N, O, 2C, 2D

### **BORCHARDT, Hugo Hysert (#J/21171) – Photograph page 374**

Hugo Borchardt was born in Kitchener, Ontario on September 25, 1913, the son of Max Paul Hugo (a carver, born in New Stettin, Germany) and Mary (Mae) Almera (nee Hysert, born in Toronto) Borchardt, of 257 Emma Street, Sarnia. His parents Max and Mary were married on April 19, 1910 in Waterloo, Ontario. Hugo had three sisters, including Ruth Eleanor (became Windover), born in Sarnia in 1911. Hugo was a native of Kitchener-Waterloo but moved to Sarnia at the age of four. He attended Central United Church and was educated at a Sarnia public elementary school and Sarnia Collegiate high school. While at high school, he took a technical course, was a member of the gym team, and later graduated in auto mechanics. After leaving school, Hugo sailed for three seasons, and then for a time was employed at the Y.W.C.A.

Hugo would marry Violet Constance Mary Shand, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William C.D. Shand of 203 North Vidal Street, on March 6, 1936 at St. George's Church in Sarnia. Hugo and Violet Borchardt would reside at 356 ½ Nelson Street, Sarnia, and they would have two children together--Marilyn Dianne (born July 1937) and Hugo Sergei Junior (born January 1943). For two years, Hugo was a painter prior to enlisting. Hugo enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on November 26, 1940. He trained at Brandon, Penhold, Regina, Fingal, and Ancienne, Quebec where he received his Bombardier Wings and commission as a Pilot Officer, on November 26, 1941. Following his graduation he instructed at Mountainview and Mossbank, Saskatchewan. In January of 1943, Hugo would return to his duty as an instructor at Mossbank Bombing and Gunnery School after spending a furlough with his wife and young children on Nelson street in Sarnia.

In early August of 1943 on a Saturday evening, a farewell party was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Powers in Sarnia in honour of Hugo Borchardt prior to him going overseas. About 30 friends gathered to wish him good luck, with an evening of dancing and singing. Bob Powers offered a toast to the guest of honour and Archie Reeves, after an appropriate speech, presented Hugo with a black leather Gladstone bag. The evening was brought to a close with the singing of "He's a Jolly Good Fellow," and "Auld Lang Syne."

Hugo went overseas in late August 1943, first obtaining his operational training in England and then going on operations with the RCAF 90th squadron. He was flying on Lancaster bombers from this squadron's base at Tuddenham, Bury-St.Edmunds, England. As a member of RCAF #90 squadron "Celer" (Swift), he attained the rank of Flying Officer Bomb Aimer in December of 1943. On July 21, 1944, his Lancaster aircraft LM813 was lost over Eindhoven, Holland after operations over Hamburg. This trip was his twelfth mission over enemy territory. In late July of 1944, wife Violet Borchardt in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Flying Officer Hugo Borchardt has been reported missing while on operational duties overseas.* Approximately 10 months later, in April of 1945, Violet Borchardt was advised that her husband Hugo Borchardt was now officially presumed dead. Information had been received in February of 1945 by the International Red Cross Society quoting a German authority as saying that he had lost his life. Approximately one week after Violet received this information, VE Day was declared, marking the end of war in Europe.

Hugo Borchardt would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Perishing with Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer Hugo Borchardt were RAF members Sgt.s S.C. Butcher, J.F. Dineen, H.R. Hunnisett, A.F. Marshall, and R.P. Naylor; WO. J.W. Butterworth; and F/L P.J. Rossington. Hugo Borchardt left behind his wife, Violet, and their two children, Marilyn, age 7, and Hugo Junior, age 1 1/2. Thirty year-old Hugo Borchardt is buried in Eindhoven (Woensel) Cemetery, Netherlands, Plot KK. Grave 103.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

#### **BRAKEMAN, Jesse Clemence (#R/68117)**

Jesse ("Clem") Brakeman was born on August 7, 1920. He was the only son of the Jesse Clair Brakeman and Rose Adele Brakeman of 174 Penrose St., Sarnia. His father died when Jesse was only three years old. Jesse's mother Rose, originally from Exmouth, Devon, England, came to Canada in 1909. Rose was a secretary at the local yard office of the Canadian National Railways, where she was to work for 40 years. Jesse's grandmother, Mrs. Harriet A. Clemens, resided at 175 Penrose St., Sarnia. Jesse was a graduate of Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate Institute.

Jesse (Clem) Brakeman enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July of 1940. He completed his training at several Canadian flying schools and was sent overseas in the early part of 1941. He arrived in England in early March of 1941, and cabled his mother that he had arrived safely and that he was feeling fine. He would become a member of the RCAF #214 Federated Malay States squadron "Ultor In Umbris" (Avenging in the Shadows), with the rank of Sergeant-Air gunner. By July 1941, he had shot down his first German plane.

Just over a year after he enlisted, on September 3, 1941, Jesse Brakeman's Wellington aircraft was lost during a bombing operation over enemy territory. Perishing with Sergeant-Air Gunner Jesse Brakeman were FS. J.P. McKay; Sgt.s L. Black (RAF), and C. Hambleton (RAF); and F/L. R.H. May (RAF). On September 4th, Jesse's mother, Mrs. Rose Brakeman in Sarnia, would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Headquarters in Ottawa, informing her that her son, *Sergeant-Pilot Jesse Clemens Brakeman was reported missing as the result of an air operation overseas recently*. There were no further particulars concerning the air operations, so the *Canadian Observer* reported that, "the fact that he was designated as missing held out some hope that he might have been forced down over Nazi-held countries in Western Europe or made an escape in some other manner." The telegram from Ottawa was a severe shock to Mrs. Rose Brakeman particularly because word that he had shot down his first German plane in July had just recently arrived home. Twenty-one year old Jesse Brakeman was buried in the Dunkirk Town Cemetery, Nord, France, Plot 2 Row 2 Grave 20. On Jesse Brakeman's headstone are inscribed the words, *God be merciful to my son. Reunite his soul with those of his Dad and his pals. Mother*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2B, 2C

#### **BROWN, George William (#J/12195)**

George Brown was born in Saskatchewan on September 24, 1921, the son of George Morton Brown and Bathia (nee Riddle) Brown, of Sarnia. Both his parents were originally from Scotland. George's home address was listed as 333 Wellington Street, Sarnia. George, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a member of RCAF #487 New Zealand squadron "Ki Te Mutunga" (Through to the End), attaining the rank of Flight Lieutenant, Flying Officer-Pilot. On September 17, 1944, George's Mosquito aircraft MS979 crashed on take-off from Thorney Island en-route to Holland. Approximately one week later, Mrs. Bathia Brown in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing her that her son, *Flight-Lieutenant George William Brown has been reported missing after air operations overseas on September 16*. George was later officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (England)*. Twenty-three year old George Brown has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Panel 244.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **BROWN, Paul Albert (#N3119) – Photograph page 375**

Paul Brown was born at Domville, Ontario, near Prescott, on July 8, 1920. He was the son of Albert Glenn Brown (of Domville, Ontario) and Ada Helena (nee Anderson) Brown. Paul had one brother, Russell Charles Brown (of the RCAF, stationed at Moncton, N.B. at the time of Paul's death); and two sisters: Jean A. (Brown) Knight

*I HAVE FOUGHT FOR GOD, FOR CANADA, AND FOR YOU, DEAR PARENTS.  
PRAY FOR ME.*



Barker (a teacher in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario); and Eleanor L. (Brown) Hutchinson (of Sarnia). Paul's father, Albert, who never resided in Sarnia, died in March 1928, when Paul was only eight years old. His mother, Ada, a Sarnia school teacher, would die in August of 1940 in Sarnia General Hospital, approximately four months before Paul would lose his life. Paul lived in Sarnia about eleven years and attended Johnston Memorial Public School and Sarnia Collegiate. During school days, he used to spend his spare time on farms. He was active in Central United Church Century Young Men's Sunday school for many years. He would work on a farm only one summer before enlisting in the navy in 1938.

In April 1938, he left high school to join the Royal Canadian Navy in Halifax. Paul was stationed at *HMCS Stadacona* training barracks. He was guard of honour for our King George VI and Queen Elizabeth during their cross-Canada visit and happened to be on the same ship as Their Majesties. Paul received his elementary training on *HMCS Venture*, a training ship that was similar to the *Bluenose*. From there, he was posted on the *Skeena* and then the *HMCS Saguenay*, where Able Seaman Paul Brown was a pom-pom gunner. In letters received by his relatives, Paul had said that he had been "all over the world."

The *HMCS Saguenay (D 79)* was an A-Class Destroyer commissioned for service in the Royal Canadian Navy in 1931. The *Saguenay* was the first warship ever to be custom built for the Royal Canadian Navy. In the early morning hours of December 1, 1940, the *HMCS Saguenay* was part of a group escorting a convoy about 300 nautical miles west of Ireland. Travelling at twelve knots and in a zigzagging pattern, she noticed a flare shot up from the dark sea that had been fired by a U-boat moving in to attack the rear of the convoy. The *Saguenay* increased her speed and made for the position of the flare. At approximately 3:50 am, the submarine was sighted half a mile distant. Almost simultaneously, a torpedo struck the *Saguenay*. The torpedo had been fired by the Italian submarine *Argo*. The *Saguenay* bow was blown off, and flames broke out and raced through the ship. The *Argo* surfaced again, circling to get in a second shot. Able Seaman Clifford McNaught demonstrated the kind of courage indicative of the remaining crew. Clifford McNaught was suffering from painful burns to his face, and his hands were horribly mangled. He nevertheless dashed forward to assist the short-handed gun crew by passing shells to them. The *Saguenay* crew were able to fend off the *Argo*. The British destroyer *Highlander* arrived within an hour or so to find the *Saguenay* limping slowly forward. Ninety men were transferred to the *Highlander* to reduce casualties in case of another torpedo attack. Throughout the night and most of the next day, a skeleton crew remained on board the *Saguenay* continuing to fight the fires.

By noon of the next day, the *Saguenay*, "the ship that would not sink" had managed to limp to a British port on one engine. The ship would be out of service for six months. A total of 21 of the *HMCS Saguenay* crew lost their lives in the U-boat attack, and another 18 were wounded. Two of the lost crew members were from Sarnia. Paul Brown was reported missing and feared killed in action in the damaging of the destroyer *Saguenay*. Paul Brown would later be officially listed as, *Death due to enemy action, at sea*. Also on board the ship was Hector Le Gare, who would also be killed in the attack on the ship, and has his name on the Sarnia cenotaph. Paul Brown and Hector Le Gare were the second and third casualties from Sarnia to lose their lives in the Second World War.

Approximately one week prior to the attack, Paul's sister, Miss Jean Brown, a school teacher in Sault Ste. Marie, had received a letter from Paul, but it was so rigorously censored that she could not derive much information from it. Paul's brother, Russ Brown, has been corresponding with Paul, and the two brothers had hopes of spending Christmas together in Halifax. A week after the attack, Paul's other sister, Miss Eleanor Brown in Sarnia, would receive a telegram from the Minister of National Defence for Naval Affairs, informing her that Paul was missing. At an assembly at Sarnia Collegiate, principal F.C. Asbury announced the loss of the two former students, which was followed by a period of silence in respect to the memory of the two Canadian sailors.

Paul Brown was the first member of the Central Century Club to pay the Supreme Sacrifice. In mid-December of 1940, Paul Brown was honoured at a service at Central United Church. The pastor of the church, Rev. E.W. Jewitt paid tribute by saying, "These young men who are giving their lives are giving them to preserve the freedom and liberty of us all." Twenty-year old Paul Brown has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Panel 4.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, S, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

FIGHTING FOR HUMANITY HE FELL. GOD'S ANGELS SAW HIM AND THEY WEPT.  
"GOD'S FINGER TOUCHED HIM AND HE SLEPT."

## **BRUNETTE, Jack**

Jack (Junior) Brunette was born on November 20, 1922, the son of John (Jack) and Emma Mae Brunette of Sarnia. Jack, single at the time of his enlistment and recording his occupation as a student, joined the Canadian Army. He listed his home address as 112 Lisgar Street, Ottawa. Jack became a member of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, R.C.I.C., attaining the rank of Lieutenant. On March 24, 1945, Jack Brunette would lose his life during fighting in Germany, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. One and a half months after his death, the war in Europe would end. Jack Brunette would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. Twenty-two year old Jack Brunette is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XXII.C.2. On Jack Brunette's headstone are inscribed the words, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. II Tim.IV.7.*

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

## **BRYDGES, Thomas Edwin (#A/28400)**

Thomas Brydges was born in Plympton Township, Lambton County on January 2, 1918, the son of Thomas Bertie Brydges (born in Camlachie) and Elizabeth (nee Beebe) Brydges, of Eureka Street, Petrolia. Thomas had three sisters--Frances Dorothy (born 1919), Kathleen Pearl (born 1922), and Blanche Elizabeth (born 1931--along with eight brothers: Alvin Bertie (born 1921); Arthur Beebe (born 1924); Charles Vincent (born 1925); Allen Ross (born 1927); James Ralph (born 1928); Eldon Wesley (born 1933); John Dalton (born 1936); and Lorne Elmer (born 1939). His father, Thomas Bert Brydges, was an employee of the Mueller Plant in Sarnia.

Thomas Brydges, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery, 4th Field Regiment, with the rank of Gunner. Three of his brothers also served with the Canadian Army, and all four boys of the Brydges family would serve in Holland. At the start of March 1945, Private Arthur Brydges, had been overseas for one year; Private Alvin Brydges, had been overseas for about two years (both Arthur and Alvin were with field ambulance units); Private Charles Vincent Brydges, who had enlisted in April 1944, arrived overseas early in 1945, serving in the infantry with the Lincoln and Welland Regiment at only 18 years of age; and Gunner Thomas Edwin Brydges had been overseas for five years. Just before the start of March 1945, brothers Arthur and Thomas Edwin met in Holland and spent a short time together. Only weeks later, Thomas Edwin would lose his life. His three brothers were all serving overseas in Holland at the time of Thomas' death.

Gunner Thomas Brydges had arrived overseas in 1940, with a reinforcements unit for the 26th Battery. In January of 1944, Thomas Edwin would spend a leave together with his brother Alvin in Scotland. Thomas had been overseas for five years when, on March 12, 1945, Thomas Edwin Brydges died while fighting in Holland, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. In late March of 1945, Thomas Bertie and Elizabeth in Petrolia received a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Gunner Edwin Brydges was killed in action in Holland or Belgium recently*. Thomas Brydges would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Holland)*.

In mid-April of 1945, Thomas Bertie and Elizabeth would receive high tributes to the worth of their son Thomas Edwin as a man and as a soldier in letters of sympathy from his padre, Capt. A. Marshall Laverty, and his friend, T.S.M. Urie, Watford, of the same battery. The padre's letter stated that Thomas Brydges was killed instantly on March 12th in the Reichwald Forest, Germany, when he encountered a mine. He was a "faithful diligent member of the crew," the padre stated, and the funeral service was attended by the second in command, the acting battery Commander, and a great number of his friends. He added that the burial took place at Nejmegen, Holland, temporarily and it was expected that the Canadian dead would later be concentrated in a permanent cemetery. In expressing his great loss in the passing of Thomas Brydges, T.S.M. Urie stated he knew "Slim" better than anyone in the battery. "He was on my gun crew for over three years and I can safely say he was the best gunner in our troop."

Twenty-seven year old Thomas Brydges is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave IV.A.2. On Thomas Brydges' headstone are inscribed the words, *Nobly he fell while fighting for liberty*. Thomas Brydges' name is also inscribed on the Petrolia cenotaph in the Town of Petrolia.

Thomas' brother Charles Vincent would also serve in the Canadian army, as a Private with the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, also in Holland. In mid-April of 1945, approximately one month after Thomas' death, parents

*DIED AS A HERO FOR HIS COUNTRY, LEAVING AN ADORED WIFE AND  
A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE DAUGHTER. MAY GOD BLESS HIM.*

Bert and Elizabeth received another telegram informing them that their 18-year old son, *Private Charles Vincent Brydges has been listed as missing in action in Western Europe*. About one month later, they would receive a telegram informing them that Charles Vincent was now safe in England. He had been a prisoner of the Germans, but and had been released by the advance of the Allied forces and taken to England with the repatriated prisoners. The war in Europe would end on May 8, 1945.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **BUCHNER, William Hiram (#A/4526)**

William (Bill) Buchner was born on May 4, 1923, the son of Warren Hiram Buchner (born Welland, Ontario) and Mrs. Ruth Edith (nee Booth) Smith, of 108 South Mitton Street, later 142 1/2 North Victoria Street, Sarnia. He had three brothers--Robert, Peter, and Harold (born 1930)--and two sisters, Dorothy and Virginia, all living in Sarnia at the time of William's death. He would lose his father Warren Hiram in 1932, when William was only nine years old. Growing up in Sarnia, William attended Wellington Street Public School and played softball in the school league. Prior to enlisting, he was working in Niagara Falls, listing his occupation as a labourer and his home address as 225 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. William, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Regiment, in London, Ontario, adding a year to his age to qualify for enlistment, when he was only 17 years old.

While overseas, he was with the Canadian Army that smashed the Axis defences in the Battle of Sicily and moved on to fight them on the road to Rome, during the Italian Campaign. In an October 1943 letter home to his mother, he had little to say about the engagements he had been through, but did describe the Italian country as "pretty" and that "the weather is sure hot over here". On Christmas Eve, 1943 Private William Buchner would lose his life in the Italian Campaign, when Allied forces in Italy drove the Axis defences across the Straits of Messina. In early January of 1944, mother Ruth Edith Smith in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records at Ottawa informing her that her son, *Private William Hiram Buchner was killed in action on December 24 while fighting in Italy*. The telegram said that further information would be forwarded when available. William Buchner was later listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Nineteen year-old William Buchner is buried in Moro River Canadian War Cemetery, Italy, Grave VII.D.15.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **BURKE, Carl Victor (#B/74572)**

Carl Burke was born in Nipissing County on February 28, 1913, the son of a miner, Clarence Burke and Margaret (nee Maloy) Burke. Carl would marry Rita Burke (nee St. Jean, of Sarnia) and they would reside at 257 Birch South Street, Timmins, Ontario. The couple would have one daughter together. At his enlistment, Carl would record his occupations as a dairyman and a miner. He would join the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the 48th Highlanders of Canada, R.C.I.C., and attaining the rank of Private.

On July 23, 1943, Carl would lose his life as a result of wounds that he received during fighting in the Battle of Sicily. Carl Burke would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Sicily)*. Carl would leave behind his wife, Rita, who was residing at 307 Exmouth Street, Sarnia at the time of his death, and their five year old daughter Leda. Thirty year-old Carl Burke is buried in Agira War Cemetery, Sicily, Grave D, B, 401. On Carl Burke's headstone are inscribed the words, *In loving memory of one who will not be forgotten by his wife and daughter*.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **BURKE, David Warnock (J86415)**

David Burke was born in Sarnia on October 12, 1918, the son of Captain David Wilson and Ethel Ellen Burke, of Hamilton, Ontario. He received his education in a Sarnia public elementary school and Sarnia Collegiate High School. David was a member of the Central Century Club and had played hockey for the club. While at high school, he played junior and senior WOSSA rugby and City League hockey. He was also fond of swimming and skating. After graduating from a technical program at Sarnia Collegiate, he attended the Radio College of Canada in Toronto, as he was very interested in amateur radio. While schooling in Toronto, David took some flying lessons. Following his studies, he received an Amateur Radio Certificate and was employed by Trans-Canada Air Lines prior to joining the Air Force. His residential address was 145 N. Euphemia Street, Sarnia.

David, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on February 2, 1940, and after taking a short course he was posted to No. 1 Wireless School, Montreal, as an instructor for about one and a half years. David was transferred to the wireless school in Winnipeg and then he remustered to aircrew in February 1942. He had his initial training at Regina, his elementary training at Fort William, and his service flying at Uplands, where he received his Pilot Wings on December 16, 1942. David went overseas in January 1943 and took his operational training in England and Scotland. He became a member of RCAF #640 Squadron, piloting Halifax bomber aircraft LW500 and making quite a number of trips over Germany.

On March 31, 1944, David was part of a crew aboard their Halifax bomber on a bombing raid over Nuremberg, Germany. Following the raid, the aircraft was shot down by a German flak ship off Dieppe, France. David Burke along with the crew of six RAF members were listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. This was Pilot Officer-Pilot David Burke's fourth operation and his was one of 108 Allied aircraft lost this night. Twenty-five year old Pilot Officer-Pilot David Burke has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 249.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, S, 2C, 2D

### **BURR, Kenneth Leslie (#A/104953)**

Kenneth Burr was born in Sarnia Township on August 9, 1923, the son of Gordon Nelson Burr and Harriet Bell (nee Kemsley) Burr, of Lakeshore Road, R.R. #3, Sarnia. Kenneth had one sister, Helen Matilda (born 1919), and five brothers: John Nelson (born 1921); Howard (born 1925); James (born 1927); Franklin (born 1933); and Gerald (born 1938). Kenneth received his early education at Clark's schoolhouse, on Point Edward Road, and later took a technical course at Sarnia Collegiate. Prior to enlisting, he was employed by Anglin Norcross Limited at the Polymer Plant, listing his occupation as a blacksmith.

Kenneth Burr, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army in October 1942. He was trained at Chatham, Petawawa, Woodstock and London before proceeding overseas in November 1943, as a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery, 2 Survey Regiment, with the rank of Bombardier. In early December of 1943, parents Gordon and Harriet Burr in Sarnia would receive a telegram from their son Kenneth informing them that he had arrived safely overseas. According to later letters that his parents received, Kenneth had gone to France only a few days after the D-Day invasion in June 1944 and that he most recently had been in Germany with the Canadian Forces.

On December 28, 1944, Bombardier Kenneth Burr would lose his life while fighting in Holland, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. In early January of 1945, parents Gordon and Harriet Burr in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Bombardier Kenneth Burr, has been killed in action in Germany*. Kenneth Burr was later officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Holland)*. In early February of 1945, a memorial service for Private Kenneth Burr was held in Trinity Anglican Church, Sarnia Township, conducted by the Rev. G.C. Stone. Twenty-one year old Kenneth Burr is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave II.F.7. On Kenneth Burr's headstone are inscribed the words, *At rest*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **CAMERON, William Donald Leslie (#R/116979)**

William "Bill" Cameron was born on March 28, 1921, the son of Donald Gordon Cameron and Ellen (nee Pollock) Cameron, of Thedford, who were living at 206 Maria Street, Sarnia. William's father, Donald, was an employee of the Pumping Department at Sarnia Imperial Refinery. William was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate. Prior to enlisting, William was employed with the Sarnia Imperial Refinery. On August 29, 1941, William, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and subsequently received his air force training at Toronto, Trenton, St. Thomas and Hagersville. He received his wings at Hagersville almost a year after he enlisted. Of his graduating class of 80, two graduates were chosen for immediate service overseas, and William Cameron was one of them. He would leave for overseas in September of 1942. In November of that year, he was a member of RCAF #419 Moose squadron "Moosa Aswayita" (Beware the moose), attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II-Pilot.

In early August of 1943, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* reported on an attack over Germany in which William Cameron was involved. In heavy attacks made by the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. on Mannheim and

Ludwigshafen on an August night, William Cameron piloted a Halifax bomber with Sgt. Bev. Scharf, another Sarnian, a member of his crew. Sgt. Scharf was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Scharf of 267 Cobden Street.

On September 1, 1943, his Halifax aircraft JD270 was in a mid-air collision with an enemy fighter aircraft just after completing the bombing run over the target of Berlin, Germany. Perishing with Warrant Officer II-Pilot William Donald Cameron were FS.s V.J. Wintzer and G.E. Birtch; and Sgt. J.T. Mullany (RAF). Two Canadians, FS.s R.E. Boos and B.W. Scharf, and L. Duggan (of the RAF) bailed out and were taken as Prisoners of War.

Not long after, Donald and Ellen Cameron in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing them that their son, *Sergeant William Cameron was reported missing in action after his nineteenth operational flight over Germany*. In February of 1944, Donald and Ellen would receive another telegram from Ottawa advising them that their son, *Sergt. William Cameron has been promoted to Flight-Sergeant, dating from February 14*. No further details were received by his parents. William Cameron would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Twenty-two year old William Cameron is buried in Berlin 1939-45 War Cemetery, Charlottenburg, Germany, Coll.grave 6.A.2-4. On William Cameron's headstone are inscribed the words, *Psalm XXIII.4*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, 2C, 2D

### **CAMPBELL, Allan William (#J/36786) – Photograph page 375**

Allan Campbell was born in Strathroy, Ontario on July 12, 1918, the son of Postmaster William Allan (born in Lobo, Middlesex) and "Ena" (Christina, nee McNeil, born in Strathroy) Campbell, of Strathroy. Allan had one sister and one brother, Kenneth D. Campbell (born 1923) who, at the time of Allan's death, was serving overseas as a Pilot Officer in the R.C.A.F. Prior to joining the military, Allan Campbell was an accountant in the Stratford branch of the Royal Bank. Allan Campbell enlisted for service in 1941, graduating at Aylmer on April 10, 1941 in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

After graduating from Aylmer, Allan would spend over 1 ½ years on Pacific coastal duties. Allan married Miss Viola Garside, a registered nurse and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Garside of Sarnia on May 14, 1942. After the ceremony at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the couple resided at 257 Nelson Street, Sarnia. In June 1943, before going overseas, Allan and Viola would return home to Sarnia to visit Mr. and Mrs. Garside. Four months later, in October 1943, Allan Campbell would proceed overseas. Allan Campbell became a member of RCAF #263 Squadron "Ex Ungue Leonem" (By his claws one knows the lion), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot.

Allan's squadron was one of the first to go into Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. About 2 ½ months later, on August 25, 1944, Allan was on a mission flying his Typhoon aircraft MN883 during the Battle of Normandy. He was attacking barges on the Seine River in France when his Typhoon aircraft was hit by enemy flak. The aircraft was last seen in a dive at 4,000 feet. Not long afterwards, Viola Campbell in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Flying Officer Allan W. Campbell was reported missing on August 25 after air operations overseas*. In mid-October of 1944, Allan Campbell would be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas (France)*. Allan left behind his parents, his brother and sister, and his wife of just over two years, Viola. Twenty-six year old Allan Campbell was buried at Theillement, France, exhumed, and reburied in the Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave XXVI.C.7. On Allan Campbell's headstone are inscribed the words, *To live in the hearts of those we love is not to die*. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as A.J. Campbell.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **CARLTON, William Frederick (#A/17216)**

William Carlton was born on May 12, 1914, the eldest son of Major William Frederick Griffin Carlton and Edith Carlton of Tecumseh Street, later 282 Confederation Street, Sarnia. William had a brother, Stanley Griffith and a sister, Jean. William Carlton was a star catcher on several Sarnia baseball teams as well as being active in most other sports, including hockey, football and softball. He not only played with local city baseball teams, but also graduated to intermediate teams and to the Strathroy seniors. Nicknamed "Farmer", William also played local hockey, city league football and softball. William married Miss Mary Evelyn Willick, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Willick of Richard Street, Sarnia at Devine Street United Church on September 23, 1936. At the ceremony, Miss Joan Willick, the sister of the bride, served as maid of honour, and Sergeant Stanley Carlton, brother of the

groom, served as the best man. Following the autumn ceremony, forty guests attended a reception at the home of the bride's parents. After their marriage, William and Mary's residential address was 250 Tecumseh Street, Sarnia and his occupation listed as a sailor.

On September 9th of 1939, William was the best man for his brother Stanley at his wedding. William's brother, Sgt. Stanley Griffith Carlton of the 26th Battery R.C.A., would marry Mary Isabel Curran, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F.P. Curran, Campbell Street, at St. John's Anglican Church. The wedding took place one day before Canada officially declared war on Germany. The *Sarnia (Canadian) Observer* described it as the first military wedding held in Sarnia since the days of the Great War. Members of the 26th Battery provided a guard of honour at the church steps.

William Carlton enlisted in September 1939 and was initially stationed at Camp Petawawa. He would become a member of the Canadian Army, Western Ontario unit of the Royal Canadian Artillery, 4th Field Regiment, with the rank of Bombardier. While overseas, William was active in inter-unit sports and played baseball for his camp in the Canadian Army League. He was progressing within the army and, having secured his two stripes as a bombardier, was aspiring to become a sergeant.

In May of 1941, while in England, investigators believe William fell beneath a moving railway train and had both his legs crushed. The resulting shock caused his death on May 19, 1941. In Sarnia, William's young wife, Mary Carlton, was at the *Canadian Observer* the next day during the lunch hour, renewing her husband's subscription to the newspaper when a telegraph messenger was looking for her to deliver the telegram with its tragic news. William would officially be listed as, *Overseas casualty, death due to multiple injuries caused by being run over by a railway train in Aldershot, England*. William's father, Major William Fred Carlton had predeceased William. William Carlton was survived by his wife Mary Evelyn Carlton; his mother Edith; his sister Jean Carlton; and his brother Sergeant Stanley Carlton, who was in the same military unit as his brother. Twenty-seven year old William Carlton was buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 31.E.10. On William's headstone are inscribed the words, *Till the day break and the shadows flee away*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **CARR, Stuart Allan (#R/209938)**

Stuart Carr was born January 18, 1925, the son of Norman McLeod Carr and Florence May (nee Wellington) Carr, of London Road, Sarnia. Stuart's father, Norman, was a well-known Sarnia Township dairyman. Stuart had four brothers: James (born 1922, who was a Lieutenant with the Royal Canadian Artillery and overseas at the time of Stuart's death); David (born 1928); Donald and Douglas. The Carr family also included Stuart's three sisters--Catherine May (born 1920), Dorothy May (born 1926) and Barbara Jean (born 1933). Stuart attended S.S. No. 5 school in Sarnia Township. Since so many of the Carr family attended the school, it was, according to Myra, known as the "Carr School." Stuart then attended Sarnia Collegiate. He also joined the Young Usher's Club and the choir of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, where he also joined the hockey team.

Stuart Carr enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in January 1943. After training at Toronto, Brandon and Winnipeg, he graduated in September 1943 as an air gunner in Western Canada (#3 B. and G. School). He became a member of RCAF #1679 Heavy Conversion Unit, with the rank of Sergeant Air Gunner. In early November of 1943, parents Norman and Florence in Sarnia received a telegram from Stuart who let them know that he had arrived safely overseas. Only three months later, Stuart Carr would lose his life. In the interval and assignment in Scotland, Stuart at one point became homesick. His officers didn't know what to do with him, so he was sent to a family in Scotland on leave to get well.

Only three months after arriving overseas, on January 23, 1944, the Lancaster aircraft DS839 in which Stuart Carr was a crew member, was engaged in a night training exercise when it crashed at Ridgemont, Bedfordshire, England. In late January of 1944, Norman and Florence Carr would receive this notification from the RCAF Casualty Officer at Ottawa about their son, Sergeant Stuart Allan Carr: *Deeply regret to advise that your son, R209938, Sergt. Stuart Allan Carr, was killed on active service overseas January 23. Please accept my profound sympathy. Letter follows*. Perishing with Stuart Carr were FS's F.W. MacDonald, J.J. Farrell, and L.I. Hogan; F/O. R.W. Grosser; and two of the crew, not Canadians. In late January of 1944, parents Norman and Florence Carr in Sarnia would receive

AMONG HONORED COMRADES. OUR SON. "REST ON, THY DUTY DONE."  
FROM HIS HOME IN CANADA.

another telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer at Ottawa regarding the funeral of their son. The message read, *Funeral of son, Sergeant Stuart Allan Carr, takes place at 2:30 p.m. January 28, at Cambridgeshire, England. A letter will follow.* Stuart Carr would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (England).* Nineteen year old Stuart Carr is buried in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom, Grave 13551A. On Stuart Carr's headstone are inscribed the words, *He died that others might live.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

#### **CHURCH, Maurice Gordon (#R/114615)**

Maurice Clark was born sometime around 1916, the son of George Church and Anne Isabel Church of 114 North Vidal Street, Sarnia and a sibling to two sisters and a younger brother. Maurice was born in the prairies and educated in Regina, but after Maurice went overseas, his parents moved to Sarnia. In July of 1941, Maurice enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He graduated at Mossbank, Saskatchewan on February 28, 1942, before going overseas in May of 1942. He would become a member of RCAF #408 Goose squadron "For Freedom", attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II Navigator.

Maurice was last heard from on March 31, 1943, when he volunteered to take the place of another navigator on a bombing expedition. On April 3, 1943, Maurice was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft JB866 that went missing in action from a night trip to Essen, Germany. George and Anne Church in Sarnia would initially receive word from German sources that their son Maurice had been killed in action. R.C.A.F. headquarters were more cautious, reporting him as, *missing after air operations.* In September of 1943, Maurice Gordon Church's name would appear on the air force casualty list, officially recorded as, *previously reported missing in action overseas, now for official purposes is presumed dead.* Perishing with Warrant Officer II-Navigator Maurice Church were P/O.s E.A. Sirett and G.A. Fletcher; F/O. J.D. McBride; and Sgt.s G.D. Boyer, F.R. Burke, and K.O. Brice (RAF). Twenty-seven year old Maurice Church is buried in Uden War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave 4.G.13.

Maurice had a younger brother, James Mayson Church, born on March 7, 1919. James Mayson was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, 156 (R.A.F.) Squadron with the rank of Flight-Sergeant/Air Gunner. Just three months after Maurice's death, his brother James, would also lose his life during fighting. On July 30, 1943 at the age of 25, James Mayson Church was killed in action and is buried in Hamburg Cemetery, Germany Grave 5A.J.15.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C

#### **CLARK, Ross Edgerton (#J/14771)**

Ross Clark was born on March 4, 1923, the son of William Ernest Edgerton Clark (born in Innisfill, Simcoe, Ontario) and Margaret Elizabeth Rhona (nee Gilbank) Clark, of 208 Arthur Street, Point Edward. Ross had three brothers: Wilbert Elmore (born 1910), Allen Ernest (born 1921), and Kenneth. He also had two sisters--Marjory Irene (born 1911) and Velma Clark. In 1934, when he was eleven years old, Ross would lose his father William Clark. Ross was a graduate from Sarnia Collegiate. After Ross, a bachelor, enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in January of 1942, he received his training at Rockcliffe, Belleville and Malton. He would receive his wings at the Malton training centre of the R.C.A.F. on October 9, 1942, after which he visited his home in Sarnia on graduation furlough. In early November of 1942, Mrs. Margaret Clark of Sarnia would receive a cable from her son Ross announcing his arrival overseas. Ross would become a member of RCAF #425 Alouette Squadron "Je Te Plumerai" (I shall pluck you), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot.

Less than one year after his arrival overseas, on August 6, 1943, Ross Clark was part of a crew aboard Wellington aircraft HE261 that crashed into the sea off Cap Bon, near the harbour at Haquarhe, Tunisia. About one week later, his mother, Margaret, would receive word that her son, *Pilot Officer Ross E. Clark was missing after active service overseas.* No further details were received.

Perishing with Flying Officer-Pilot Ross Clark were Sgt. C.A. Reist; FS.T.J. Driscoll; P/O D.A. Wood; and Sgt. R.B. Perry (RAF). Ross Clark would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, fell into the sea, presumed drowned (N. Africa).* Twenty-year old Ross Clark has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Malta Memorial, Malta, Panel 10, Column 1. His family also erected a memorial stone at Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia, Section M. Ross Clark's name is also inscribed

ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES KNOW THE BITTERNESS OF "GONE."  
FROM HIS LOVING MOTHER.

on the Memorial in the Village of Point Edward.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**CLARK, William Brown (#R/68182) – Photograph page 375**

William (“Bill”) Brown Clark was born in Sarnia on June 20, 1912. He was the only son of William Brown Clark (a dry goods merchant in Sarnia) and Agnes Jane (nee Steed) Clark (born in San Francisco), of North Christina Street, Sarnia. He had four sisters including Janie Clark who resided with their mother on Lakeshore Road, Sarnia at the time of William’s death. His other sisters were Mrs. Roy M. Smith and Mrs. Charles Weir, both of Sarnia, and Mrs. L. Woolley, of Toronto. Prior to enlistment, William was a keen builder of model airplanes and an expert yachtsman at the Sarnia Yacht Club. He was a well-known downtown businessman, managing the W.B. Clark Company Limited on North Front Street, with which his family had been associated for many years. William enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July of 1940, leaving Sarnia on July 22, 1940 to go into training. Eight months later, in mid-March of 1941, on the evening before his scheduled wedding, the then Sergeant Observer William Clark of the R.C.A.F., was honoured by a number of his friends at a stag party at the Sarnia Yacht Club. Among those who attended were Logan Mackenzie, Lorne and Lyle Watcher, Gordon Link, David Wright, Charles Weir, Roy Smith, James Harris, Jack Lewis, Mel Garside, Dr. Jack Garrett, Reginald Ewener, Stewart Austin, Patrick Butler, Gordon Ferguson and Arthur Wilkinson. William was presented with a purse of money as a gift.

On March 21, 1941, William married Marian Emily Leach, the second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norwood A. Leach of Toronto (former residents of Sarnia), at St. George’s Anglican Church. At the ceremony, Miss Leach’s attendants were her sisters Mrs. Allan Warwick of Detroit and Miss Ilean Leach of Toronto. Serving as best man was Norwood F. Leach. Nearly three months later, the bride’s sister, Miss Ilean Leach, would also get married at St. George’s Anglican Church to Donald Fraser of St. Thomas. Following William and Marian’s wedding ceremony, a reception was held at the Sarnia Riding Club. After the reception, the newlywed couple left for a wedding trip to the Maritimes. Their residence was listed as 110 Oriole Parkway, Apt. 303, Toronto.

William had enlisted and departed en route to the manning pool in Toronto of the Royal Canadian Air Force in mid-July of 1940, along with fellow Sarnians John Murray and John Hallam (Hallam is also included in this project). In May of 1941, two months after getting married, William Clark would arrive in England along with three other Sarnia airmen: Sergeants Lloyd Gallaway (also included in this project); John Bennett; and J.D. Murray. Almost immediately, William was put into combat flying, becoming a member of the RCAF #12 squadron “Leads the Field” as a Sergeant-Observer and flying a Wellington aircraft W5577. On August 31, 1941 his Wellington aircraft was shot down off Dieppe during a bombing operation. Perishing with 29 year-old Sergeant-Observer William Clark were pilot-officer R.N. Dastur, a member of the Royal Indian Air Force, and Sgt. R.B. Russell (RAF). Two of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed.

In early September of 1941, William’s relatives in Sarnia received an official message informing them that, *Sergeant William B. Clark was reported missing as the result of an air operation overseas on August 31*. There were no further particulars, so according to the *Canadian Observer*, “the fact that the flyer was designated as missing held out some hope that he might be a prisoner or had made an escape in some other way.” In early November of 1941, William’s relatives, however, received the following message from Ottawa: *Sgt. Clark who was previously reported missing is still missing, now believed killed in action*. The Clark family regarded this message as a customary notice sent to the relatives of men who are reported as missing and about whom no reliable information has been received within two months. William’s relatives and friends still hoped that he might be safe, a probable prisoner of war in Nazi-occupied Europe.

William Clark would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations overseas, now for official purposes, presumed to have died*. Twenty-nine year old Sergeant William Clark was buried at Berneval Le Grand, France, exhumed, and reburied in the Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery, Hautot-Ser-mer, Seine-Maritime, France, Grave H.7. William’s wife of only five months, Mrs. Marion Clark of Sarnia, was residing in Toronto at the time of his death.

SOURCES: A, B, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**CLARKE, John Charles (#A/20130)**

John (“Jack”) Clarke was born in Windsor, Ontario on July 17, 1920, the eldest son of Cecil Charles Clarke



(born March 31, 1898) and Edith Phyllis (nee Ewener) Clarke, of 121 South Forsythe Street, and later 306 George Street, Sarnia. Both his parents were born in England--Cecil in Rotherham, Yorkshire, and Edith in Southwark, Middlesex. Edith's father fought in World War I, and her brother fought in World War II. John had three younger siblings: Reginald C. (born 1921), Cecil William (born 1926) and one sister, Marguerite Phyllis (born 1923). John Clarke was educated in Sarnia schools and at Sarnia Collegiate. He would be a member of the reserves in Sarnia and, when war broke out, he and his brother volunteered for service.

John's father, Cecil Charles Clarke, served overseas from 1916 to 1919 in World War I with the Fourth Canadian Mounted Rifles. When his two sons, John and Reginald, decided to join the active service forces in WWII, father Cecil Charles decided to go along just to look after them if they got into a tight spot. So father Cecil Charles would enlist again in World War II, becoming a Sapper with the 11th Field Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers, the same unit as his two sons John and Reginald. John and Reginald would get their stripes first and took keen delight in issuing instructions to "the old man." As it turned out, however, Sergeant Cecil Charles Clarke proved he could take it as well as his sons and it wasn't long before he was sporting three stripes and remarking, "I told you so, boys." Oldest son John and middle son Reginald, would both serve in the Canadian Army and, like their father, would become members of the Royal Canadian Engineers. The youngest son, Cecil William, would join the army, becoming a member of the 30th Reconnaissance Battalion, in London, Ontario with the rank of Trooper. The only Clarke daughter, Marguerite, would become a member of the Canadian Women's Army Corps. The family was nicknamed, "The Fighting Clarkes" (of the army).

Another Clarke family in Sarnia was also known as the, "The Fighting Clarkes" (of the navy). Lieutenant Roy Clarke and his wife, Mrs. Clarke of Lakeshore Road, had four sons who would all serve in the Royal Canadian Navy. A fifth son was a decker on the *Harmonic*, too young to enlist in the R.C.N. Members of the "Fighting Clarkes" of the navy included father Lieutenant Roy Clarke, who had been in the Navy prior to going into the Army; sons and Petty Officers (Gunner's Mates) Douglas and David Tait; Petty Officers Gordon Stewart and Thomas; and the youngest son, Bruce, who planned to join the navy as soon as he was of age.

At his enlistment, John Charles Clarke, of the "Fighting Clarkes" (of the army) recorded his occupation as a concrete work and a carpenter. John enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, like his father and his brother, John, and attaining the rank of sergeant. He was stationed at Seaford, Sussex, England. John Charles Clarke, of the "Fighting Clarkes" of the army would marry Lucy Clarke in England in the spring of 1942. They would later reside at East Wellington Street, Sarnia. John and his new wife Lucy would have a baby daughter together.

August 19, 1942, was one of the darkest days in Canadian military history. On that day, 4,963 Canadian soldiers landed on the beaches of Dieppe, a small town on the coast of France. Called *Operation Jubilee*, the plan had soldiers arriving early in the morning under the cover of darkness; however, they were delayed and had inadequate supporting fire. The Canadians waded ashore, trying to cross the cobblestone beaches but were fully visible to the well-entrenched Germans who were waiting for them sitting atop the 75-foot high cliffs. By mid-morning, it was clear that the raid could not continue, and the retreat began. The Operation was a disaster and, of the 4,963 Canadians who landed, 907 were killed, 2,460 were wounded and 1,946 were captured.

A number of Sarnia and Lambton men took part in the Dieppe Raid, including three members of the Clarke family who were also members of the Royal Canadian Engineers: father Cecil Clarke, a sergeant and veteran of the Great War; Lance-Sergeant John Clarke and Corporal Reginald Clarke. As he vowed when he enlisted, father Cecil Charles "looked after them if they got into a tight spot," which Dieppe certainly was. Miraculously, all three Clarkes would not only survive the disaster, but would escape unharmed. Edith Clarke in Sarnia received a cable a week later from her husband Cecil, which informed her that he and their two sons all took part in the raid and were now all safe and well in England. She would also receive news that her brother, Lieutenant William A. Ewener of the Royal Canadian Engineers, who also take part in the Dieppe Raid, was seriously wounded, but would survive.

A little over a year after surviving the Dieppe Raid, John Clarke would lose his life. Edith Clarke then residing at 208 Harkness Street, Sarnia, would receive a telegram from the director of records at Ottawa, informing her that her son, John Charles Clarke, serving overseas as an instructor with a demolition unit, died of burns received in an accidental blast while on duty on November 23, 1943. No information as to whether the accident occurred in England or with the Canadian troops in Italy was provided. The message said that further information would be

transmitted later. Edith Clarke had received a letter from her son John only two weeks prior.

John Clarke would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, misadventure, due to blast and burns, multiple injuries and fracture of the skull (England)*. John left behind his parents, his brothers and sister, his wife of less than two years, Lucy, and their baby daughter. In mid-February 1944, a group of 94 area soldiers arrived from overseas duty at the London, Ontario train station into the arms of happy, laughing friends and relatives. According to the London media report, one of the happiest family groups at the station were the “Fighting Clarkes” of Sarnia. Sgt.-Major Charles Clarke, who had been overseas for almost four years, was greeted by his wife Edith and their daughter Cpl. Marguerite Guthrie of No. 6 Company, C.W.A.C.. His sons, Lt-Cpl. Cecil Clarke and Sgt. Reginald Clarke, were in the army both overseas. His twenty-three year old son John Charles Clarke is buried overseas in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 47.H.2.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **COLEMAN, Wesley Percival (#R/91480) – Photograph page 376**

Wesley Coleman was born in Saskatchewan on March 3, 1922, the son of Rev. Stanley Harold Coleman (born in England) and Sophia Beatrice (nee Armstrong) Coleman, of Westport, Ontario. Wesley, single at the time, joined the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a member of RCAF #1402 Meteorological Flight Unit. He recorded his address at the time as 43 Mayfield Avenue, Toronto. Wesley attained the rank of Warrant Officer Class I and Wireless Operator Air Gunner. On September 8, 1943, while overseas, Wesley Coleman’s Hampden aircraft P1265 failed to return from a meteorological flight. Three of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed. Wesley Coleman would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Wesley Coleman has no known grave. Twenty-one year old Wesley Coleman’s name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 179.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, 2C, 2D

#### **CONWAY, Adam Edward (#A/102217)**

Adam Conway was born in Belfast, Ireland on April 25, 1921, the only son of Edward Conway and Anne Conway of Northern Ireland. Adam first arrived in Canada (port in Quebec) on July 28, 1922, aboard the ship *Metagama*, when he was only 11 months old. His family then travelled by train to Sarnia, where they would reside at 218 Confederation Street, and later 342 Queen Street, Sarnia. The Conway family visited Ireland in 1929, returning from Belfast to Canada (port of Montreal) on August 24, 1929 aboard the passenger ship *Andania*. Adam was eight years old at the time. Adam’s father Edward recorded his occupation as a labourer, his wife Anne as a housewife.

Adam would marry Gladys Margaret McKellar of London, the youngest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Wesley McKellar. Adam and Gladys were married in a quiet wedding in Devine Street United Church on June 20, 1942. At the ceremony, Gladys’ attendant was Miss Shirley Smith, while the bridegroom was attended by Arthur Fleck. Following the ceremony, a reception was held at the Vendome Hotel, after which the couple left on a wedding trip to Toronto and points east. The newlywed couple would then reside at 342 Queen Street, Sarnia, with Adam recording his occupation as a labourer.

Adam Conway enlisted in the Canadian Army in Windsor, Ontario in July 1942. He would become a member of the Highland Light Infantry of Canada, R.C.I.C., attaining the rank of Corporal. For some time before going overseas to England, Adam was an instructor at the Chatham Basic Training Centre. In early October 1943, Gladys in Sarnia would receive a cable from her husband Adam, in which he informed her that he had arrived overseas with a detachment of the Canadian Army. He also stated that the crossing was “uneventful.”

Less than a year and a half after arriving overseas, on March 24, 1945, Adam Conway would lose his life while fighting in Germany, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. In early April 1945, wife Gladys Conway and parents Edward and Anne Conway, at 342 Queen Street, Sarnia, would receive a telegram from the Director of Records at Ottawa informing them that, *Cpl. Adam Edward Conway, has been killed in action in Germany*. Only one and a half months after Adam Conway’s death, the war in Europe would end. Adam Conway would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. Twenty-three year old Adam Conway is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XIX.A.12. On Adam Conway’s headstone are inscribed the words, *In memory of a brave soldier who died that his country might live*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, N, 2C, 2D

**CORE, Garnet Douglas (#A/106978)**

Garnet Core was born on March 28, 1923, the son of James Bright Core and Myrtle West Core of Blackwell. Prior to enlistment, he was an employee of Mueller Limited, recording his occupation as a valve tester. Garnet enlisted in the Canadian Army in May 1943 and trained in London, Camp Ipperwash and Nova Scotia. In June 1943, Garnet would spend a few days at home on leave with his friends and grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry West, Sr. of Blackwell.

Garnet married Miss Betty Vera Randall, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arleigh Randall of Mooretown, on October 1, 1943 at the United Church parsonage in Corunna. At the wedding ceremony, Miss Freida Lapham of Sarnia served as bridesmaid, and Private Allan Nagorsen of Windsor, served as the best man. After the ceremony, the bridal party dined at the Cosy Café, and then the newlywed couple left for a wedding trip to Niagara Falls, New York. On their return, Mrs. Betty Vera Core resided at R.R. #3 Sarnia, while Garnet returned to Camp Ipperwash after his 17-day furlough..

Garnet went overseas in January 1944, a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment. He would spend his 21st birthday at sea, on his way to fight in Italy. In a letter received in May 1944 by his aunt, Mrs. Victor Wellington, of 123 South Brock Street, Garnet Core described his life in Italy. The following are portions of that letter written from "Somewhere in Italy":

*I really covered a lot of miles since I left Canada... We had a swell trip coming over; spent my twenty-first birthday aboard ship. I really love the water; wish I had joined the navy. This country is beautiful and the climate is much like our own. The summer, they say, is really hot here. It is spring now; has been nice but is rather cool today. There are lots of fruits and nuts to be bought. Oranges cost about thirty cents a dozen. When it is orange season, you pick them off the trees.*

*The Italians are great for wine. It can be bought from thirty cents up for a quart most anywhere. They call it 'veno.' I had one taste of it. That's all I want. It's just like rotten cider. The people let their animals sleep in the house with them. It is not unusual to see a horse or a mule tied in a corner of the living quarters. I nearly died laughing the first time I saw a horse tied in a house. The buggy was inside also.*

*I went up to a monastery built on a mountain. It was really beautiful inside; sights which I had never seen before. The art work was lovely. The altars were great masterpieces which must have taken years to build. The food over here is really good, but I do miss fresh milk now and then. I had some Italian ice cream today. It was not too bad, but not as good as our Canadian ice cream. I have had the odd plate of spaghetti. Boy, it really is good, but darn dear. A plate alone, no bread, costs seventy cents.*

In June 1944, Betty Core in Mooretown would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband Garnet, was slightly wounded on May 30, 1944 while fighting with Canadian troops in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. The nature of the wound was not revealed. Betty Core expressed to her family and friends that she hoped that the wound was not serious and that he would be able to rejoin his unit soon. On an early June morning, Betty Core visited the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* office to advise them that her husband had been wounded in action in Italy on May 30. A short time later, she received further information from the director of Records at Ottawa that her husband had died on May 31, 1944, as a result of wounds received during fighting. Garnet Core would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Italy)*.

In early July 1944, Blackwell United Church in Sarnia honoured Private Core. A capacity congregation filled the Church on the occasion of a Sunday morning memorial service for Garnet Core. The church was beautifully decorated with flowers and flags for the service. During the service, an honour roll bearing the names of fourteen men who had enlisted from the Blackwell congregation and community was unveiled and dedicated. The unveiling ceremony was performed by Private James Somes; R.C.A., and the prayer of dedication was pronounced by the Rev. P.S. Banes, of Point Edward.

Twenty-one year old Private Garnet Core is buried in Cassino War Cemetery, Italy, Grave XIII.B.12. On Garnet's headstone are inscribed the words, *The peace of Jesus filled his breast and in his arms he sank to rest.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

**CRAWLEY, David (#R/183604)**

David Crawley was born in Askam-in-furness, England on November 14, 1912, the son of Thomas Crawley

and Mary Ann (nee Mylray) Crawley. Both of his parents, Thomas and Mary Ann, were born in England. David had an older brother, Frank, who was born in 1909. When David was ten years old, he would lose his father Thomas, who died in June 1923. Mary Ann Crawley along with her two sons, Frank and David, departed Liverpool, England aboard the vessel *Montrose* and arrived on December 3, 1927 in St. John, New Brunswick. David was 14 years old when his family arrived in Canada. Their destination was Mary Ann's brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Bright of R.R. #1 Campbellford, Ontario.

David Crawley would marry Blanche Doris (nee Maidment) Crawley, and they would reside at 255 ½ North Mitton Street. David enlisted on August 5, 1942, joining the Royal Canadian Air Force. He trained at Lachine and Hagersville and received his Air Gunner's badge at MacDonald, Manitoba. He would become a member of RCAF #420 Snowy Owl Squadron "Pugnatus Finitum" (We fight to a finish), attaining the rank of Sergeant Air Gunner. While David was overseas, his wife Blanche would reside at 254 North Front Street, Sarnia with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Maidment. David would arrive overseas in July 1943. Only seven months after arriving overseas, on February 25, 1944, David was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft LW427 that crashed in enemy territory during a night trip to Schweinfurt, Germany. Perishing with Sergeant-Air Gunner David Crawley were F/O. H.M. Long; P/O. M.A. Knight; FS. D.B. Richardson; and Sgt.s H.E. Hirst and W.H. Botterill (RAF). One crew member, not Canadian, was reported missing and believed killed.

In early March 1944, Blanche Crawley would receive a telegram from the casualty office at Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Sgt. David Crawley, has been reported missing after air operations on February 25*. There were no other details provided and the message added that further information would be forwarded when received. David Crawley would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Thirty-one year old David Crawley is buried in Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany, Grave 4.C.23.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **CUSHLEY, William Jonathan James (AFGHANISTAN) (#N88957698) – Photograph page 377**

William (Billy) Cushley was born in Bristol, England on July 28, 1985, the son of Errol Cushley and Elaine Cushley. Just a few months after William's birth, the family moved to Sarnia, residing there from 1977 until 1992. They would later move to Sombra and eventually settle in Port Lambton, Ontario. William, the only son, had three sisters: Lisa (born Aug 1, 1967); Tonia (born Oct 10, 1970); and Amanda (born May 26, 1982). William was a very active child. He enjoyed skateboarding, BMX biking, running, and road hockey as well as playing a few seasons of organized hockey and spending some time in the Cubs where his mother Elaine was one of the leaders. William loved to draw but, when others suggested he consider art school, William insisted art was only a hobby and a way to relax. As he got older, he enjoyed fishing and swimming with friends in the St. Clair River by his family home. William first attended St. Benedict's Elementary School in Sarnia for three years. After his family moved, he would continue his schooling and graduate from Sacred Heart Elementary School in Port Lambton, and then Wallaceburg District Secondary School. Having a great interest in history, William expressed his desire in his mid-teens to join the military, specifically the infantry. His father Errol suggested going to university first, which would allow him to enter the military in the officer stream. William, however, wasn't interested and told his father he wanted to go directly into the army like everyone else and work his way up.

A number of people in Williams's life were paramount in influencing him to choose the military as a career. William's maternal grandfather, Ernest Gordon Phillips, was a Private during the Second World War with the British Army "Glorious" Gloucestershire Regiment. He would serve in Belgium, Holland, Germany, and France, including, landing on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. William's paternal grandfather, William Henry Cushley, also served during World War II, and beyond. He was a Chief Petty Officer with the British Royal Navy and would serve from 1938 until 1963, a career which included tours of duty in the Atlantic, the Africa Campaign, the Italian Campaign and in the Arctic. William's father, Errol Cushley, served as an Efficient Deck Hand, in the British Merchant Navy from early in 1963 until the end of 1966. He would serve in Cypress in 1963 as well as in the Atlantic. Another major influence on William was his cousin, James Moloney. Born in 1977, James joined the British military in September of 1993 at the age of sixteen. James Moloney would become a member of the British Army, Royal Engineers, 59th Independent Commando Squadron, serving for 14 years and rising to the rank of Corporal. James would serve in Northern Ireland (instructor at Lympstone, 2001-02); Afghanistan (2002); with the first soldiers in Basra, Iraq

(2003); and as an instructor at the training depot in Chatham, England (2003-2007). Though none of these individuals in William's life encouraged him to join the military, growing up with them and hearing of their experiences, were undoubtedly significant factors in William's decision to follow in their footsteps.

After graduating from Wallaceburg District Secondary, he submitted his application for the Canadian Forces at a recruitment office in Chatham. So anxious was he to get his army career underway that William was eventually asked by the military recruiters to refrain from calling and emailing to inquire about the status of his application. Frustrated with the delay in hearing a response, William crossed into the U.S. with the intention of joining the U.S. Marines. To his disappointment, however, William was told that the Marines didn't take Canadians and that he should go home and join his own army. Being a dual British-Canadian citizen, William then contacted the Royal Marines in the United Kingdom and was offered a spot in their 42-week basic training program. Upon hearing this, the Canadian Forces quickly offered him a spot in their basic training program.

William joined the Canadian Army, excelling at basic training at Saint-Jean, Quebec, and later at Battle School, thriving in the tightly structured environment of the military. He was assigned as a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment, 1st Battalion, based at CFB Petawawa. Almost immediately he indicated his interest in going to Afghanistan. He knew that a tour of duty would help him to achieve his goal of having a career: either with the Joint Task Force 2, an elite special operations team of the Canadian Forces; with a new marine commando unit, similar to the U.S. Navy Seals; or with a special rapid response border unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Aside from helping him to achieve his desired career with special forces, William had another motive for stepping into a combat zone. Not long before he went overseas, he had a heart-to-heart discussion with his father Errol. William explained that he wasn't going overseas so that Afghan girls could go to school. Rather, he wanted to do his part to ensure that Afghans had the opportunity to make that choice without someone telling them they couldn't, as had been the case for decades. He wanted them to have the same opportunities that we have here in Canada. Will also told his father that he was afraid, not of the enemy, but of being a coward under fire. Will was worried about getting his army pals killed if he lost his nerve and turned tail during a firefight. Errol told Will that he'd never know for sure until he found himself in that situation, but he advised his son to think back to his training. Shortly before leaving for Afghanistan, William would give his father Errol two breast patches from his uniform with the name CUSHLEY embossed on them. Once in Afghanistan, Will's fears were soon put to the test. It turned out his fears were completely unfounded. Private Cushley was cool, calm and professional under fire. Just a week before he was killed, William demonstrated a textbook performance as a fill-in gunner aboard a light armoured vehicle (LAV).

William was home for the Port Lambton Gala Days celebration in July 2006, where he celebrated his 21st birthday. Less than two months later, having been overseas for only one month, William would lose his life in Afghanistan. On the morning of Sunday, September 3, 2006, father Errol was out training on the backroads not far from his home in Port Lambton, preparing for a month-long hike in Spain that he and Elaine were about to undertake. Elaine was tired that morning and had opted to stay home. Partway through the training session, Errol heard a car slowly approaching on the country road behind him. Behind the wheel was a neighbour from town, who tearfully informed Errol that a military officer and chaplain were waiting back at home. As Errol climbed into his neighbour's car on that Sunday morning, he knew the military would show up at your doorstep for only one reason.

On September 3, 2006, William Cushley would lose his life alongside three other Canadian soldiers in a fierce gun battle with Taliban insurgents, approximately 15 kilometers west of Kandahar City. It happened in the volatile Panjwayi district, where a massive Canadian-led offensive called *Operation Medusa* was in its early stages of trying to put the Taliban-held region under Afghan government control. NATO's aim was to remove armed militants from the volatile Panjwayi and Zhari district region so that displaced villagers could return to their homes and re-establish their livelihoods without living in constant fear of the Taliban. On that September 3rd day, the Canadians had been ordered to advance into an area where the Taliban insurgents had faced a massive artillery and aerial bombardment. Unknown to the Canadians, they were severely outnumbered, as 1200 Taliban fighters waited in ambush. Sixty-two members of Number 7 Platoon never had a chance and, miraculously, not all were killed. Private Cushley would lose his life in the ambush, along with three other Canadian soldiers in a chaotic and bloody battle that ensued. Six other Canadian soldiers were wounded in the attack. Military analysts would call this period some of the fiercest combat Canadian troops had seen since the Korean War.

Along with twenty-one year old Private William Cushley, also killed were Warrant Officers Frank R.

Mellish, 38, and Richard F. Nolan, 39, and Sergeant Shane Stachnik, 30. Private Mark Graham died the following day in a friendly fire incident. In a solemn ramp ceremony at Kandahar airfield, approximately 800 Canadian soldiers and 100 from other countries bid farewell to their fallen comrades. While Private Cushley's and four other flag-draped coffins were carried onto a C-130 Hercules aircraft, a piper played a mournful melody. William was the first Lambton County resident killed in action since the Korean War. Twenty-one year old William Cushley's body was returned home to Canada, along with the four other Canadian fallen. All five men had gone over to Afghanistan together, and all five returned home together.

Nearly two thousand people paid their respects during the two-day visitation period at Sacred Heart Church, Port Lambton. Over 500 people attended his funeral at Sacred Heart Church on September 13, 2006. On the day of the funeral, much of the town was closed off, with EMS vehicles and fire trucks blocking the streets. A bus load of troops had arrived and proceeded to march on all four roads surrounding the jam-packed church. The overflow area was also full and a screen had been set-up outside for people to watch the service from there. American servicemen were in attendance and, on bended knee, presented Will's mother Elaine with an American flag, the first presented to a Canadian since the Korean War. As the procession passed by Sacred Heart Elementary School, from which he had graduated only seven years before, the entire student body lined up on the curb, most dressed in red, all wearing arm bands that read 'Thank you Will'. Most waved Canadian flags or tossed flowers. Other than a few muffled sobs, the 145 youngsters stood silently as the procession, which was more than 100 metres long, passed by. Will's full military funeral concluded with a graveside service of three volleys of fire from soldiers, a bagpiper, then a trumpeter sounding the "Last Post." William Cushley is buried in McDonald Memorial Cemetery, Port Lambton, Ontario. On his headstone are inscribed the words, *Private William Cushley, 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, died on September 3, 2006 fighting against Taliban insurgents near Kandahar City, Afghanistan. Private Cushley fought to bring human rights and democratic values to an oppressed people. He wanted to make a difference in this world and he died doing so.*

Things will never be the same for the Cushley family. William's youngest sister, Amanda, felt the strong desire to go to Afghanistan and did so one year after his death. She would serve with the Canadian Forces Personnel Agency (CFPSA). Amanda would do three tours in Afghanistan, one in Dubai (Camp Mirage) and one in Cypress. Her last tour was at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan when it was closed upon Canada's withdrawal from its mission there. His mother Elaine points out that someone will always be missing from family events and festive occasions. But she says they've come to terms with the fact that they still need to live life; and that's exactly how William would want it. Elaine says her son is with them everyday and everywhere. She spends time talking with William in his basement bedroom where the walls are adorned with pictures, military certificates and mementos. She also visits the nearby cemetery often, placing flowers and putting up balloons for his birthday, something that Errol says with a chuckle, would surely cause William to roll his eyes. Elaine says she grew up not really knowing much about Remembrance Day and not paying a lot of attention to veterans. The Afghan mission was a major "wake-up call." She says our war heroes, past and present, should never be forgotten, and thinks children need to understand that freedom has a price--one that the Cushley family will pay for the rest of their lives. The freedom we enjoy now, says Elaine, is because of our heroic veterans and war dead who gave so much.

On December 4, 2010, the sixty-two members of Number 7 Platoon were given a prestigious award for gallantry. The Governor General of Canada awarded the Commander-in-Chief's Unit Commendation to the men and women of the First Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment, Battle Group 3-06. The citation reads, *For courageous and professional execution of duty in Afghanistan during August and September 2006 that prevented the capture of Kandahar City by insurgents.* William Cushley would also receive the Citation: Sacrifice Medal (posthumously).

Following their son's death, William's parents received letters he'd written for delivery only if he fell in battle. The letter to his mother harkened back to a bet that the two had placed as Will climbed aboard a bus bound for the airport to Afghanistan. As he boarded a bus to CFB Trenton, Elaine bet her son \$50 that she wouldn't cry when they parted. Moments after boarding, Will got back off the bus, picked up his mother in a tight embrace and gave her one last kiss before departing. In doing so, Will won their wager of \$50. The last line of William's final letter to his mother reads, *Do not weep too much. I will always be with you in heart and spirit! Love always & forever, Will. P.S. You can keep the \$50! LOL*

THANK YOU, SON, FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.  
EVER REMEMBERED. DAD AND MUM.

William Cushley is remembered as a courageous man and a proud soldier who was devoted to his country. Though he was a strapping young soldier when he died, his mother Elaine Cushley says she will always see her son as a boy. "I miss cuddling him," she said. "Every time I close my eyes I see his face and he is always smiling. He was always fun, a dry sense of humour that boy."

SOURCES: D, E, I, L, N, 2D, 3D, r

### **DAWDY, Cecil Blake**

Cecil Blake Dawdy was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on April 18, 1908, the son of Blake Laverne Dawdy (born in the United States) and Frances Hasard (nee Graham, born in Ontario) Dawdy. Cecil had one brother, Carmen Wesley (born 1906) and one sister, Laverne (born 1913). When Cecil was seven years old, his family moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta. His father Blake recorded his occupation as merchant-jeweller. Years later, Cecil would marry Miranda L. Dawdy of London, Ontario. Cecil and Miranda would reside at 18 Wolseley Avenue, London, Ontario, and while there, Cecil was employed as a salesman. Cecil would lose his father, who died in 1938, and his mother then moved to Edmonton, Alberta.

Cecil Dawdy would join the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment, attaining the rank of Captain. On July 21, 1945, Cecil Dawdy would lose his life in an accident, in Willow Lake, Kitchener, Ontario. The war in Europe had ended on May 8, 1945, and the war in Japan would end less than one month after Cecil Dawdy's death. Cecil Dawdy would be officially listed as, *Died as a result of a broken neck suffered in diving accident, Kitchener Waterloo Hospital*. Thirty-seven year old Cecil Dawdy is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, London, Ontario, Military Plot Sec. X, Grave 69. On Cecil Blake's headstone are inscribed the words, *Rest in Peace*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

### **DAWS, Frederick John (#J/12472) – Photograph page 378**

Frederick Daws was born in Sarnia on November 2, 1920, the only child of Frederick Daws (born in Oldham, Lancashire, England) and Annie Elizabeth (nee Graham, born in Oldham, England) Daws. Parents Frederick and Annie were married in Hamilton, Ontario in 1914. The family would move to 333 Wellington Street, and later to Lakeshore Road in Sarnia. Frederick attended Sarnia public school and Sarnia Collegiate. Fred was a member of the Central Century Club, where he played basketball, hockey and softball. While at Sarnia Collegiate, he was active in the Cadets, becoming a Cadet Major in 1940, and was the Master of Ceremonies of the annual school show. For some time while at SCITS, he was a member of gold medal winning bands. He played high school basketball, and would play on the Sarnia Collegiate WOSSA rugby team. Later as halfback, he played both junior and senior O.R.F.U. for Sarnia. Frederick would also be a member of the Sarnia Imperials football team. He was greatly interested in organized boys' work, acting as chairman of the Boys' Work Board for three years, and acted as a leader on a number of occasions at the Boys' Camps at Lamreton. After leaving Sarnia Collegiate, he was employed at Mueller's Limited for just over one year, prior to enlisting.

Frederick Daws enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on July 19, 1941, and trained at Toronto, Fingal, Goderich and Number 14 Service Flying Training School, Aylmer where he received his Pilot Wings in July 1942. He obtained the highest marks of his class in flying and received a commission as Pilot Officer. At Summerside, P.E.I. and Debert, Nova Scotia, prior to going overseas on February 8, 1943, Freddie acquired his O.T.U. In early June 1943, his parents Frederick Sr. and Annie would receive a cablegram from overseas stating that their son Frederick had been promoted to the rank of Flying Officer from Pilot Officer. On June 17, 1943, Freddie Daws married Kathleen May Daws (nee Wilson), of Bournemouth, England, in the district of Swindon, Wiltshire, England.

On July 25, 1943, only six months after arriving overseas, and one month after getting married, Frederick Daws lost his life when his Hudson aircraft AM788 stalled and crashed on take-off at Ras El Ma, Algeria. At the end of July in 1943, Fred Sr. and Annie in Sarnia would receive a cablegram informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Fred J. Daws, had been killed in action overseas*. No other details were made available, though his parents believed that he may have been in action over Sicily. In his last letter home, Frederick had mentioned that he expected soon to be leaving for Africa. Along with Flying Officer-Pilot Frederick Daws, also killed was Flight Sergeant R.H. Jarvis. Frederick Daws would later be officially listed as, *Killed in a flying accident, overseas (Algeria)*. Twenty-two year old Frederick John Daws was buried in Fez, French Morocco, but later was re-interred at

Le Petit Lac Cemetery, Oran, Algeria, Plot E, Row C, Grave 17.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

**DICK, Daniel (#A/106954)**

Daniel Dick was born on December 24, 1913, the son of Josephine Dick, of Fort William Mission Bay Indian Reserve. An Ojibway First Nation, he would eventually make his way to Sarnia. When Daniel enlisted to serve, he recorded his home address as Polymer Corp., Sarnia. He would join the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps, attaining the rank of Private. On April 3, 1944, Daniel would lose his life at Mountain Sanatorium, Hamilton, Ontario as a result of what was listed as “pulmonary tuberculosis”. Thirty year-old Daniel Dick is buried in Fort William First Nations Cemetery, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D, 4D

**DIONNE, Raymond William (#A/20675) – Photograph page 378**

Raymond Dionne was born on a farm in Camlachie, Ontario on June 22, 1899, the son of Charles Dionne (born in Kamouraska, Quebec) and Mary Philomene Dionne (nee Lalonde, born in Sarnia Township), of 142 Durand Street, Sarnia. He had five brothers: Joseph (born 1895), Charles (born 1897), Clarence (born 1900), Delmore (born 1905) and Kenneth (born 1916), along with seven sisters: Rose (born 1894), Lila (born 1903), Anna (born 1908), Mae Celestine (born 1909), Teresa Cecilia (born 1910), Clara (born 1914) and Daisy (born 1917). Raymond was a member of Our Lady of Mercy and St. Joseph’s Catholic Parishes, Sarnia.

In the Great War, Raymond William Dionne, enlisted in the army in January of 1916, recording his occupation as a labourer, and his residence at 344 Durand Street, Sarnia. Raymond Dionne would serve overseas in World War I, both in England and in France. He was wounded in France in 1917, and returned to Canada in 1918. Shortly after returning home, Raymond would lose his mother Mary Dionne, who died in April 1919. On August 21, 1919, twenty year old Raymond William Dionne married eighteen year old Golda Marie Young, who was born in Freemont, Ohio, the daughter of Robert and Emma Young (nee Williams). At the time of his marriage, Raymond listed his occupation as a Pipe Fitter. In December 1923, the young Dionne couple were residing at 343 Victoria Avenue, in Point Edward. Raymond and his wife Golda would go on to have nine children together, including sons, Melvin, Raymond James (born 1921), Robert Charles (born 1923, see below) and Ronald N. (born 1925).

In 1941, forty-two year old World War I veteran Raymond William Dionne, would again enlist to serve his country in World War II. He would serve in England with the Canadian Army, as a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers as a Sapper. In June 1942, Raymond would celebrate his 43rd birthday in England, far from his home and family. Four of Raymond William Dionne’s sons would also serve in uniform during World War II: his son Raymond James, would attain the rank of Corporal with the Canadian Army, serving in North Africa, Sicily and Italy; his son Melvin, would serve with the Canadian Army, Lincoln-Welland Regiment, in Belgium; his son Ronald N., would become a member of the Canadian Army, with the rank of Sapper, initially serving in Canada, who would be wounded on Juno Beach on D-Day, and later returned to battle where he was wounded again on the drive into Germany; and another son, Robert Charles, would also become a member of the Canadian Army, losing his life while serving on October 1, 1944. (see below).

Raymond William Dionne, Great War veteran and father of nine children, was wounded while serving overseas in a bombing raid and was returned to Canada in 1943. Raymond William Dionne died on May 23, 1943 at Sarnia General Hospital, officially listed as, *The result of gastric haemorrhage due to military service*. Less than a year and a half later, Raymond’s widow, Golda Marie, the mother of nine children, would lose a son to war, twenty-year old Robert Charles, who was killed in Belgium. Forty-three year old Raymond William Dionne is buried at Sarnia (Our Lady of Mercy) Catholic Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

**DIONNE, Robert Charles (#A/20654)**

Robert Charles Dionne was born in Sarnia on December 24, 1923, the second son of Raymond William Dionne (see above) and Golda Marie (nee Young) Dionne. During wartime, the family resided at 343 Victoria Avenue, Point Edward. Robert had eight siblings, including brothers Melvin Joseph, Raymond James (born 1921) and Ronald N. (born 1925). Robert Charles was raised in Sarnia, and was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish, attending Our Lady of Mercy School and graduating from St. Patrick’s Catholic High School.



Robert, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army, recording his occupation as a sailor. Robert became a member of Royal Canadian Engineers, 11 Field Coy, with the rank of Sapper, going overseas in January 1941. Three of Robert's brothers, along with his father, Raymond William Dionne, a veteran of the Great War, would serve in the army during World War II.

Robert's older brother, Raymond James, would attained the rank of Corporal, serving with the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Engineers in North Africa and Sicily. At the time of Robert's death, Raymond James had returned to Sarnia from Italy. Raymond James had received his education at Our Lady of Mercy school and before enlisting worked at the Holmes Foundry. Raymond James was married and had a son only a few weeks old when he left for overseas on August 21, 1940. After spending two years in England, he was amongst the first Canadians to go to North Africa. Later, he would land in Sicily where some of the toughest work his unit experienced was carried out. Raymond James would arrive back in Sarnia in late-August 1944 after approximately four years service overseas. When interviewed about his Sicily/Italy experience, he described it as not so much fighting as chasing the enemy long, weary miles without rest. He said, *Messina and Reggio were not the beauty spots that appear in pictures when we got there after the bombardment. We had real hard fighting at Cassino. The Germans are tough fighters and do not give up while they have weapons or ammunition. One prisoner declared he was the last man in his unit and would have fought it out only his weapons were gone. After the fall of Rome most of us managed to get there on a visit. It was a fine sight after months spent in the fields.*

Robert's brother Melvin, was a Private, serving with the Canadian Army in Belgium. Robert's younger brother Ronald N. was a Private, also in the Canadian Army. Ronald would be one of the first infantry-men to step ashore on Juno Beach on June 6, 1944. Wounded on D-Day, Ronald was sent to England to recover from wounds received in France. Ronald would later return to battle, where he was wounded again on the drive into Germany. Robert's father, Raymond William Dionne, a veteran of World War I, would also serve in World War II. Patriarch of the family Raymond William Dionne would serve in England with the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Engineers, with the rank of Sapper. Robert's father Raymond, was wounded overseas in a bombing raid and would return to Canada in 1943. Patriarch of the family, Raymond William Dionne, would lose his life in May 1943, his death the result of his wounds.

Robert Dionne was in England in January 1942, as a Sapper, initially working on army equipment. On May 23, 1943, Robert would receive the news from his home in Sarnia that his father Raymond had died, after being an invalid while at home. Just over one year later, on June 6, 1944, D-Day, Robert Dionne would land on Juno Beach, France. Four months later, on October 1, 1944, Robert Dionne would lose his life while fighting in Belgium, in the early stages of the Battle of the Scheldt. In mid-October 1944, widowed mother Golda Dionne in Point Edward, who had lost her husband less than a year and a half prior, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Sapper Robert Charles Dionne, was killed in action in Belgium on October 1.* Approximately two weeks after receiving the telegram of her son Charles' death, Golda Dionne would receive another telegram informing her that her third son, *Pte. Melvin Dionne, has been wounded overseas.*

Robert Charles Dionne would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action, in the field (Belgium).* Robert Dionne was awarded a decoration posthumously in July of 1948 from the Belgian government. The award he received was the "Croix de Guerre 1940 avec Paime" with the words inscribed, "The King has been pleased to grant the following decoration in recognition of distinguished services in the cause of the Allies." Twenty-year old Robert Dionne is buried in Bergen-Op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave 5.E.10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, a

### **DOWDING, John (Jack) Frederick (#J/46041)**

John Dowding was born on October 26, 1925, the son of Ivan Louis Dowding and Rhea Jean (nee Krohn) Dowding, of 162 John Street, Sarnia. John had one brother, Harry James Dowding, born September 27, 1921, who would enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force in March 1941. Older brother Harry would receive his wings at Camp Borden in December 1941. In December of 1942, Harry was promoted while overseas from Sergeant-Pilot to the rank of Pilot Officer.

John's brother, Flying Officer Harry Dowding would make a name for himself as a pilot of a Canadian Spitfire wing, a member of the famous Wolf Squadron of the R.C.A.F. In April 1943, parents Ivan and Rhea in

Sarnia would receive a clipping from an English newspaper telling of the part their son, Pilot Officer Harry Dowding, played in an air attack over France sometime during the middle of March 1943. The clipping stated that, *two Royal Canadian Air Force Spitfire pilots, attacked and banished a Nazi freight engine during a low level sweep across France the previous week. Pilot Officer Edward Gimbel of Chicago, and Pilot Officer H. Dowding of Sarnia, were the fliers. They made two runs over the engine. The engine was stopped at the first attack.* In May 1943, Harry Dowding was credited with the destruction of a German Messerschmitt while on fighter escort duty over France during a bombing raid in the Meaulte district. In August 1943, Harry's group destroyed three German fighters and badly damaged another in sweeps over France and Holland. In this encounter, Harry and a pilot from Windsor were credited with getting one fighter. In September 1943, Harry Dowding destroyed his fourth enemy plane when he closed to within 200 feet of a German fighter and sent it down in flames with one short burst. He was one of three Canadian fighter pilots who each shot down a German plane while flying as escorts for medium bombers attacking the railway yards at Abbeville, France.

In late October 1943, John's older brother Flying Officer Harry Dowding was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his many exploits. The citation read, *This pilot has at all times displayed the utmost keenness to engage the enemy, and has destroyed three enemy aircraft, as well as sharing in the destruction of two others and damaging two more. On escort duty, in a period of five days, he recently succeeded in destroying two enemy aircraft and damaging another. His flying skill and fighting spirit have at all times been of the highest order.* In June 1944, Harry Dowding would make headlines again – he was believed to have been the first Allied airman to make a “both wheels down” landing on an emergency strip established on the French invasion area on June 7th, one day after D-Day. Harry had come down after beachhead flak had punctured his gas tank and gas was spraying into his cockpit. His flying companion, Flt. Lt. G. Keltie of Edmonton, “beat up” the strip a few times to warn persons on it that an aircraft was coming in. Everyone cleared off but a French farmer who was pitching hay. When Harry Dowding landed, he ran smack into a load of hay in a wagon drawn by horses. Both the plane and wagon were wrecked; both Harry Dowding and his partner escaped unhurt. Harry Dowding would return to England by boat. Officials later expressed their belief that the farmer had intentionally driven his hay wagon into the line of the landing plane, endangering the lives of both fliers, as the farmer and his whole family were found to have collaborated with the Germans.

For younger brother John Dowding, in the shadow of his older brother Harry who had a distinguished career with a fighter squadron of the R.C.A.F., his story would be quite different. As a young child in elementary school, John Dowding had won an award for successfully attaining the highest percentage on the essay “Fire Prevention Week”. He was recognized in the *Canadian Observer* newspaper and was presented with a suit of clothes from Walker Brothers Store on Mitton Street. He was a member of the Young Men's Usher Club of St. Andrew's Church. Prior to enlisting, John was employed in the laboratory of the Imperial Oil Limited. John enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in August 1943, when the Mobile Recruiting Unit from London visited Sarnia. John was just 17 years old, and lied about his age to get into the war. He trained at Number 4 I.T.S. Edmonton, Alberta, then Saskatoon where he received his wings as an Air-Gunner. He continued his training at Number 3 Bombing and Gunnery School at MacDonald, Manitoba where he received his commission. John Dowding would go overseas in July 1944, where he completed his operational training. He would become a member of RCAF #19 Operational Training Unit, attaining the rank of Pilot Officer Air Gunner. In late July 1944, John Dowding was serving in England, and would enjoy a weekend leave together with his brother Harry, who was stationed in France. The meeting in England was the brothers' first meeting since John arrived in England. Harry Dowding would relate this story, and others, when he addressed the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Men's Club in Sarnia in November 1944, one month after John's death.

On the evening of October 17, 1944, just over one year after enlisting, John Dowding was a part of a crew aboard a Whitely aircraft AD685. The Whitely was engaged in a cross-country training flight when the aircraft disintegrated in the air and crashed at Slingby Hill Farm, East Murton, County Durham, England. The reason for the crash was unknown. Perishing with John Dowding were P/O A.L. Sunstrum; F/O.s K. Reed and W.D. Wall; Sgt. L.J. Olmstead; and one of the crew, not Canadian. Approximately one week later, parents Ivan and Rhea in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pilot Officer Jack Dowding had been killed on active service overseas on October 17.* No other details were given, but the message stated that a letter with information would follow. John “Jack” Dowding would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (England).*

The funeral for John Dowding was held at Harrogate Cemetery, Yorkshire, England on October 23, 1944, with full service honours and military officers present; however, his family could not attend. A memorial service, conducted by the Rev. J.M. Macgillivray for Pilot Officer John Dowding was held on October 23, 1944 in St. Andrew's Church, Sarnia at the same hour as the burial service was taking place in Harrogate, England. In early November 1944, brother Harry Dowding would return home to Sarnia to spend a 30-day leave with his grieving parents. Three years after his death, a memorial service for John Dowding was held on Sunday, December 1, 1947 at St. Andrew's Church in Sarnia, conducted by Reverend J.M. Margillivray. Eighteen year-old John Dowding is buried in Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire, United Kingdom, Section G. Row A. Grave 8. On John "Jack" Dowding's headstone are inscribed the words, *He challenged those who would destroy the innocent and the way of life he loved so well.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2B, 2C, 2D

### **DRINKWATER, John Willard (#R/99962)**

John ("Bill") Drinkwater was born on June 13, 1923, the son of Edward William Drinkwater and Florence May (nee Martin) Drinkwater, of 223 Devine Street, Sarnia. Both of his parents, Edward and Florence were born in England. John had an older sister, Marjorie Lorraine, who was born June 21, 1921. John was born, raised and educated in Sarnia, and graduated from Sarnia Collegiate. During high school, he played on the junior rugby team, where he was the first string flying wing. At the time of his enlistment, John was employed by the King Milling Company as a truck driver. He enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in March 1941. He graduated as an Air Gunner at Paulson, Manitoba in November 1941. John arrived in England on June 13, 1942, a member of the RCAF #44 Rhodesia Squadron "Fulmina Regis Iusta" (The King's thunderbolts are righteous), as Flight Sergeant-Air Gunner.

Three months after arriving overseas, on September 18, 1942, John Drinkwater was part of a crew aboard a Lancaster aircraft, when it crashed, due to enemy action, in the North Sea off Hunstanton, England. The aircraft had been engaged in mine-laying operations at the time. Flight sergeant-Air Gunner John Drinkwater and six members of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed on September 18th. One month later, in mid-October 1942, parents Edward and Florence in Sarnia would receive a notification from R.C.A.F. headquarters informing them that their son, John Drinkwater, had been promoted to Flight Sergeant.

Two weeks later, in November of 1942, Edward and Florence would receive a letter from the Casualty Officer in Ottawa informing them that, *the body of their son John Drinkwater, reported missing since September 18th, had now been recovered.* The letter also advised them that the body had been claimed by James Drinkwater, an uncle of the deceased flier, and had been conveyed to the hometown of his father, in Evesham, Worcestershire, England, where burial was made alongside his grandfather. John Drinkwater would later be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas.* In mid-November 1942, a memorial service for the late Flight-Sergeant John Drinkwater was held in St. John's Anglican Church, Sarnia. Nineteen year-old John Drinkwater is buried, alongside his grandfather, in the Evesham Cemetery, Worcestershire, England, Grave 2104. On John Drinkwater's headstone are inscribed the words, *Eternal rest.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **DUNCAN, John William (#R/170586)**

John Duncan was born on October 9, 1915, the son of William Duncan and Sarah (nee Holmes) Duncan, of Toronto, Ontario. Before the war, John was employed as a traveller for the Imperial Tobacco Company. He married Olive Elizabeth (nee Braiden) Duncan, and the couple would have a daughter together. The young family resided at 191 ½ North Mitton Street, Sarnia. About one year before his death, while John was overseas, his wife Olive left Sarnia, to live with her parents at 94 Sorauren Avenue, in Toronto.

John enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a member of RCAF #22 Operational Training Unit, attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class I-Pilot. On May 8, 1945, the war in Europe ended, however war with Japan would not end until mid-August of 1945. On May 28, 1945, John Duncan was a member of a crew aboard Wellington aircraft HE871 that failed to return from a cross-country exercise over St. George's Channel. The plane and its whole crew were never found. Perishing with Warrant Officer I-Pilot John Duncan were Sgt. J.R. Morin, F/O

A.H. Handley, FS.s F.T. Gidilevich and W.E. Algar. John Duncan would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead. Death was the result of an accident, during a cross country training flight, overseas.* John left behind his wife and daughter. Twenty-nine year old John Duncan has no known grave. John Duncan's name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 281.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **DUROCHER, Wilfred Albert (#A/110275) – Photograph page 379**

Wilfred Albert (Frenchy) Durocher was born in Casselman (Village), Russell, Ontario on July 24, 1915, the son of Eli Francis Durocher (born in Buckingham, Quebec) and Marie Almanda Alexandrine (nee Thibault, born in Hull, Quebec) Durocher. Wilfred came from a large family, with seven brothers and five sisters. His brothers were: Elie Remie (born 1908), Jean Baptiste Emelien (born 1910), Oliver Joseph (born 1917), Omar (born 1923, died two years later), Frederick Joseph (born 1927), Albert (born 1928, died at birth) and Johnny (born 1931). His sisters were: Marie Rose Viola (born 1914, later to become Mrs. Lester Schram), Dora (born 1918, died at age 19), an unknown female (born 1922, died a few months later), a female stillborn (1928), and Freida (born 1931, later to become Mrs. Gill Gaynes). When Wilfred was age six years old, the Durocher family was residing at 230 Shamrock Street, Sarnia.

Wilfred Durocher would marry Florence Agnes (nee Hamilton) Durocher of Sarnia. The young couple would have two children together (a boy and a girl), and they would reside at 103 Alfred Street, Sarnia. Wilfred was employed by the Laidlaw Belton Lumber Company, recording his occupation as a lumber shipper. In January 1943, Wilfred would lose his father, Elie, an employee of the section gang of the Pere Marquette Railway, who died at that time. The family was then living at 239 Chippewa Street, Sarnia. A little over one year later, in April of 1944, Wilfred enlisted, joining the Canadian Army and becoming a member of the Algonquin Regiment, R.C.I.C. He attained the rank of Private and went overseas on October 1, 1944.

About four months later, on February 26, 1945, Wilfred Durocher would lose his life while fighting on German soil, during the Battle of the Rhineland. Wilfred would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Germany).* At the time of Wilfred's death, two of his brothers, both privates, were also overseas. Brother Emile was in a hospital in England after being wounded a few weeks earlier, and Oliver was believed to still be somewhere in England. Wilfred would leave behind his wife and two young children. Twenty-nine year old Wilfred Durocher is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave IX.B.6. On Wilfred Durocher's headstone are inscribed the words, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **ELLIOT, Thomas Harold (#J/90281)**

Thomas Harold Elliot was born in Sarnia on May 29, 1918, the son of Thomas Herman Elliot (born in Exeter, Ontario) and Ethel (nee Holt), born in Stephen, Huron, Ontario) Elliot, of 212 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. Thomas's father, Thomas Herman, was employed in the Pumping Department at Sarnia Imperial Oil Refinery. Thomas Harold had one brother, Elmer Bruce, born 1915, who would later be a member of the reserve army. Thomas Harold received his education at Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. While at Sarnia Collegiate, he played WOSSA rugby and was also a member of the gymnastic team. He was on the executive of the Boys' Athletic Committee and was a member of the Editorial Staff of the Collegiate Magazine. In his last year at school he was Quartermaster Cadet Lieutenant of the High School Cadets. Graduating from Sarnia Collegiate in 1937, he was employed on the construction of the Blue Water Bridge. Prior to enlisting, Thomas was employed in the Machine Shoe Department with the Sarnia Imperial Oil Refinery.

Thomas enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in April 1942, and was stationed at the Manning Depot at Toronto. He received his training at Fingal, Crumlin and St. Catharine's, where he graduated in late June 1943 as a Sergeant Bombardier. After graduating, he would spend a short leave at home in Sarnia with his friends and family. Thomas arrived overseas in July 1943, and received his operational training in England. He became a member of RCAF #192 Squadron, flying on Halifax bombers, and was promoted to Flight-Sergeant in March, 1944.

Less than one year after arriving overseas, on April 25, 1944, Thomas Elliot was a member aboard Halifax bomber aircraft LW622 that went missing during a special night bombing raid over Karlsruhe, Germany. Several

days later, parents Thomas Herman and Ethel in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer in Ottawa stating, *Deeply regret to advise you that your son, R112975, Sergeant Thomas Harold Elliot, is reported missing after air operations April 25. Letter follows.* The message was a shock to his parents, since he had never once mentioned taking part in any raid in his letters home. They had heard, however, from friends overseas, that he had been flying. On checking Canadian Press dispatches, the Elliot parents suspected that he may have been lost on an attack launched on Karlsruhe on April 24-25, in which 30 British aircraft were lost, including eight Canadian planes.

Sometime after being reported missing, Thomas Elliot would be promoted to the rank of Pilot Officer. In early February 1945, Thomas Herman and Ethel would receive a telegram from R.C.A.F. authorities informing them that their son, *Flight Sergeant Thomas Elliot, missing since April 25, 1944, is now for official purposes presumed dead.* Perishing with Thomas Elliot were FS. P.H.G. Vincent; F/O.s C.W. Crowdy and L.L. Mortimer; P/O F.W. Morris; Sgt.s F. Etienne and D. Parkin (RAF); and FS. M.C. Wilmer (RAF). Thomas Elliot would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany).* Twenty-six year old Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer Thomas Elliot is buried in Schoonselhof Cemetery, Belgium, Grave IVa.D.39. On Thomas Elliot's headstone are inscribed the words, *Beloved son of Mr. and Mrs. T.H. Elliot, Sarnia, Ont., Canada.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, S, 2C, 2D

### **ELLIOTT, Ralph Leslie (#J/45090)**

Ralph Elliott was born on October 26, 1924, the son of Thomas Fleming Elliott and Mary Christina Elliott, of Woodrowe Road, Sarnia. He had one brother, Douglas A. Elliott, who at the time of Ralph's death, resided in Moore Township. Ralph had attended Sarnia Collegiate, and prior to enlisting, was employed by the Canadian Kellogg Company on the construction of the synthetic rubber plant. At enlistment, Ralph listed his address as R.R. #1, Corunna. Ralph enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on July 26, 1943, and went overseas in June 1944, as a member of RCAF #1 Advanced Flying Unit, attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer.

Less than six months after arriving overseas, on December 6, 1944, Ralph Elliott would lose his life in an accident at RAF Station, Wigtown, Wigtownshire, Scotland. On December 11, 1944, Thomas and Mary in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pilot Officer Ralph Leslie Elliott has died of injuries received while on active service overseas on December 7.* The telegram also informed them that, *his burial was taking place at Newton Stewart cemetery, Wigtownshire, Scotland today.* There were no details of the injuries, but the telegram did state that a letter would follow.

Three days later, Thomas and Mary Elliott would receive a letter from the R.C.A.F. Casualty Office overseas informing them of the circumstances of their son Ralph's death. The letter stated that, *Pilot Officer Ralph Elliott was injured while on duty. He was accidentally knocked down by a Royal Air Force motor transport vehicle on the main camp road at Wigtown, Wigtownshire, Scotland. He was admitted to the E.M.S. Hospital Gallaway House near Garliestown, Wigtownshire, suffering from shock, a fractured skull and fractures of both legs. He died on December 7 as a result of these injuries.*

Ralph Elliott would later be officially listed as, *Died of injuries sustained when knocked down accidentally by RAF motor vehicle. Fracture to skull, both legs, and shock, overseas (England).* Twenty year-old Ralph Elliott is buried at Newton Stewart Cemetery, Wigtownshire, United Kingdom, Section M, Grave 2.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **ELLIS, Norman George (#A/61791)**

Norman George "Pinky" Ellis was born on May 13, 1922, the eldest son of Herman Manford (born in Lambton, Ontario) and Annie Maria (nee Dunn, born in Courtright, Ontario) Ellis of 294 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. Norman had six sisters and four brothers which included: Donna Jean (born 1926), Wilfred Henry (born 1930), Edith and Edward (twins born 1935, though Edward died at birth), Eva, Gerald, Kenneth, Barbara, Norma and one other sister. Norman would marry Gladys Louise Copeland of Inwood, the only daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Copeland at the United Church in Inwood on June 4, 1941. At the wedding ceremony, Miss Winnie Maidment of Sarnia served as bridesmaid, and serving as best man was "Bus" Nesbitt of Sarnia. Following the ceremony, a reception was held at

the Masonic Hall in Inwood. A buffet luncheon was served on the lawn to approximately 150 guests. Afterwards, the newlywed couple left for a trip to eastern points. Upon their return, the young couple resided in Sarnia, at 294 South Mitton Street. The young couple would have one child together, a son, Douglas.

Prior to enlisting, Norman drove for the Morris Taxi firm and drove a truck for Kist Beverages. Norman Ellis enlisted in the Canadian Army in London, Ontario in September of 1942, receiving most of his army training in British Columbia. He would become a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C., attaining the rank of Private. In April 1943, Norman would return to Sarnia on furlough from an army camp on Vancouver Island, to visit his friends and family, which included his young wife Gladys and their son Douglas. In August 1943, while still stationed on the west coast, Norman Ellis was promoted to Corporal. In May of 1944, Norman would return to Sarnia on another furlough to be with his wife Gladys and their two year old son Douglas.

On June 4, 1944, Norman would leave for overseas. Less than two months later, Norman would arrive in France, on July 31, 1944. Shortly after, on August 8, 1944, Gladys in Sarnia would receive a letter from her husband Norman in which he stated that he was well. He also enclosed a piece of French currency. On that same day, August 8, 1944, only eight days after arriving in France, Norman Ellis would lose his life during the Battle of Normandy in Operation Totalize, south of Caen, Normandy, France. In late August 1944, Gladys was visiting her parents Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Copeland in Inwood when she would receive a telegram informing her that her husband, *Private Norman G. Ellis was reported missing on August 8.*

In early December 1944, Mrs. Gladys Ellis in Inwood would receive a telegram from the Department of National Defence informing her that her husband, *Private Norman George Ellis has been reported killed in action.* Norman George Ellis would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France).* In early December of 1944, a short memorial tribute was held in St. Paul's United Church, Sarnia at a morning service to pay tribute to Private Norman Ellis. Twenty-two year old Norman Ellis is buried in the Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave VIII.D.14. On Norman Ellis' headstone are inscribed the words, *He gave his life so that his wife Gladys, and son Douglas, might live in peace.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2B, 2C, 2D

### **ESSELMONT, John Clarence (#A/115857)**

John Clarence "Jack" Esselment was born in Wainwright, Alberta, on December 6, 1915, the son of James Edward Esselment (born in Sombra) and Alma L. (nee Luckins) Esselment, of Alvinston, Ontario. His father James, was a World War I veteran. The Esselment family moved to Sarnia in 1920. John, also known as Jack, had two brothers, Alton and Walter (William). At the time of John's death, brother Walter was with the Canadian Forces in Kingston. John was educated in Sarnia, attending Johnston Memorial Elementary School and Sarnia Collegiate High School. He graduated with three years of technical studies and one year of drafting. He worked on numerous farms and the Scott Misner Line freighters for two years. After the Esselment family moved to Alvinston, John was hired as a bartender at the Columbia Hotel, a job that he held for four years, until he enlisted. On January 7, 1941, John married Annetta Gregory, of Brooke Township. John and Annetta Esselment moved to Strathroy. The couple would have two children together, Carole (became Mrs. Zavitz) and George (who passed away at a young age).

John enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the NRMA. In May 1942, he was sent to serve on the West Coast in Prince George, British Columbia. From November 21 to December 9, 1942, he was in Prince George Military Hospital. By January 1943, he was receiving his \$1.50 per diem. In September 1943, he was given a 13-day leave from Nanaimo, British Columbia. On February 18, 1944, he became qualified at a weapons course. On June 12, 1944, John joined active service in Prince George with the Highland Light Infantry of Canada, R.C.I.C.. He had one final furlough, from July 2- July 21, 1944. After serving on the West Coast for two years, John Esselment went overseas on July 22, 1944, and would serve in several countries.

Only three months after arriving overseas, on October 31, 1944, Private John Esselment would lose his life while fighting in Belgium, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. He and his fellow soldiers were hiding in a barn which was bombed by German air strikes. In mid-November 1944, James and Alma in Alvinston would receive a message from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. John Esselment, has been killed in action.* No other details were provided.

John Esselment would later officially be listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Belgium).*

During his four months on the front, John earned the 1939-1945 Star, the France and Germany Star, the War Medal CVSM and Clasp. Twenty-eight year old John Esselment is buried in Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Belgium, Grave IV.E.2. On John Esselment's headstone are inscribed the words, *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. St. John I.6.* John Esselment's name is also inscribed on the Village of Alvinston's Memorial.  
SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, N, R, 2B, 2C, 2D

#### **ESSER, George (#A/105444)**

George Esser was born in Holland on November 28, 1924, the son of Isaac Lambertus Esser and Anna Sophia (nee Van Dijk) Esser, of R.R. #2, Plank Road, Sarnia. Both of his parents were originally from the Netherlands. George came from a family of ten children, which included brothers William (born 1932) and John (born 1934), and five sisters. The family arrived in Petrolia in May 1926, when George was not quite two years old. One of George's sisters, Kay Chivers (nee Esser), would join the RCAF when she was nineteen-years old, working as a bookkeeper. At George's enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a woodworker. He enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, R.C.I.C., attaining the rank of Private. In September of 1944, George would return home on leave to be with family and friends for Labour Day. He would then return overseas.

One month later, on October 23, 1944, having been overseas for only few months in total, Private George Esser would lose his life while fighting in his native Holland, during the Battle of the Scheldt. In early November 1944, Isaac and Anna in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Director of Records in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private George Esser, was killed in action October 23 in Belgium.* George Esser would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Holland).* Nineteen year-old George Esser is buried in Bergen-Op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave 4.D.1. On George Esser's headstone are inscribed the words, *A soldier of the cross who did not lose the battle.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **EVERINGHAM, Arthur Charles (#A/117782)**

Arthur Everingham was born on September 22, 1924, the youngest son of Earl Wesley Everingham and Beatrice Everingham, of 123 Capel Street, Sarnia. He received his education at the Durand Street Public School. On finishing school, he was employed at the Polymer Rubber Plant until he enlisted. Arthur enlisted in the Canadian Army in March of 1943. Single at the time of his enlistment, he stated his occupation as a labourer. Arthur would receive training in Windsor, Chatham, Ipperwash, Delbert, Nova Scotia and Camp Borden. Arthur would become a member of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps attd. H.Q. 4th Canadian Armoured Brigade, as a Trooper. In late August 1944, Beatrice Everingham in Sarnia would receive a letter from her son Arthur, stating that he had arrived safely in France with the Canadian Forces. He would serve in France and continue with the Canadians through Belgium and into Holland. In December 1944, Earl and Beatrice in Sarnia would receive flowers for Christmas from their son, Arthur, who at the time was serving with the Canadian Army in Holland.

Six months after arriving overseas, on February 21, 1945, Trooper Arthur Everingham would lose his life while fighting in Holland, during the Battle of the Rhineland. At the end of February 1945, Earl and Beatrice would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Trp. Arthur Charles Everingham has been killed in Holland while with the 4th C.A.B.H.Q. Squadron.* The official communiqué did not state how he was killed nor where. Arthur Everingham would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Holland).* Just over two months after Arthur Everingham's death, the war in Europe would come to an end. Twenty year-old Arthur Everingham is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XVI.C.15. On Arthur's headstone are inscribed the words, *Until the day break and the shadows flee away.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **EVERS, Orval Clare (#J/95536)**

Orval Evers was born on September 8, 1925, the son of Charles Neil and Susan Evers, of Lakeshore Road, Camlachie, Ontario. The Evers family moved to Sarnia from Kitchener when the rubber plant was started in Sarnia in 1942. Prior to enlisting, Orval was employed at Electric Auto-Lite Limited. Single at the time, Orval enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. At the time, he recorded his permanent residence as 507 Victoria Street, Kitchener. Orval received his training in the vicinity of Montreal and Halifax. Later, he was transferred from Prince Edward Island to

Quebec. In May 1944, Orval would spend a furlough in Sarnia with his parents, family and friends. One month later on June 13, 1944, Orval would go overseas, as a member of RCAF #514 Squadron "Nil Obstat Potest" (Nothing can withstand), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Air Gunner. Orval Evers would fly in Lancasters. Less than one year after going overseas, Orval would lose his life.

In September 1944, parents Charles and Susan Evers placed an announcement in the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* stating that their son, Sgt. Orval Evers, who had been overseas for three months, was celebrating his 19th birthday in England. Eight months later, on May 9, 1945, only one day after VE Day had been declared, Orval Evers was part of a 5-man crew aboard a Lancaster aircraft. The Lancaster aircraft took off from the airfield at Jovincourt, Belgium with 24 ex-prisoner of war British Army personnel as passengers, en route to England. The aircraft crashed near Roye Ami, France, killing all on board, including the crew. For Orval Evers, he had 11 flights to complete his tour of operations when VE Day was declared.

On May 3rd, 1945, parents Charles and Susan Evers in Sarnia would receive a letter from their son Orval Clare in which he said that he was flying food from England to Holland. Less than two weeks later, and one week after VE Day marking the end of war in Europe, Charles and Susan Evers would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flight Sergeant Orval Clare Evers, has been reported missing, believed killed, as a result of flying operations on May 9.* The message gave no further information. At the end of May 1945, Charles and Susan would receive confirmation of the report that their son was killed on active service. The official letter from Air Vice Marshal H.L. Campbell said,

*Advice has been received from the Royal Canadian Air Force Casualties Officer, Overseas, that your son lost his life during flying operations on May 9, 1945. His body has been recovered together with five other members of the crew and twenty-five passengers. Among the crew members were two others as well as your son, who belonged to the Royal Canadian Air Force. They were Flying Officer Ray Bertram Hilchey, whose next-of-kin is his father, S.B. Hitchey, of 108 Lawrence Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Flt. Sgt. Robert MacPherson Toms, whose next-of-kin is his father, Edward Toms of 77 Botwood Road, Grand Falls, Newfoundland.*

Orval Clare would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing as a result of a flying accident, now reported killed, overseas (France).* Perishing with Pilot Officer-Air Gunner Orval Evers, were air crew members P/O R.M. Toms (Newfoundland); F/Os R.B. Hilchey (Nova Scotia) and D. Beaton (RAF); and FS. A. McMurrugh (RAF). The passengers killed were Sgt. R.A. Adams, Pte. T. Anderson, Pte. W.L. Ball, Pte. S.J. Bayston, Cpl. E.L. Belshaw, Pte. R.A. Betton, Lt. W.B. Campbell, Pte. R.E. Clark, Pte. W. Croston, Gnr. A.J.S. Crowe, Fus. H. Cummings, Pte. R. Danson, Rfn. T.J. Edwards, L.Cpl. G.W. Franks, Gnr. A.N. Labotske, Pnr. W.L. Lindheimer, Pnr. M. Maschit, Fus. O. Parkin, Gdsmn. J.A. Roe, Lt. E.T.T. Snowdon, Cpl. A.G. Thompson, Pte. R. Turnbull, Capt. R.W. Wheeler, and Pte. P. Yates. In late May 1945, a memorial service was held to honour Flt. Sgt. Orval Evers in the Pentecostal Church in Kitchener. Nineteen year-old Orval Evers is buried in Clichy Northern Cemetery, France, Plot 16, Row 12, Coll. Grave 7-18.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **FARNER, Hugo Oscar (#J/20564)**

Hugo Farner was born in 1922, the son of Frank Charles Farner (born in Dresden, Germany) and Florence (nee Mitchell, born in Newcastle, England) Farner of 106 McGibbon Street, Sarnia. His parents, Frank and Florence, were married in February 1914 at St. George's Rectory in Sarnia. Father Frank was an engineer with the Canadian National Railways. Hugo had two brothers: Richard Herbert (born 1914, who would also serve in England) and Vernon Charles (born 1918), who would later move to Cleveland. His brother Richard would enlist in June of 1942, going overseas in December of that year, arriving in Italy with the Canadian Signal Corps. When Hugo was three years old, he and his brother Vernon returned from a visit to England with their mother. They left Liverpool, England aboard the passenger ship *Megantic*, and arrived in Quebec on September 12, 1925. Their home address at that time was 412 Davis Street, Sarnia. Hugo was a pupil at Sarnia Collegiate for three years, and during his time there was prominent in junior athletics. He won a medal for life saving and the Jack Newton championship trophy for swimming. He also played on the junior rugby teams. Before enlisting, Hugo was employed at Electric Auto-Lite. At the age of nineteen Hugo would lose his mother, Florence, who died in 1941.

Hugo Farner enlisted in November 1941 in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and received training at Toronto,



St. Thomas, Crumln, Trenton and Ottawa. He graduated and received his commission as Pilot Officer-Pilot on November 7, 1942 at Dunnville. On the following day, Hugo would marry Miss Betty Ash, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R.F. Ash, of 355 ½ Maxwell Street, Sarnia. While Hugo was serving away from Sarnia, his wife Betty Farner would live with her parents on Maxwell Street. Hugo then served for a time at Moncton, New Brunswick where he taught instructors to fly Harvard trainers. In January 1943, he was made instructor at RCAF #2 Service Flying Training School, Uplands, Ontario. When Hugo was transferred to Ottawa, Betty Farner would move there to join her husband in late January 1943 where they resided in Hogsback, Ontario, near Ottawa. In late summer of 1943, Hugo and his wife Betty were expecting to have their first child together.

On September 24, 1943, Pilot Officer-Pilot Hugo Farner would lose his life when his Harvard aircraft #3293 crashed on an instruction flight at St.Jacques, East Quebec. He was killed instantly, the cause of the flying accident listed as obscure. A student pilot, Warrant Officer A.E. Frazer from Edmonton, Alberta was also killed in the crash.

Pilot Officer Hugo Farner and Leading Aircraftman-Pilot Leonard Meere (who died September 23 in a crash in Western Canada and is included in this Project) were buried barely a wingspan apart in Sarnia's first double military funeral. Hundreds of relatives and friends attended both services, which drew thousands to the streets, around the churches, and lining the routes of march to Lakeview Cemetery. Pallbearers, honorary pallbearers and a firing party came from R.C.A.F. flying school at Centralia. The Sarnia Air Cadet Squadron band played at both funerals and they also provided an escort party. The service for both began at the Robb Funeral Home, then for Hugo Farner was continued at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church with Rev. J.M. Macgillivray officiating, while the service for Leonard Meere was continued at St. George's Anglican Church by Rev. F.G. Hardy. From the churches, led by the firing party, the band and the escort party, the corteges started for the cemetery at a slow march. At Lakeview, they again slow-marched to the gravesides, with the band playing the "Dead March in Saul". After the services at the gravesides by the ministers, the firing party delivered three volleys, with the band playing "Abide With Me" between them. Then the two buglers who accompanied the firing party from Centralia, stepped to the end of the graves and sounded the "Last Post".

Twenty-one year old Hugo Farner is buried at the Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section E. Lot 137. On Hugo Farner's headstone are inscribed the words, *The Lord bless thee and keep thee. Beloved husband of Betty Ash.* Eight months after Hugo's death, his wife Betty would give birth to their baby daughter, Connie Lea Farner, born May 13, 1944. Connie Farner would never know her father.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **FERGUSON, William Lorne (#B/8354)**

William Ferguson was born on November 28, 1915, the son of William D. Ferguson Sr. and Anne Ferguson, of 150 Watson Street, Sarnia. William had two brothers, Burton and Gordon of Sarnia, and two sisters, Lois of Sarnia and Mrs. C.R. Black of Washington, D.C.. William's father was an executive of the Mac-Craft Corporation of Sarnia, and former secretary-manager of the Sarnia Chamber of Commerce and the Blue Water Highway Association. William Lorne attended Sarnia Collegiate, and would go on to graduate in 1939 from the University of Western Ontario, where he obtained a four-year B.A. degree, majoring in business administration. He joined the staff of the Hobbs Manufacturing Company at London, Ontario, and was later transferred to Toronto, where he worked as a salesman. He resided at 107 St. George Street, Toronto. While in Toronto, he served in the University of Toronto C.O.T.C. militia from October 1940 to February 1941, and September 1941 to December 1941.

William Ferguson enlisted in the Royal Canadian Army on February 23, 1942 in Toronto (five months prior to his eventual death). He became a member of the Royal Canadian Ordinance Corps, district headquarters, Ottawa. Only five days prior to his death, he was promoted to the rank of Corporal. On the late afternoon of Saturday July 18, 1942, William and other members of his unit had gone on a picnic party to the Hull, Quebec resort at Fairy Lake. William had only been in the water a few moments when he sank from view, and was tragically drowned. The Medical Examiner reported that William, *Suffered a broken neck while diving from end of pier into river.* After the body was returned to Sarnia, more than 300 relatives and friends of the family attended the funeral at D.J. Robb's Funeral Home. Twenty-six year old William Ferguson is buried at the Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section I. Lot 140. He was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service War Medal 1939-45. On William Ferguson's headstone are inscribed the words, *Rest in peace.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, R, 2C, 2D

**FISHER, Joseph Gerald (#A/116104)**

Gerald Fisher was born in Sarnia on March 24, 1920, the son of Walter Frederick Fisher and Margaret Rosabelle (nee McLean) Fisher, of the 4th Concession of Sarnia Township. Gerald was born on the 10th line of Enniskillen Township. He had three sisters: Dolores (born 1910), Beulah Sarah (born 1913) and Gwendolyn (born 1924). At the time of Joseph's death, his sisters were then: Mrs. Fred Evoy, of Norwich; Mrs. H.G. MacColl, of Petrolia; and Gwendolyn Fisher, in Sarnia. Joseph also had four brothers: Andrew Clayton (born 1915, who at the time of Joseph's death was a Sergeant serving with the RCAF overseas); Donald Cleone (born 1919); Arlie Eugene (born 1926); and Wayne George (born 1931).

Single at the time, Gerald enlisted in the Canadian Army in September 1942. He listed his occupation at the time as a farmer. Private Gerald Fisher went overseas in March 1943, on his 23rd birthday, as a member of Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps 22 Field Ambulance. In late March of 1944, parents Walter and Margaret Fisher in Sarnia Township would receive a cablegram from their son Joseph Gerald in which he stated that he was "fine and hopes to soon be home again." Less than three months later, Gerald would be part of the landing force on Normandy, France on D-Day.

About three months later, on September 5, 1944, Gerald was wounded during fighting in France. The next day, September 6, Gerald Fisher would lose his life as a result of his wounds in a hospital in France, ten hours after an operation made necessary by injuries caused by enemy shellfire the previous day. Joseph Gerald Fisher would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (France)*. On October 22, 1944, an Honour Roll, bearing the names of the men and women of the London Road West United Church congregation serving in the forces was unveiled and dedicated at a service there. At the same ceremony, a special memorial service was also held for Private Joseph Gerald Fisher, R.C.A.M.C. who died in France in the previous month.

In late October of 1944, parents Walter and Margaret Fisher in Sarnia would receive messages of condolence in the death of their son, Private Gerald Joseph Fisher, from the officer commanding the 22nd Canadian Field Ambulance unit and from the commander of his section. Captain J.W. Latimer, in a letter written on September 11 said,

*By this short note I wish not only to convey to you my deepest sympathies but those of this entire unit and particularly of those members of my section in the loss of your son, Gerald Joseph. I will try also to give you a few details of the incidents which led up to his being wounded.*

*Gerald had been a member of my section for many months in England. He was held in high esteem by all the men and I was proud to have him under my command, not only because he was efficient at his work but also because he was an example to others. I was pleased to put him in charge of a squad long before the invasion. We crossed the channel together, landed on the beach together in France on D-Day and he has been with me ever since.*

*On September 5 we were travelling in a convoy along a highway when suddenly enemy shelling broke loose among our vehicles. I was riding in the rear of the convoy and saw the shells landing a short distance ahead. I immediately got out of my vehicle and ran up to where the shells had landed. The other members of my section had already managed to get Gerald and several others who were wounded into a ditch. I immediately dressed his wounds and gave him morphine to relieve his pain. We carried him to a nearby house where I administered "Plasma transfusion" to him. He was immediately sent back by ambulance to the hospital.*

*The wound he received was caused by a shell fragment which struck him in the back of the chest. On reaching hospital he was given blood transfusions and was operated on by a surgical specialist. Everything that could possibly be done for him was done and he was never allowed to have pain after he received his wound. He passed away about 10 hours after the operation.*

*Your son and I were very good friends, Mr. Fisher, and I feel your loss very deeply myself. We had been through many actions together in the past three months. I considered him one of my bravest men and he was always there when duty called, regardless of the personal risk involved. He brought relief to many of his wounded comrades and I feel sure that save for his work and skill more Canadian lives would have been lost. He died as he lived, unselfishly, bravely and a good soldier.*

GOD ONLY LOANED YOU TO US. THEN GOD CALLED YOU HOME, SON,  
BUT OH, HOW WE LOVED YOU. MUM AND DAD.

Lieut. Col. M.R. Caverhill, officer commanding the C.F.A. unit, added this testimonial;  
*Your son was an excellent soldier, well liked by his companions and the officers of the unit, and had carried out his duties with the utmost faithfulness since landing in France on D-Day.*

Twenty-four year old Gerald Fisher is buried in Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, France, Grave 1.B.12. On Joseph Fisher's headstone are inscribed the words, *Our darling son is sheltered by the rock of ages. Anchored on God's golden shore.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2B, 2C, 2D

### **FISHER, Melvin Kenneth (#A/106345)**

Melvin Fisher was born in Brooke Township on February 3, 1922, the son of Mr. and Mrs. A.A. Fisher, of 157 North Brock Street, later Cameron Street, Sarnia. Melvin came to Sarnia with his family at the age of seven, and attended Lochiel Street Public School. He attended both Sunday School and church at Central United Church. Prior to enlisting, Melvin was employed at Electric Auto-Lite Limited, listing his occupation as a generator tester. Melvin had two brothers and one sister, who at the time of Melvin's death were: Joseph Fisher, at home in Sarnia; Keith Fisher, a Leading Seaman on active service with the RCN; and his sister Mrs. Doris Gunter, 322 Wellington Street, Sarnia.

Melvin married two years prior to enlisting, his wife was Mrs. Evelyn Bernice (nee Coulter) Fisher (of Port Elgin). Melvin and Evelyn would have two daughters together, Patricia Ann and Shirley (one of the daughters was born January 18, 1943 at Sarnia General Hospital). The family resided at 117 Collingwood Street, Sarnia. Melvin enlisted in the Canadian Army in March 1943, receiving his training at Chatham, Camp Ipperwash, and Debert, Nova Scotia.

In mid-April 1943, Melvin's brother Keith, would make headlines in Sarnia for rescuing three men trapped in the debris of a collapsed and burning building. Keith was home in Sarnia on furlough from an East Coast station. He was visiting friends in Port Huron when an early morning fire broke out in the White Block, opposite the post office on Water Street in the Port Huron business section. As the blaze grew worse, everyone in uniform including state troopers, civilian defence volunteers, members of the U.S. coast guard, city police and Keith Fisher, who was in uniform as a member of the R.C.N.V.R. were pressed into service. As the walls of the burning Webb Building collapsed, the second and ground floors were carried into the basement, trapping people inside. Keith Fisher led the way toward cries coming from beneath the debris, working to pull rubble aside, extricating three Michigan State Troopers trapped in the building, one of whom was unconscious as Keith carried him out. Aside from the property damage, the fire caused the death of one Michigan State trooper, three were critically injured and seventeen others were injured. Keith would return to Port Huron the first thing the next morning to see if there was any more work to be done, and to pick up his Naval uniform which had been soaked through and was covered with plaster, dust and grime. The three men that Keith Fisher rescued would survive.

Melvin K. Fisher would go overseas in January 1944, his wife Evelyn receiving word of his safe arrival in early March 1944. While Melvin was overseas, Evelyn, for a time, and their one-year old daughter would reside with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Coulter in Goderich. Melvin would spend one month in England. From there, he would later move on to Italy, his wife Evelyn receiving a telegram in late April 1944 of his safe arrival in Italy. Melvin would become a member of the Perth Regiment R.C.I.C., British 8th Army, in the Central Mediterranean Forces. Melvin Fisher was part of the Italian Campaign, and he took part in the horrific battle at Cassino. Melvin would serve in Italy for only several months. In a letter received by his parents in Sarnia not long before his death, Melvin Fisher told them of his being on the front lines in Italy. On December 20, 1944, only days before Christmas Day, Private Melvin Fisher would lose his life during a battle on the Lamone River in Italy.

In late December 1944, parents Mr. and Mrs. A.A. Fisher in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Department of National Defence informing them that their son, *Pte. Melvin Kenneth Fisher, had been killed in action in Italy*. No further details were provided. Melvin Fisher would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Melvin left behind his wife Evelyn Bernice and daughters Patricia Ann and Shirley, who at the time of his death, were residing with Mrs. Fisher's mother in Goderich. In early January 1945, a service was held at a morning service in Central United Church, Sarnia, to honour the memory of Private Melvin Fisher, killed in action in Italy in December 1944, and Coder Joseph Griffith Bell, lost at sea in September 1943 (included in this

project). Both men were members of the congregation. The Rev. E.W. Jewitt extended the sympathy of all the congregation to the bereaved parents, and voiced the hope for a just and enduring peace. Twenty-two year old Melvin Fisher is buried in Villanova Canadian War Cemetery, Italy, Grave IV.A.3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

### **FORDYCE, Gordon William (#R/116865)**

Gordon Fordyce was born on June 13, 1920, the son of Gordon William Fordyce Senior and Janet Wright (nee Marshall, born in England) Fordyce, of 309 Maxwell Street, Sarnia. At the time of his death, his mother resided at 159 ½ North Front Street, Sarnia and his father was residing at Belleville, Ontario. Gordon was the youngest of four children; he had one sister, Margaret Isobel (would become Mrs. Kenneth Buxton), of Sarnia, and two brothers who at the time of his death were John Fordyce in Sarnia, and Sergeant George Fordyce, overseas. His brother George Fordyce was a member of the 26th Battery in Sarnia when war broke out, and went overseas in 1940. In September of 1944, brother George, who was a bombardier serving with the Royal Canadian Artillery in France, would send his mother Janet Fordyce in Sarnia three souvenirs from his travels. The souvenirs included: a piece of paper money issued to Nazi troops when they occupied the Netherlands in 1940, which was dated October 1, 1938 (a year before the war began); a sample of propaganda which the Germans dropped in an attempt to induce the Allied soldiers to surrender (with purported excerpts from letters written home by British and American prisoners of war, telling of what fine treatment they received at the hands of the Nazis); and a “safe conduct pass” which were used by Germans who surrender to the Allies.

Gordon Fordyce was educated in Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. He was employed for two years at Kingston Brothers Service Station, North Vidal street, prior to enlisting, as a clerk and as a service station attendant. Gordon Fordyce enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in London, Ontario on August 12, 1941. He received his training in Quebec (Valcartier, St. Hubert, Victoriaville and Windsor Mills), in Yorkton, Saskatchewan and in Halifax. He gained his pilot’s flying badge on September 11, 1942, attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II-Pilot, going overseas in November of 1942. Beginning in mid-June of 1943, Gordon would go on to fly twenty-four operational sorties with RAF Bomber Command, twenty-one with the #12 RAF Squadron based at RAF Wickenby, Lincolnshire and three sorties with #156 RAF Pathfinder Force based at RAF Warboys, Cambridgeshire. Gordon and his crew of six others, volunteered to join the prestigious Pathfinder Force. The chances of surviving a tour of 45 sortie operations in the winter of 1943/44 was about 15%, lower than that in the trenches of the First World War.<sup>12</sup>

As a member of RAF #156 Squadron “We Light the Way”, Pathfinder Force, Warrant Officer Class II-Pilot Gordon Fordyce’s Lancaster Bomber crew also consisted of Sergeants Lawrence J. Collins (N), Albert Edward Egan (WAG), R. Harris (BA), George Johnson (F/E), Ronald Horace Hodges (AG) and James Steel Minogue (AG, of Cumberland, Ontario). This crew, as part of #12 Squadron and of #156 Squadron participated in raids targeting cities such as Modane in France, Genoa and Milan in Italy, and Cologne, Hamburg, Nurenburg, Hanover, Munich and Berlin, in Germany, as they would record it, “dropping nickels” (propaganda leaflets) and bombs.

The Battle of Berlin was the British air bombing campaign on Berlin (and other German cities) beginning in mid-November 1943, lasting until March 1944. On the night of November 23, 1943, a total of 383 aircraft; 365 Lancasters, ten Halifaxes and eight Mosquitos, left England targeting Berlin. Gordon Fordyce and his crew aboard Lancaster aircraft JB293 were part of the 383 aircraft that night. The target was obscured by clouds, but the Pathfinders arrived on time and marked the target accurately. Also helping the bombers mark their targets through the clouds was the glow of major fires still burning from the previous night when 764 aircraft attacked the city, the heaviest bombardment against Berlin to date. On the night of November 23, the time over the target was 7:58 – 8:15 p.m. and 1,377 tons of bombs were dropped, 734 high explosives, and 643 incendiaries. Though the raid was classified as a success, twenty RAF aircraft were lost, all Lancasters, including Gordon Fordyce’s Lancaster bomber.

On its return from bombing Berlin, Gordon Fordyce’s Lancaster crashed into High Acre House, near Manor Farm, Harpley, Norfolk, England. A local lorry driver/Home Guard Sergeant heard the crash and rushed to the scene only 200 yards away. He entered the burning building and broke the plane’s cabin with bricks and rescued an airman trapped in the burning nose, another stuck under the wing, the rear-gunner trapped in the broken tail and a fourth member who had been flung from the plane. Three of the seven Lancaster crew members died in the crash. Along

*FROM ME YOU WERE TAKEN. MY HEART WILL ALWAYS MOURN FOR YOU.  
REST IN PEACE, DEAR SON.*

with Flight-Sergeant Gordon Fordyce, also killed were Sgt. Ronald H. Hodges, mid-upper gunner, (RAF), and Sgt. George Johnson, flight engineer, (RAF).

In late November 1943, Janet Fordyce in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Gordon William Fordyce, has been reported killed on Tuesday, November 23, while on active service overseas, and further information would be forwarded when received.* No further details of the action that cost the life of her son were given. On November 30th, 1943, Janet Fordyce would receive a cable informing her that her son, *Flight-Sergeant Gordon William Fordyce, killed in action with the R.C.A.F. on active duty on November 23, was buried at Cambridge, England, yesterday afternoon at two o'clock.* Gordon Fordyce would later be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas (England).*

In April 1945, Mrs. Janet Fordyce would receive a photograph of the grave of her son who was buried in the Royal Air Force plot at Cambridge Borough Cemetery, Cambridge, England. The photograph and details of the plot were sent by R.A.F. Flt. Lieut. J.F. Flynn, regional burials officer in England. Officer Flynn explained that the plot was a gift from the Borough of Cambridge to the Royal Air Force, which now contained many airmen of all ranks from all parts of the Dominion, together with French, Belgian and Polish comrades. In the photograph, Gordon Fordyce's grave was marked with a wooden cross, which would be replaced by a stone memorial after the war. There was also a wreath there, which was a tribute to him by his friends. Officer Flynn explained that the area was in the care of the Imperial War Graves Commission, which was responsible for its maintenance for all time. He added:

*The principal architect to the Imperial War Graves Commission was here some months ago and he showed me the design for the final layout of the plot. I can assure you it will be very beautiful. The Royal Air Force desires to help the families of those lads who rest so far from their homeland and we are always ready to give whatever information we can.*

Twenty-three year old Gordon Fordyce, who had been overseas only one year prior to his death, is buried in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom, Grave 14518. Gordon's service awards included the 1939-45 Star, Europe Star, Defence Medal, War Medal and the C.V.S.M..

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D, I

#### **FOSTER, Charles St.Clair (#R/70200)**

Charles Foster was born August 14, 1916, the son of Cecil Horatio Foster and Matilda B. (nee Bartlett) Foster, of 221 North Mackenzie Street, Sarnia. Charles attended Central United Sunday School, later becoming an active member of the Church, and served as an usher. He would also be a carrier for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia for a time. He received his education in Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate, where he graduated after five years as a draughtsman. His hobby was the construction of glider planes with some of his pals, known as the "Pee Wee Glider Club." Prior to enlisting, Charles was employed in a Sarnia grocery store.

Single at the time, Charles Foster enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in April 1940, and trained at the Galt Aircraft School as an airframe mechanic. He was then stationed at Toronto, followed by Trenton, and MacDonald, Manitoba. In November 1941, Charles would spend his furlough at his home in Sarnia with his family and friends. After returning to his unit, he would go overseas on the day after Christmas, December 26, 1941. Shortly after serving in England, he remustered to air crew and took further training at Ayr, in England, and Wales. He graduated as a Sergeant Flight-Engineer in January, 1943, and was attached to the RCAF #419 Moose Squadron "Moosa Aswayita" (Beware the moose), flying on Halifax bombers.

On March 28, 1943, Charles Foster's Halifax aircraft BB283 went down near Escoublac-La-Baule during target operations on a Nazi submarine base at St. Nazaire, France. This was Charles Foster's first operation. Perishing with Sergeant-Flight Engineer Charles Foster were FS.s R.M. McLeod, G. McGrath, R.F. Beckett; Sgt. J.J. Goldspink; and Sgt.s D. Ansley (RAF) and W.J.S. Boyd (RAF). In mid-April of 1943, parents Cecil and Matilda in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa signed by the R.C.A.F. casualty officer, informing them that their son Charles Foster, who had been previously reported missing, was now believed to have been killed in the course of a raid on a Nazi submarine base. Charles Foster would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas.* Twenty-six year old Sergeant Flight Engineer Charles Foster is buried in Escoublac-La-Baule War Cemetery, Loire-Atlantique, France, Grave 2.G.2.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

**FOWLIE, John (Jack) Mackintosh (#J/13989) – Photograph page 379**

John Fowlie was born in Collingwood, Ontario on May 3, 1920, the only son of Melville Mackay Fowlie (born in Erin, Wellington County, Ontario) and Margaret Rose (nee Mackintosh, born in Collingwood, Ontario) Fowlie, of 144 South Forsythe Street, Sarnia. John's mother Margaret, died the day after a difficult childbirth while delivering John. From the age 6 on, John was raised by his father Melville and his second wife Catharine Clark (nee Ferguson) Fowlie. Melville and Catharine Fowlie would have two children together of their own, Janet and Don. The family lived in Collingwood for a time, then in 1930, moved to Wheeling City, West Virginia. Around 1936, the family moved to Sarnia.

In his everyday life, John Fowlie went by the name Jack. Jack graduated in 1938 from Sarnia Collegiate, where he was an active participant in student life. He played football, hockey and badminton, and was a member of the debate team. He then attended London Normal School, London, Ontario, followed by several years at Appleby College in Oakville. Jack's dream was to teach at a high school. He was part way toward his dream because before enlisting, he was a teacher in a one-room rural Sarnia schoolhouse at Bickford, on the Moore and Sombra town line. Teaching all grades 1 through 8, and living with the Nichol's family while there, he earned between \$700-\$800 a year.

During the war, Jack Fowlie would put his dream on hold; single at the time, he enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1941. He received training at Prince Albert, and graduated at Rivers, Manitoba. His initial training was in single engine, two-seater planes, first learning to fly, then learning to drop bombs accurately. In September 1942, Jack would visit his parents Melville and Catharine in Sarnia, before leaving for a posting in Prince Edward Island for further training. Jack went overseas in 1943 and did further training in Hudson and Wellington double-engine bombers. He was to attain the rank of Flight Lieutenant-Bomb Aimer with the RCAF #1664 Heavy Conversion Unit. His unit had numerous roles, such as planting mines, patrolling for submarines, bombing targets, and training new recruits.

On the evening of March 16, 1945, while aboard RCAF Halifax aircraft MZ481, Jack Fowlie's plane crashed into the North Sea during a cross-country training exercise. The plane and the bodies of all seven on board were never found. Approximately one week later, parents Melville and Catharine Fowlie in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their only son, *Flight-Lieutenant John Mackintosh Fowlie, is missing after flying operations overseas*. Less than two months after receiving the above telegram, the war in Europe would end. It was not until seven months after he was reported missing that Jack Fowlie's parents would be notified that their son John (Jack) M. Fowlie was now officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Perishing with Flight Lieutenant-Bomb Aimer John (Jack) Fowlie were F/O. J.C. Pearson; F/L. F.E. Connors; and FS.s J. Graham, J.H. Grahame, and A.H. Jones. Another member of the crew, not Canadian, was reported missing and believed killed.

John (Jack) Fowlie's name, along with nineteen others are inscribed on a tablet on the Memorial School building at Appleby College, which was built as a memorial to the members of the Appleby community killed in World War II. Twenty-four year old Flight Lieutenant John (Jack) Fowlie has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 278. Jack Fowlie's family also had a stone laid in tribute to him at Lakeview Cemetery, Sarnia.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D, i

**GALLAWAY, Lloyd George (#J/16499) – Photograph page 380**

Lloyd Gallaway was born on February 16, 1917, the son of Edgar E. Gallaway (born in Creemore, Simcoe County, Ontario) and Gertrude Effie (nee Hoare, born in Georgetown, Halton County, Ontario) Gallaway, of 130 Bright Street, Sarnia. Lloyd had three brothers, Raymond William Thomas (born 1912), Edgar, and Jack, and four sisters, Jean, Helen, Irma and Dorothy. In September 1942, Lloyd's brother Edgar would celebrate his 20th birthday in England, having enlisted in Sarnia prior to that date, with the Eleventh Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers, attaining the rank of Sapper. Lloyd Gallaway was a member of St. John's Anglican Church and would also be a carrier for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia for a time. Lloyd attended Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate where he was an honour student during his years there. While in high school, Lloyd was on the business staff of the magazine in 1936, attended Air Cadets, was a member of the senior rugby team, and was part of the team that won the W.O.S.S.A. football championship in 1937.

In 1937, Lloyd assumed a position with Walker Stores Limited in Sarnia and was later given a promotion, and transferred to the company's store in Barrie. He later returned to Sarnia, worked for a while with the W.B. Clark Company, and then re-entered the employ of Walker Stores. He would later be transferred to the company's warehouse in Toronto. Single at the time, Lloyd enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in September 1939 at the Toronto Manning Pool. From that moment on, he loved the air force. In May 1941, Lloyd Gallaway would arrive in England along with three other Sarnia airmen: Sergeants William B. Clark (included in this project), John Bennett and J.D. Murray. Lloyd Gallaway would become a member of RCAF #61 Squadron "Per Puram Tunantes" (Thundering through the clear air), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer, and Wireless Operator/Air Gunner.

By September 1941, Lloyd Gallaway was taking part in bombing operations over German-occupied Europe. Ten months later, in July of 1942, he completed a gunnery leaders course in England. Following that, he was then with Coastal Command, which he described as, "Not very exciting" after being in all the recent "big shows" including bombing operations on "Cologne, Essen and Bremen in three or four nights." With Coastal Command, rear gunner Lloyd Gallaway would sit in his rear turret hour after hour on the long Atlantic patrols. He described as;

*Not very exciting, but it was often quiet back where I was on the bombing jobs. We just sat, first leaning on one side and then on the other to keep from getting cramped up and tired. All the time we kept looking out trying to spot night fighters, if it was a night raid. On some trips we didn't see a thing and never opened up on anything unless we were pretty certain it was an enemy taking a bead on us. The best thing to do was just sit tight keeping our guns quiet unless we could plainly see a Jerry swinging about taking aim. In that case, according to Lloyd, there was only one thing to do – smack him.*

During seventeen months of service Lloyd Gallaway took his place as one of the top-ranking Canadian fliers, and served with Australian and English crews. He was selected for many dangerous jobs and was frequently mentioned in news stories sent by *Canadian Press* writers from England. In the British motion picture "Target For Tonight" Lloyd was seen as an active airman. Many Sarnia people saw him when the movie was shown in Sarnia.

On October 1, 1942, while a part of a crew aboard a Lancaster aircraft, the aircraft crashed one mile north-east of Gunthorpe, Nottinghamshire. Along with Pilot Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Lloyd Gallaway, also killed were Sgt. F.G. Bellchambers (RAF), and five other non-Canadian members of the crew. Several days after the crash, parents Edgar and Gertrude Gallaway in Sarnia were advised by air force headquarters that their son Lloyd was killed in action. No other details were given in the message. Lloyd Gallaway would later be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas*. Lloyd Gallaway was posthumously awarded the rank of Pilot Officer, his third promotion since enlisting (he was listed as Flight-Sergeant at the time of his death). In a list of promotions prior to his death, the RCAF had mistakenly awarded the promotion to an "L.G. Hallaway", of Sarnia in February of 1942. It was not until after his death that RCAF headquarters discovered their mistake. On the same day that the remains of Lloyd Gallaway were interred in the English cemetery, a funeral service was held in Sarnia's St. John's Anglican Church, which was attended by members of the Gallaway family, relatives and friends. Twenty-five year old Lloyd Gallaway is buried in Newark-Upon-Trent Cemetery, Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom, Section P, Grave 305. On Lloyd Gallaway's headstone are inscribed the words, *So he passed over and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **GAMMON, Rex Thomas (#R/90157)**

Rex Gammon was born in Sarnia on December 11, 1916, the eldest son of James Gammon (born in Bosanquet, Lambton County) and Rhoda Mae (nee Longley, born in Sarnia) Gammon, of 253 Lochiel Street, Sarnia. His father James was a school attendance officer and a former grocer. Rex had two sisters, Drena (became Mrs. Edward Cockerham) and Barbara, and one brother, William ("Bud") Arthur, who was four years younger than Rex. Rex was a member of the Presbyterian Church and attended Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. He would also be a carrier for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia for a time. He was well known in the local sporting community, where he enjoyed playing badminton, curling, basketball and tennis, where he was a member of the Sarnia Tennis Club. Prior to enlisting, he worked as a clerk for two years, as a coremaker for two years at Mueller Limited, and in a shoe store for one year.

Rex, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in London, Ontario on February 7, 1941. He

left shortly after for the R.C.A.F. Manning Pool No. 2 at Brandon, Manitoba. Before he left for Brandon, employees of Mueller Limited, where he had been employed for a year, waited on Rex at his home and presented him with a set of military hair brushes. In mid-November of 1941, Rex would graduate from the No. 4 Wireless School of the Royal Canadian Air Force in Guelph. At the time, Rex's younger brother William, who had also enlisted in the RCAF in May 1941, was a student pilot at an Eastern Canada air command training school. A little over one month later, in late December 1941, brother William Gammon received his wings as a pilot at Moncton, New Brunswick, graduating with the 11th class at No. 8 Service Flying Training School. One day later, Rex Gammon would graduate as a wireless air gunner at No. 1 Gunnery and Bombing School in Jarvis, with his proud parents attending the graduation. Both Rex and William would go overseas together in February 1942. William would take an officer's training course in Scotland before being placed on patrol duty over the Atlantic Ocean. Rex would go on to attain the rank of Flight Sergeant with the RCAF #22 Operational Training Unit as a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner.

On July 28, 1942, Rex was a member of a crew aboard Wellington aircraft X3201 when it was shot down over their bombing target of Hamburg, Germany. Also killed along with Flight Sergeant-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Rex Thomas was FS. Patrick C. Noel. Three Canadians, Sgt.s Bell, W.C. Warren, and J. Pierce, were taken prisoners of war. It was not until several weeks after the crash that Rex Gammon was listed as, *Missing after air operations*. At the same time, three members of the crew that he was with were reported as, *Prisoners of war in Germany*.

Less than three months later, in October of 1942, Rex's parents James and Rhoda were advised by R.C.A.F. headquarters at Ottawa that their son's body had been recovered and buried by the Germans in a cemetery at Neumunster, Germany two days after he was shot down. Earlier in that same week, the Gammon parents had received official news informing them that their other son, William Gammon of the R.C.A.F., was a prisoner of war in Germany. By early December of 1942, Rex Gammon would be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-five year old Rex Gammon is buried in Ohlsdorf Cemetery, Hamburg, Germany, Grave 4A.E.14. On Rex Gammon's headstone are inscribed the words, *Son of James and Rhonda Gammon Sarnia, Ontario Canada*.

On October 8, 1942, Rex's younger brother RCAF Warrant Officer William "Bud" Gammon, was reported as, *Missing after air operations, believed to have been rescued after having been shot down at sea*. Three weeks later, parents James and Rhoda Gammon would receive a message from the International Red Cross Society that German sources had reported that their son William Arthur Gammon, was as a prisoner of war in Germany, confined to Stalag 344. Only days later, James and Rhoda Gammon would receive the official news that the body of their other son, Rex Thomas Gammon, had been recovered and buried by the Germans after being shot down in late July 1942.

In May 1944, James and Rhoda Gammon would receive a letter from their son William Arthur, a prisoner of war in Germany, dated February 2, 1944 and posted at Stalag 344, Germany. He praised Canadian organizations which had been sending supplies to those interned by the Nazis and announced the transfer of some of the Sarnia prisoners. He wrote:

*You certainly have to hand it to the different organizations in Canada in regard to looking after us. All Canadians received about two pounds of chocolate and the other day a shipment of plates, cups, forks and spoons, etc., came in. The Dieppe prisoners left for a new camp last week, including Ward, Date, Demary and the rest of the fellows from Sarnia. I was sorry to see them go, however, it will be a change for them.*

Nine months later, in mid-February 1945, James and Rhoda Gammon would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *William Arthur Gammon, warrant officer, second class R.C.A.F., who is a prisoner of war in Germany, has been promoted to warrant officer, first class*. Three months later, in early May of 1945, James and Rhoda Gammon would receive a letter from William, written April 23, 1945, advising them of his escape from the Germans and subsequent treatment at No. 4 Canadian General Hospital after meeting up with American troops. In William's letter, he revealed that he and five other prisoners had escaped while the camp's personnel were being marched to another area. He and his friends fled into the woods, where they remained for several days until they ran across units of an American Army. Eventually they returned to the Canadian forces and were hospitalized. William Gammon was able to return to Sarnia after the war. The father of the family, James Gammon, didn't outlive his son Rex by much, passing away from a heart seizure on November 7, 1945, at the age of 56.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D



**GANDER, Arthur Frederic (#R/169746)**

Arthur Gander was born in Sarnia on August 15, 1923, the son of Arthur Edward (born in Tunbridge Wells, England) and Gladys Genevieve Edith (nee Browne, born in Brighton, Sussex, England) Gander, of 405 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. Arthur had three brothers: Victor (born 1928), Douglas (born 1934), and Norman (born 1936), and two sisters, Margaret Edith (born 1921) and another one. Arthur attended Devine Street School, and then Sarnia Collegiate, graduating in 1941 at the age of seventeen. Single at the time, Arthur enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942, and graduated from the #9 Bombing and Gunnery School in Quebec in July of 1943. He wanted to be a navigator, but instead was posted as a Flying Officer. Arthur went overseas to Scotland in August 1943, and it was there that he was promoted to Sergeant-Air Gunner.

Arthur became a member of the RCAF #427 Lion squadron “Ferte Manus Certas” (Strike sure). Arthur made seven successful trips with his squadron over Germany. On the night of November 18, 1943, Arthur Gander and his crew were aboard their Halifax aircraft LK976, when they left the aerodrome to carry out a night bombing mission on Mannheim Germany. Due back the next morning, something went wrong, and the aircraft never returned, and there was no communication from it. Likely, their aircraft had crashed in the English Channel.

While overseas, Arthur Gander had written home once a week for 17 weeks. When his family did not receive an 18th letter, parents Arthur Sr. and Gladys Gander in Sarnia knew that something was wrong. Initially, Arthur Senior and Gladys would receive a telegram from the RCAF Casualties Officer in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Sergeant Arthur Frederic Gander is reported missing in action after air operations overseas, after a raid over Germany.* In a letter sent in late November 1943 by #427 Wing Commander R.S. Turnbull to Arthur’s father, Wing Commander Turnbull wrote:

*It is with deep regret that I write to you this date to convey to you the feelings of my entire Squadron. We lost an excellent crew when this aircraft did not return from this operation and we count its loss a most severe blow to this Squadron. Although Arthur and the other members of his crew had not been long members of this particular Squadron, in the short period of time that he was with us he carried out his duties in cheerful and energetic manner. Arthur was popular with all ranks of this Squadron’s personnel and it is indeed a pity that his career with us should be terminated so abruptly by this tragic event. There is always the possibility that Arthur may be a prisoner-of-war, in which case, you will either hear from him direct, or through the Air Ministry, who will receive advice from the International Red Cross Society. Your son’s effects have been gathered together and forwarded to the Royal Air Force Central Depository, where they will be held until better news is received, or in any event for a period of at least six months before being forwarded on to you through the Administrator of Estates, Ottawa. May I now express the great sympathy which all of us here share with you in your grievous anxiety, and I would like to assure you also how greatly we all honour the noble sacrifice your son has made, so far from home, in the Cause of Freedom, in the Service of the British Commonwealth of Nations.*

Nine months later, in August 1944, Arthur Sr. and Gladys Gander would receive another letter from the R.C.A.F. Casualty Officer, stating:

*It is with deep regret that, in view of the lapse of time and the absence of any further information concerning your son, Sergeant Arthur Frederic Gander, since he was reported missing, the Air Ministry Overseas now proposes to take action to presume his death for official purposes.*

After her son Arthur was declared dead, his mother Gladys’s Gander wrote the following poem:

*Sometimes the note of his favourite song.  
Brings a thought of him.  
Oftimes the sound of a passing plane.  
Is a temptation to speak his name.  
A token of love and remembrance.  
Of a son we shall never forget.  
His memory is a treasure.  
His loss a lifetime regret.*

Along with Sergeant Arthur Gander, also killed, on the given date of November 19, 1943, were WO. P.G. Jolliffe; FS. R. Dixon; F/O.s F.W. Winter, P. Kennedy and Sgt. W. Riddell (RAF); and FS. G.C. Harper (RAF). Arthur Gander would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing on active service with the R.C.A.F.,*

*now for official purposes, presumed dead.*

In October 1950, Arthur Sr. and Gladys Gander would receive a letter from Wing Commander W.R. Gunn, RCAF Casualties Officer. It began with a statement of regret with regard to the loss of their son. It then stated that the Missing Research and Enquiry Service had located the grave of the navigator of Arthur's crew, Flying Officer Winter, in the Parish Cemetery at Cayeux-Sur-Mer in the Department of Somme, France. It continued:

*It was ascertained that his body had been recovered from the sea near Brighton, Department of Somme. Although this area has now been swept by search teams, unhappily, no information could be secured on any other member of the crew. In view of the above, therefore, it must be regretfully accepted that all members of the crew with the exception of Flying Officer Winter lost their lives at sea and have no known grave. Due to the extreme hazards attending air operations there are, unhappily, many thousands of British aircrew boys who, like your son, do not have a known grave, and their names will be commemorated on General Memorials that will be erected at a number of locations by the Imperial War Graves Commission (of which Canada is a member), each Memorial representative of a theatre of operations. One of these Memorials will be erected at Runnymede, England and the names of your son and the other members of his crew will appear on that Memorial. A detailed announcement concerning these General Memorials will be made at a future date. I realize that this is an extremely distressing letter and that there is no manner of conveying such news to you that would not add to your heartaches, and I am fully aware that nothing I may say will lessen your great sorrow, but I would like to take this opportunity of expressing to you and the members of your family my deepest sympathy in the loss of your gallant son.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*W.R. Gunn, Wing Commander, RCAF Casualties Officer, for Chief of the Air Staff.*

Twenty year-old Arthur Gander has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 186.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **GLASS, William James (#J/95300)**

William James (Billy) Glass was born in Courtright, Ontario on January 31, 1923, the son of William Orison Glass (born in Mooretown, Ontario) and Emma Viola (nee Campbell) Glass, of Courtright, Ontario. He had one sister and three brothers. One brother, John George Glass (born in 1925), was also in the RCAF, as an LAC, with the No. 5 Equipment Depot at Moncton, New Brunswick at the time of William's death. William attended Courtright Public School and Sarnia Collegiate. He was a member of St. Stephen's Anglican Church, and very active in the work of the local Anglican Young People's Association. Billy enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on November 11, 1942. In December of 1943, he married Frances Mabel Glass, (nee Webb, of Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta).

Billy graduated from the R.C.A.F. school at Winnipeg in February 1944, and then went overseas in April 1944, as a member of RCAF #12 Squadron "Leads the Field", with the rank of Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer. On January 16, 1945, William (Billy) Glass was part of a crew aboard Lancaster aircraft LM213 that was shot down at Bentheim, Germany during a night trip to Zeitz, Germany. Their Lancaster aircraft was on a mission to bomb the huge synthetic oil plant at Zeitz. Perishing with Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer William Glass were P/O. D.E. Linington; F/O.s W. Kerluk and D.J. Bailey; and one of the crew, not Canadian. One Canadian, Sgt. A.F. Hynes, the rear gunner, was taken prisoner of war.

Billy's parents, William Senior and Viola in Courtright, received two telegrams from the RCAF Casualties Officer in the coming months. On January 20, 1945, they received a telegram that informed them that their son, *Flight Sergeant Bombardier William (Billy) Glass Jr., was reported missing in action overseas.* One and a half months later, on March 9, 1945, they received a second telegram that read: *Regret to advise that International Red Cross quoting German information states your son flight sergeant William James Glass lost his life January sixteenth but does not give additional particulars stop pending further confirmation your son is to be considered missing believed killed stop please accept my sincere sympathy stop letter follows.*

William Glass would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany).* In a letter to his parents afterwards, William's younger

**PRAY FOR HIM, WHO FAR FROM HIS NATIVE LAND BREATHED HIS LAST  
WITHOUT HEARING A FRIENDLY WORD.**

brother John (who was in Moncton with the RCAF at the time) penned a few words of remembrance:

*They say he is gone to the land beyond, To a better world, I know;  
But it does not seem right he should end his flight. When so young and so far away.  
To me he bides right by my side. As he did in days gone by;  
But the end has come, such a bitter end. Of my brother and truest friend.  
He will always live on, he can never die, For his memories are always here -  
Of his hurried walk, and his quiet talk: Oh my brother, so very dear.  
So now you see why he will never die. My brother and truest friend -  
He has left to me these memories. I shall cherish to my life's end.*

William Glass would leave behind his wife Frances and his parents William Senior and Viola Glass in Courtright. Twenty-one year old William (Billy) Glass was buried at Bentheim, Germany, exhumed and reburied in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany, Grave 13.E.11. On William Glass' headstone are inscribed the words, *Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* William Glass' name is also inscribed on a memorial plaque on the interior wall of St. Stephen's Anglican Church in the Village of Courtright.

The following is an account from William Glass's gunner, Al Hynes, the only survivor from the last mission:

*My hometown is Winnipeg and that's where I joined the RCAF when I turned eighteen. At the time I joined they were not taking aircrew so I wound up ground crew and it took a few years before I finally got to re-muster. I tried out for a pilot but didn't make it. The war was getting on towards the end and I had to get into it so I volunteered to be a gunner. I went to Mont-Joli, Quebec where I took my gunnery training. We flew Fairey Battles with Bristol turrets. I went overseas and eventually wound up on an RAF squadron, No. 12, who were flying Lancasters which was fine with me. The Lancaster was the bird that everybody wanted to fly.*

*Our first trip was to Essen in the Ruhr Valley. That first trip - the flak and the searchlights and the bombs going down. It was absolutely beautiful - better than any fireworks display I've ever seen. As the trips progressed you began to realize that we were killing them and they're trying to kill you and the fear sets in. You don't really let that bother you because it's a short duration thing, eight to ten hours and you're back home. You go to the pub, get drunk, and have a good night's sleep in a bed with sheets. The food is fair and then away you go the next night to another hair-raising experience.*

*On my tenth trip we went to a German city called Zeitz - very deep into Germany. It was an oil refinery. We had a bad feeling about this trip - a premonition. We all had it. We discussed amongst ourselves whether we'd put the aircraft unserviceable. We decided, no, we'd go ahead and fly it. Who believes in premonitions? Anyway, we were over the target. We'd bombed it and it was quite different there. There was a layer of thin cloud over the target and the fires below and the searchlights, there were hundreds of them playing on the cloud layer, made a glowing screen and every plane in the bomber stream was clearly visible from above. We knew there were fighters around because they were dropping fighter flares and the photoflashes were going off. It was quite spectacular.*

*Anyway, I had a nasty feeling we were being hunted. I was desperately looking around. I swung my turret around and looked down and there was the hunter, a Messerschmitt 410. He was tilted up about 25 yards away. I directed my guns down immediately and opened fire. At the same time I yelled for the skipper (F/O William Kerluk RCAF) to corkscrew. This all happened within a heartbeat. The fighter opened fire. I could see his four cannons blink once. One cannon shell took the two guns out of my turret on the left side. One hit under my feet and blew out the pipelines (the hydraulic lines that powered the turret) and the intercom. One hit the tail and one I'm sure went up the fuselage and killed the navigator. All this happened just like that. I opened fire. I yelled for the skipper to corkscrew starboard. All he heard was, "Corkscrew," before the cannon shell cut off the intercom. He's yelling, "Which way? Which Way?" I could hear him but he couldn't hear me.*

*It was all over in seconds. I opened fire when this happened and I could see my tracers bouncing off him. Then he broke away down and it was all quiet. I used the hand crank to turn my turret and my intercom came back on. So I told the skipper the enemy fighter was directly below us and we had about ten seconds to live. I told him to corkscrew or dive to the clouds or do something. The last words he said were, "I'm afraid to move it. The controls are shot up." I said, "Here he comes!" and he tilted up and opened fire. He hit us in the gas tanks and we started to burn. The flame was coming down the fuselage and out through my turret.*

*Luckily I was wearing the new seat pack - I was sitting on my parachute (Previously the rear gunner's parachute was stowed on a hook in the fuselage and the gunner had to reach behind into the fuselage and clip the parachute pack on). Now when you parachute out of a gun turret you unplug your intercom, your oxygen mask, your oxygen mask heater, and your heated suit. The flames were hitting me in the face. I tried to get my face out of the flames so that I could unplug. I leaned out the doors while I was doing this. The wind caught my parachute harness and I couldn't get back in to unplug anything. So I let go and everything pulled loose which was something of a miracle because they told you if you didn't unplug it usually breaks your neck.*

*Anyway there I am. It's about 15,000 feet at eleven o'clock at night and 50 below zero. I'm falling on my back. I could see the Lancaster going away. I could see the Messerschmitt 410 coming back. I reached for the ripcord with my right hand but I couldn't reach it because my Mae West had inflated. So I reached with my left hand and got my thumb in the D-ring, pulled it, and after a long pause the parachute opened. I looked down and there's my boots disappearing into the clouds. It seemed like a long, long time that I came down. As soon as I got below the clouds I realized that it was snowing quite heavily.*

*I couldn't see the ground but I kept looking down and all of a sudden there I was, "Bang." I landed in my stocking feet in a foot of snow. My Mae West had inflated so I couldn't reach the risers to deflate my chute and it was blowing me across the field. So I dug my hands in to think about what I was going to do next. I thought I'd get up and I'd run around the chute but the snow was too deep and in my stocking feet I couldn't do it.*

*So I was lying there and I saw a light coming. I knew I was in the middle of Germany so I thought, 'Well, I'll dig my hands into the snow and wait until this guy walks by and hope he doesn't see me in the falling snow.' He got behind me but a gust of wind blew me right into him and it turned out to be my wireless operator (F/S G.J. Harris). He was very badly burned. I grabbed him and I said hang on. I turned the quick release on my parachute. You bang it with your fist to release everything except that it was jammed. I kept banging it and banging it but it wouldn't open. So I got him to sit on my legs while I got my knife out and I cut away the parachute harness.*

*I looked at him. He was pretty bad. So I decided to give him a shot of morphine. I got my first aid kit out and I got the needle. I said, "Come on. I'll give you a shot of this and you'll feel a little easier." He'd have nothing to do with it. He was wild with pain and whatever. He was fighting me off. Finally I gave up and threw the thing away. He said, "There's a farm house over there. I'll give myself up and get some first aid." So I said, "Ok, I'll see you back in England." He disappeared into the snow. A while later I heard shots.*

*I knew I was in Germany but I didn't know where in Germany. I must have looked pretty damn conspicuous. I had cut off the legs of my electric suit and wound them around my feet. The sleeve of my electric suit had been burned off and so had my battle dress so everything was hanging by a thread here and a bunch of strings there. My face was burned so I got out the first aid kit. The first aid for burns was a dope called Gentian Violet. It was bright purple. So I got this purple ointment and smeared it on my face. I now had raggedy clothes and a purple face so I must have looked just a little suspicious.*

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **GORING, Curtis Albert (#R/90290)**

Curtis Goring was born on September 16, 1914, the eldest son of William Curtis Goring (born in Petrolia) and Amanda Flora (nee McLean, born in Brooke, Lambton County) Goring, of 133 Richard Street, Sarnia. He was also the nephew of Sarnians Mr. and Mrs. O.E. Mannen of Richard Street and Mr. and Mrs. Mose Hallam of Lakeshore Road. Curtis had four brothers: Ralph Archibald (born in Detroit in 1917), Keith Emerson (born 1918), Francis Carlyle (born 1921 – see below) and Scotty Ross; as well as two sisters: Marion (born 1919) and another one. When he was 16 years old, Curtis would lose his mother, Amanda, when she died in 1930. Four of the Goring boys would serve in the Armed Forces. At the time of Curtis' death, three of his brothers were in the aerial division of the armed forces: Sergeant Ralph A. Goring was overseas with the U.S. glider infantry; Flight-Lieutenant Francis Carlyle who went overseas with Curtis, was in England with the RCAF; and brother LAC Scotty Ross Goring, who was stationed at an R.C.A.F. base in Quebec. Prior to enlisting, Curtis Goring had been residing with his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. O.E. Mannen of 133 Richard Street, Sarnia for a few years after coming from Petrolia, where he attended high school. Curtis was single and employed with St. Clair Motors of Sarnia Limited before joining the armed forces.

Curtis enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in the early part of 1941. On December 26th of 1941,

Curtis and his brother Lyle would leave for an Eastern Canada air command. Curtis would go overseas in February 1942 as a member of RCAF #405 City of Vancouver Squadron "Ducimus" (We lead), Pathfinder Force. He attained the rank of Warrant Officer Class II-Air Gunner. During his time overseas, he experienced and survived two mishaps; he was injured in a crash landing in England and spent some time in hospital; and another time, his warplane was forced down in the North Sea where he and other members of the crew were rescued after drifting for some time on a rubber raft.

Just over two years after enlisting, on September 1, 1943, his Halifax aircraft HR915 failed to return from night operations sent to target Berlin, Germany. Perishing along with Curtis Goring was WO1 Edwin M. McArthur. One Canadian, Squadron Leader Pearson, and four of the crew, not Canadians, were taken prisoners of war.

On September 3rd, 1943, William Goring in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing him that his son, *Flight Sergeant Curtis Albert Goring was missing after air operations overseas*. The telegram did not indicate the date on which his son was reported missing. His aunt, Mrs. Mannen had not heard from Curtis for a number of few weeks. In early October 1943, his father William would receive a telegram informing him that his son Curtis Goring was now listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. No details of the action in which Curtis had lost his life were given. Reports were later received that on September 1st, eight Canadian bombers were included in the total of 47 Allied planes lost in a 45-minute raid on Berlin, one of the heaviest of the war.

Twenty-eight year old Curtis Goring has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 179. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as G.A. Goring. For his widow father William Goring back in Sarnia, he would lose a second son in the war, Francis Carlyle of the RCAF, less than one year later.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **GORING, Francis Carlyle (#J/16344)**

Francis Carlyle ("Lyle") Goring was born on September 19, 1921, the son of William Curtis (born in Petrolia) and Amanda Flora (nee McLean, born in Brooke, Lambton County) Goring, of 133 Richard Street, Sarnia. He was also the nephew of Sarnians Mr. and Mrs. O.E. Mannen of Richard Street and Mr. and Mrs. Mose Hallam of Lakeshore Road. Francis Lyle had four brothers: Curtis Albert (born 1914 – see above), Ralph Archibald (born in Detroit in 1917), Keith Emerson (born 1918) and Scotty Ross; as well as two sisters: Marion (born 1919) and another one. When he was only nine years old Lyle would lose his mother, Amanda, when she died in 1930. Four of the Goring boys would go on to serve in the Armed Forces. He had three brothers who were in the aerial division of the armed forces: Sergeant Ralph A. Goring was overseas with the U.S. glider infantry; Flight-Sergeant Curtis Albert Goring, who went overseas with Francis, a member of the RCAF who had died one year earlier; and brother LAC Scotty Ross Goring, who was stationed at an R.C.A.F. base in Quebec.

While attending Sarnia Collegiate, Francis Lyle was one of the leading marksmen there. After graduating from Sarnia Collegiate, Francis Goring enlisted, and at the time was residing with his aunt and uncle Mr. and Mrs. Moses Hallam of 529 Christina Street, later 359 Wellington Street, Sarnia. Nineteen year-old Francis Lyle joined the Royal Canadian Air Force, in January of 1941. He would receive his wings on December 5, 1941 at Dunnville, graduating as a sergeant pilot. On December 26th of 1941, Lyle and his brother Curtis would leave for an Eastern Canada air command. Not long afterwards, in January of 1942, Lyle would be sent overseas. Approximately four months after arriving overseas, Lyle experienced the thrill of being introduced to Their Royal Majesties. While stationed in England, Lyle shook hands with King George VI and Queen Elizabeth when they paid a surprise visit to the squadron in which Lyle was in.

In January 1943, Lyle was promoted to Pilot Officer. Lyle would become a member of RCAF #430 City of Sudbury Squadron, attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot. In the spring of 1943, Francis Lyle Goring would marry in England. The couple would have a daughter together. In September of 1943, Lyle Goring celebrated his 22nd birthday "somewhere in England." In March of 1943, he was promoted to Flight Lieutenant and made a flight commander in the R.C.A.F. In March of 1944, Francis Lyle Goring was part of a group of eight members of the Royal Canadian Air Force that were given the opportunity to visit a coal mine in North Wales. Arrangements had been made by the British Council, a national organization devoted to fostering goodwill. The eight members of the

RCAF were outfitted with overalls, helmets and lanterns and descended the half-mile to the pit bottom so quickly that ear-drums clicked. Francis Lyle Goring expressed the common thought: “Whoeee, just like a power dive.” As the RCAF fliers debarked from the cage, they were met by the “onsetter,” Freddie Edwards and shouted a cheery “Ullo chaps.” His 16-year old assistant grinned through a layer of coal. The assistant had chosen this job when he became eligible for compulsory employment in one of several industries. In the muffled darkness of the mine the fliers met muscular Britons toiling at the coal face. The Canadians and the miners were soon engaged in a friendly discussion as to the merits of working “above” versus “below” the earth’s surface, and each opined his job was the easiest. The fliers walked up slants and down steep grades, churning the dust and puffing audibly, surrounded by the deafening clatter, screeching and rumbling sounds inside the mine. One RCAF flier stated, “We’ll take a nice quiet war anytime.”

On August 12, 1944, Francis Lyle Goring was aboard his Mustang aircraft AG455, and would lose his life when his aircraft was shot down while it was engaged in a tactical reconnaissance over Culey Le Patry, between Falaise and Vire, France, during the Battle of Normandy. Approximately one week later, father William Curtis Goring in Sarnia would receive a telegram from R.C.A.F. headquarters in Ottawa informing him that his son, *Flight Lieutenant F.C. Goring was reported missing after air operations overseas on August 12*. The department said that a letter would follow. Not long before receiving the telegram, William Goring had received a letter from his son Francis Lyle stating that he expected to be returned to Canada soon. Francis Lyle Goring would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (France)*. Twenty-two year old Francis Carlyle Goring is buried in Banneville-La-Campagne War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave IV.C.3. For widowed father William Goring back in Sarnia, this was the second son he lost in the war, losing his oldest son Curtis of the RCAF, less than one year prior.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**GRAHAM, Lloyd, Jack and William** (Lloyd #J/92095, William #A/21931) – Photograph of William page 381

All three Graham brothers would serve and fight in the war. The boys’ parents were Arthur Graham and Florence (nee Burfield) Graham, who resided at 114 North Vidal Street during the Second World War. Lloyd Thomas Graham, the youngest of the three brothers was in the Air Force, a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, the 419 Moose squadron “Moosa Aswayita”. Jack H. Graham, the middle brother, joined the army in 1939 in Windsor, with the Essex Scottish Regiment. After training at Camp Borden, he was sent to England for extensive commando training on the Isle of Wight. William Richard Graham, the oldest of the three brothers, also enlisted in the army in Windsor, with the Essex Scottish Regiment.

**Lloyd Thomas Graham** was born on March 1, 1923. Older brothers Jack and William had enlisted in the army and were serving with the Essex Scottish Regiment prior to Lloyd enlisting. In August 1942, only days after the Dieppe Raid, parents Arthur and Florence in Sarnia received word that middle son Jack was listed as missing in the raid, and no word had been received regarding oldest son William’s fate in the raid. In that same week, single at the time and determined to get into the thick of things, nineteen year-old Lloyd Graham enlisted. Just days before enlisting, Lloyd said, “I applied for the R.C.A.F. two weeks ago. I want to be an air gunner, but mother would prefer to see me in the navy. I’ll make up my mind in a day or so.”

Lloyd Graham would enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Lloyd would graduate from Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School, in September 1943. His parents Arthur and Florence were there at the graduation to witness Lloyd receive his newly won wings. Lloyd then went on to complete another course at Crumlin. He went overseas in March of 1944, becoming a member of RCAF #419 Moose Squadron “Moosa aswayita” (Beware the moose).

On December 7, 1944, Lloyd Graham was aboard Lancaster aircraft KB779 that had left England when it went missing after it encountered severe icing conditions during a night attack against Osnabruk, Germany. The aircraft was listed as being shot down on December 7, 1944. In mid-December 1944, Arthur and Florence would receive a telegram informing them that their son, *Flight Sergt. Lloyd Thomas Graham, R.C.A.F., is missing overseas after an operational flight from England*. They received the telegram almost simultaneously with a letter from their son Corporal Jack Graham, a veteran of Dieppe, who was then a prisoner of war in Germany. Though Lloyd Graham had been reported missing in early December 1944, it was not until October of 1945, two months after the war had ended, that Arthur and Florence Graham were not notified that their son, Pilot Officer Lloyd T. Graham, was officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead*,

overseas (Germany). Perishing with Pilot Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Lloyd Graham were F/O.s B.D. Hyndman, and G.R. Cheesman; P/O.s G.E. Smith, E.M. Hansen, and D.L. Marcellus; and one RAF member of the crew. Twenty-one year old Lloyd Graham has no known grave. He is memorialized at Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 250.

**Jack H. Graham**, was born in June of 1920, the middle son of Arthur and Florence Graham. Jack enlisted in September 1939 in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C. In June 1942, he would celebrate his 22nd birthday “somewhere in England” with a Western Ontario unit. Two months later, on August 19, 1942, Jack Graham, along with his brother William, would take part in the raid on Dieppe. On that day, 4,963 Canadian soldiers landed on the beaches of Dieppe, a small town on the coast of France. Called *Operation Jubilee*, the goals were to destroy radar and other military installations, seize a neighbouring airfield, and capture a German divisional headquarters. It was also to serve as a test run for the future invasion of Europe, and to take some pressure off the Eastern Front. The raiding soldiers were intended to arrive early in the morning under the cover of darkness, but they were delayed, and there was inadequate supporting fire. They had to approach the cliffs of Dieppe fully visible to the German troops waiting for them atop the 75 foot-high cliffs. The Operation was a disaster, and of the 4,963 Canadians that landed, 907 were killed, 2,460 were wounded and 1,946 were captured.

One of those captured at Dieppe, by the middle of the day on August 19, 1942, was Corporal Jack Graham. Days after the Dieppe raid, Arthur and Florence Graham in Sarnia would receive the news that their son Jack was reported as missing in the raid, and no word on the fate of their other son William was received. Two days after learning that their son Jack was missing following the raid, Arthur and Florence would receive a letter from Jack that had been mailed in the weeks prior to the raid. In the letter, Jack told of the strenuous training that the chosen Canadian troops had undergone over a protracted period in preparation for a “big scale raid on the French coast.” He also mentioned that there was a certain somebody in England whom he liked very much, but he had not got around to the point of asking about their future plans because of the uncertainties of the future. Jack also gave details of the nature of the Commando course, and of how the troops had worked in close cooperation with the air force and the navy while making practice landings. He wrote, *The first month was the hardest, we worked in mud up to our necks. We were so tired during this time we seldom left the camp figuring sleep was more important. The men were up every day at 5 o'clock and lights were out at 9:30 o'clock.*

The days and weeks following the Dieppe raid was a very anxious time for the Graham family and thousands of others, as news of the fateful outcome and the mounting casualties continued to be reported back in Canada. It was not until Thanksgiving of October 1942 that Jack’s parents would receive the “happy” news that their son Jack, previously reported missing at Dieppe, was a prisoner of the Nazi’s, confined at Camp Stalag 8B, Germany. Two other local families would receive the same news about their sons on this Thanksgiving Day. John Brown, of 281 Wellington Street would learn that his son, Sapper Albert William Thomas Brown, who was with the 11th Field Company was in the same Camp Stalag, and Mr. and Mrs. Dunn of 405 Michigan Avenue, Point Edward would learn that their son, Sapper Douglas Albert Dunn, also of the 11th Field Company was in the hands of the Germans.

In February 1943, Arthur and Florence Graham would receive a letter from their son Jack, dated December 6, 1942. In the letter, he wrote that he was well, but still looking for letters from his home in Canada, although he had received four letters from England. He also mentioned that he had met a boy from Sarnia in the camp, named Demeray (it was Norris Demeray, also captured at Dieppe). Jack said that he would like his parents to send him a pair of shoes and a pack of cards. On a postcard dated November 29, 1942, he wrote that he had made himself a pair of warm mitts from the sleeve of a tunic. In April of 1943, Florence Graham would receive another letter from her son Jack in the German prison camp. In that letter, he acknowledged the receipt of a parcel of dainties sent to him along with the cigarettes from the Sarnia branch of the Red Cross. He was also particularly pleased with a number of family snapshots that were included, stating that he enjoyed them more than “a whole parcel of chocolate.” In mid-December 1944, Arthur and Florence would receive another letter from Jack, which arrived almost simultaneously as a telegram that they received informing them that their son Flight Sergeant Lloyd Thomas Graham was missing overseas. In Jack’s letter, he referred to others from the Sarnia district whom he had met in captivity, including Cecil Fowler, Don (Bunt) Murray, Joe Barr of Point Edward and another Essex Scottish man named Zink.

Jack Graham would spend the remainder of the war as a prisoner of war. Approximately three years after the Dieppe Raid, Jack and his fellow prisoners were liberated by the British ‘Desert Rats’ in 1945, just prior to the end of

the war. In late April 1945, Arthur and Florence Graham would receive a cable from their son Jack, stating that he had been liberated from German prison camp, Stalag 357 by the advancing troops of the United Nations. Jack was able to return home to Sarnia. His wife, Mrs. Doris Graham, was a “war bride” who came to Canada on the troopship *Mauretania*, arriving in Halifax on January 21, 1946. Jack and Doris would have three children together. Jack would work for, and eventually retire from Dow Chemical Limited in Sarnia.

Jack Graham’s memory of that fateful Dieppe Raid morning, *We had plenty of training under our belt and that training took over. We had practiced landing; however, the ramp went down and I found myself crawling over bodies, no training could prepare us for what lay ahead. I can clearly remember Pappy Beck shouting, ‘Keep your head down!’ I was carrying an E.Y. Rifle with a grenade on the end of the barrel. It was new to me and a bit top heavy. I recall getting it stuck in the stones once I reached the beach. Carnage was everywhere. It was a massacre.”*

Jack Graham was to be held as a Prisoner of War in Germany for 34 months. His memory of the war camp, *“If you behaved yourself, you would survive. I was scared and I followed the rules. There was an occasion when I cleared my throat and spat. Unfortunately, two German officers thought I was being disrespectful to them. I spent seven days in the ‘cooler’ for my actions. As the war progressed, we were aware of the Allied Forces’ successes. Crystal radio receivers kept us posted and after 34 months I heard the bombs in the distance. That morning we climbed to the roof tops and could see the British 8th Army coming. The dogs and guards were gone and for the first time in nearly three years, we were free!*

**William Richard Graham** was born on July 26, 1918, the eldest son of Arthur and Florence Graham of Sarnia. He would marry Dorothy (nee Davies), the daughter of Capt. And Mrs. A. Davies of Toronto. William would nickname his new bride “Dodie” and the couple would reside at 438 Aylmer Avenue, Windsor. At his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a truck driver. William enlisted in the Canadian Army, and like his brother Jack, became a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C. William would become a Commando instructor prior to the Dieppe Raid. William Graham took part in the Dieppe raid, as a Sergeant-Major, along with his brother Jack on August 19, 1942. Only days after the raid, parents Arthur and Florence would receive the news that son Jack was reported as missing, and no word on the fate of their other son William was received. Jack would spend three years as a prisoner of war. William would survive Dieppe to fight another day.

In February 1943, Arthur and Florence would receive a letter from their oldest son William, dated January 1943. In the letter, he informed his parents that he had been in the Dieppe Raid and that he had returned to England unwounded. He also stated that he had been recommended for a commission. He also enclosed a souvenir memorial card that had been produced in England, to the memory of those who did not come back from Dieppe. He wrote that he had a hard time trying to erase Dieppe from his memory and that he has lived it over again repeatedly in his dreams.

In the early part of 1943, William was one of a large party of Canadian soldiers who returned to Canada from England. In mid-May of 1943, William made his way to Windsor to report to Essex Scottish headquarters. His mother Florence drove from Sarnia to Windsor to meet him. In mid-September of 1943, while on the officers’ training school staff at Brockville, William and his wife Dodie would return to Sarnia for a weekend to visit his parents. One year later, in September of 1944, William and Dodie would give birth to their baby girl, Susan.

Included at the back of this project are two photographs pertaining to William Graham. One is of William, and his beautiful wife Dorothy (Davies) whom he nicknamed “Dodie”. The other photograph shows William holding their one-month old baby daughter Susan, dated October 15, 1944. After obtaining his commission as Lieutenant, William was recalled overseas and returned to his unit, arriving in England in December of 1944. In early January of 1945, William would send the following telegram to his wife Dorothy who was residing in Newmarket, Ontario at the time:

*Darling arrived safe address later love Bill Graham.*

Not long after arriving overseas, William mailed home two hand-written letters. The following are those two letters, the first letter, posted February 6, 1945 from Abergavenny, addressed to his baby daughter:

*My dearest little Susan,*

*I wonder is this the first letter you receive. Anyway I hope I shall be able to write you when you are older.*



*Your father is very proud of you. He and your grandfather were fortunate enough to have a few days together here. Your uncle Jackie was here at the same time.*

*I must thank you very much for the beautifully looking package we have just received from you sent by your grandpa. Your little ladyship showed wonderful discrimination in the choice of your gift to your aged ancestor.*

*In photographs we have received of your bonny self quite justify your fathers pride in you. Your g g ma will probably write you herself. She is laid up today with a severe headache.*

*Your uncle Jackie surprised us yesterday evening by paying us another visit on short leave before arriving from Greenwich to Cumberland.*

*Give your love to your mother Mrs. Graham & your aunt Marie & of course to your grandma and love to Susan.*

*Your affectionately,  
G.G.Pa*

The second letter, mailed February 28, 1945 location unknown, is addressed to his wife Dorothy (Note: William's "pet" name for his wife Dorothy was Dodie, and their daughter Susan was now 6 months old):

*My Darling:*

*I am afraid my letters are going to be few and far between dearest. I am kept pretty busy. But you can bet I'll do my best. I love you Dodie. And my letters will of necessity, be short. I can't tell you anything about what is going on. Besides you know more about the war than I do. We look for newspapers to tell us about it, and they are a day or so late.*

*If this is hard to read darling, please excuse it. It is a little on the difficult side to write here. We are in a ruined house and the writing facilities have disappeared. I'm struggling along on a rickety table, by candle light and sitting on a box. But I have to tell you I love you my dearest. So you must put up with this.*

*How is our Susan? She is quite a young lady now, I'll bet. Sitting in her high chair and eating grown up food. I'd sure like to see her. Does she miss her Daddy? The little devil probably gurgles and chuckles away to herself and is completely ignorant of my existence. But I love her just the same. I certainly miss her too, darling.*

*Have I told you that I love you yet my own Dodie? Well I do darling. More than you'll ever know. I'll certainly be glad when this is over. And I say that with more fervour that I ever thought possible. It will be so nice to settle down and live peaceful, normal lives again. I adore you my own dear wife.*

*So long for now sweetheart. Take care of yourself and Susan. We'll all be together soon. Kiss Susan for me darling. Give love to mom and the Burg's. I love you my Dodie. Forever & ever.*

*You're my own adoring  
Bill XXXX*

*P.S. This last is German ink, if your interested. I love you.*

*Bill*

\*(Note: from the word Burg's on, the letter is clearly written with a different kind of ink)

Two days after the above letter was mailed, on March 2, 1945, William Graham would lose his life in a mortar bomb attack in Hochwald Forest, Germany, during the Battle of the Rhineland. In mid-March 1945, Williams wife Dorothy, who was residing in Newmarket, along with his parents Arthur and Florence in Sarnia, would receive word that Lieutenant William Graham had been killed in action, presumably on the Western Front. Arthur and Florence Graham had received a letter from William only two weeks prior to his death, and were unaware that he was in Europe. Approximately two months after William Graham's death, the war in Europe would end. William Graham would later be officially listed as, *Killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. William Graham would leave behind his parents, his wife Dorothy and their six-month old baby daughter Susan. Twenty-six year old William Graham is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XXI.E.4.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, d

### **GRAINGER, Roy James (#V/17877)**

Roy Grainger was born in Kingston, Ontario on December 4, 1916, the son of James Francis Grainger and Edith Mary Grainger, of Port Hope, Ontario. When Roy enlisted, he was single, residing at 145 Davis Street, Sarnia and employed as a meat manager at Loblaws Groceteria. Roy joined the Navy, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve, serving aboard the *HMCS Athabaskan*, attaining the rank of Petty Officer Supply.

The *HMCS Athabaskan (G07)* was a destroyer of the Tribal class, built in 1940-41 and commissioned by the Royal Canadian Navy in February of 1943. She was plagued by mishaps during her very short service life. She had to be repaired due to weather-induced stress, and was involved in two minor collisions that resulted in repairs required. On August 27th of 1943, she was heavily damaged by a German Henschel glider bomb during an anti-submarine chase in the Bay of Biscay. The *HMS Egret* was sunk in the same incident.

On April 29, 1944, the *HMCS Athabaskan* and her sister ship the *HMCS Haida*, were ordered to intercept a German force steaming towards Morlaix River, off the coast of Brittany in the English Channel. Just before 4:00 pm, the *Athabaskan* made radar contact with two German Elbing destroyers, *T-24* and *T-27*, and an E-boat. Closing range to 4300 yards, the *Athabaskan* fired a volley of 4-inch star shells. As both Canadian ships opened fire, they turned their bows directly towards the German destroyers, to present as little silhouette as possible and to avoid torpedos fired at them. Unfortunately, torpedoes from German torpedo boat *T-24* hit the *Athabaskan*. Shortly after, the magazine and a boiler blew up in an explosion that was seen 20 miles away. Fires were raging fiercely above and below decks. Slowly, *Athabaskan* upended and slid under the surface, steam and escaping air hissing her death knell. Survivors were scattered, some in boats, others clinging to floats and still others supported only by their life jackets, many of them barely alive. *Haida* had continued the chase, catching and destroying *T-27*, and then she returned to where the *Athabaskan* had been.

When *Haida* arrived, it came across life jacket lights bobbing and blinking in the dark, many of the men barely conscious, located within five miles of the German-held French coast. The *Haida* dropped all of her boats and floats, scramble-nets were lowered over the side and her own men went down them to drag up dazed and exhausted survivors. Her motor cutter (power launch) also went over the side, manned by a party of three volunteers. With the tide pulling at the destroyer and dawn raising the probabilities for an imminent air attack, the *Haida* had limited time to rescue survivors. After being stopped for ten minutes, word was passed along that the ship would have to go ahead in five minutes. The warning was repeated at one-minute intervals to the rescue parties labouring along the side and on the quarter-deck. Sixty seconds after the last warning, the order "slow ahead" was given. After fifteen minutes, and after rescuing as many as she could, the *Haida* was forced to make a run for it. The *Athabaskan* captain, Lieutenant Commander John Stubbs, in the water with the other survivors, declined rescue by *Haida* to swim back for more crew members.

A total of forty-four of the oil-soaked *Athabaskan* crew were picked up out of the water by *HMCS Haida*. Eight *Athabaskan* crew members were able to climb into a lowered *Haida* motor cutter, and slowly made their way to safety. Three German torpedo boats picked up 83 survivors in the water, who were taken prisoner. A total of 128 of the crew were lost in the sinking of the *Athabaskan* that April 29 night, among them, the *Athabaskan* Commander John Stubbs and Petty Officer Supply Roy Grainger of Sarnia. Roy Grainger would later be officially listed as, *Missing, presumed dead, when H.M.C.S. 'Athabaskan' was torpedoed and sunk by enemy action in the English Channel*. Twenty-seven year old Roy Grainger has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 12.

Years later, there was speculation that the *Athabaskan* may have in fact been lost to a friendly fire incident after being torpedoed by a British motor torpedo boat, or that she had suffered some sort of catastrophic internal explosion in number one boiler room. Due to the poor condition of the wreck and the poor record keeping and incomplete logs of other ships in the area at the time, neither of these theories has yet to be confirmed.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **GREEN, Harold Cecil (#A/606494)**

Harold Green was born in Sarnia on April 23, 1921, the son of George Seymour Green (born in England) and Anne (nee Lee, born in Watlington, Oxfordshire, England) Green, of 259 Elgin Street, Sarnia. He had one brother, George Edwin Green, born in 1909. Harold Green was educated in Sarnia. Prior to his enlistment, he was employed at the Sarnia Elevator Company. He was also a member of Canon Davis Memorial Church. Harold enlisted in the Canadian Army more than two years prior to his death. He would train at Windsor and in London, Ontario, and for some time was stationed in Vancouver with the Royal Canadian 31st Armored Corps Division, with the rank of Trooper. Just prior his death, Harold had been expecting to come home to Sarnia on a furlough.

On April 24, 1944, while in British Columbia, Harold Green and three other men were riding in a Bren gun

carrier which overturned, pinning the occupants beneath it. Trooper Harold Green and the three other men were seriously injured. On May 2, 1944, Harold Green died as a result of the injuries he had received. He died in the Shaughnessy Military Hospital, Vancouver. The coroner's report stated that the injuries he accidentally received during military manoeuvres caused the death of Trooper Green. Harold Green would later be officially listed as, *Universal carrier accident while on training, New Westminster, British Columbia*. Harold Green's body arrived in Sarnia by C.N.R. not long after his death. His funeral was held at the Robb Funeral Home, followed by a public service at Canon Davis Memorial Church, followed by his internment. Twenty-three year old Harold Green is buried in Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section E, Lot 106.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

**GREEN, Russell Raymond (#A/17184) – Photograph page 382**

Russell Green was born on August 24, 1918, the son of Mrs. Gertrude B. Green, of 254 Davis Street, and later 106 North Brock Street, Sarnia. Russell was part Irish and part Iroquois Mohawk, and received his education in Sarnia schools. Russell would marry his wife Eileen prior to joining the army. He enlisted in Sarnia in the Canadian Army with the 26th Battery in September 1939. At his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a labourer, and his residence at 244 Christina Street, North, Sarnia. He would train at Petawawa and at Guelph, and went overseas in August 1940. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery, 4th Field Regiment, attaining the rank of Lance Bombardier.

In August of 1942, Russell would celebrate his 24th birthday "somewhere in England." On August 13, 1944, Russell Green would lose his life while fighting in France during the Battle of Normandy. His mother Mrs. Gertrude Green also had a younger son, Private Louis Currotte, who was wounded in his ankle while on active service in France only a few days prior to Russell's death. Gertrude Green in Sarnia would receive word in mid-August of 1944 of her son Louis Currotte's wounding in France. Only a few days later, Gertrude Green would receive a telegram from the Director of Records in Ottawa informing her that her other son, *Lance-Bombardier Russell Raymond Green has been reported missing in action in France on August 13*. The message also stated that when further information became available, it would be forwarded to her. Russell Green would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Twenty-five year old Russell Green is buried in Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave XII.G.9. On Russell Green's headstone are inscribed the words, *A beautiful memory dearer than gold of a son whose worth can ne'er be told. Mother*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

**HALLAM, John Norman (#R/68193)**

John (Jack) Hallam was born in London, England on June 8, 1918, the son of Cyril Francis Hallam (born in Hougham, England) and Marjorie Laura (nee Park, born in London, England) Hallam, of Lakeshore Road, Sarnia. John had two sisters, Betty W. (born 1917) and Nancy M. (born 1921). Father Cyril had come and stayed in Canada between June 1912 and August 1914 before returning to England. Cyril returned to reside in Canada permanently with his family in 1928. John was nine years old when the family arrived aboard the passenger ship *Aurania* that had left Southampton, England and arrived in the port of Quebec on April 22, 1928. At that time, father Cyril listed his occupation as a farmer.

John Hallam was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate and then went into employment in the drafting department of the Sarnia Bridge Company. He was exceptionally popular among the young people of Sarnia. John had been intent on getting into the air force. When war was declared in 1939, he went on his own initiative to Camp Borden under the impression that it might be possible to enlist there. However he was told there, as he had been earlier at London, that there were 25,000 men already on the waiting list, and all that could be done was to take an examination and await a future call. He was not called until a year later.

John Hallam was single when he enlisted and recorded his residence as Sarnia Riding Club. He departed enroute to the manning pool in Toronto of the Royal Canadian Air Force in mid-July 1940, along with fellow Sarnians John Murray and William Clark (William Clark is included in this project). John Hallam then continued his training in Trenton and then Regina, Saskatchewan, where he attained his classification as pilot by October of 1940. His intensive study and a natural talent for flying enabled him to attain exceptional proficiency in the air. In a letter to his parents from Regina, John mentioned Fred Houston, "Bunt" Murray, Gordon Bracken, Harry Turnbull and Doug Wilder, all Sarnia boys who were in the air school with him. In March 1941, John left for overseas service.

John would become a member of RCAF #82 Squadron "Super Omnia Ubique" (Over all things everywhere), attaining the rank of Sergeant-Pilot. Two days after he arrived overseas from Sarnia in April 1941, he was flying over the English Channel where he was engaged in active aerial warfare until his death. On July 12, 1941, approximately one year after having left Sarnia, John was part of a crew aboard Blenheim aircraft V6524. Their aircraft went out of control in sea fog and crashed in the North Sea, killing John Hallam. Two of the crew, not Canadians, were also reported missing and believed killed. On July 15th, John's parents Cyril and Marjorie in Sarnia would receive an official cable informing them that their son John was reported missing overseas, and that a letter would be following. In the newspaper story of John Hallam's missing status, the *Canadian Observer* reported that, "In the case of a missing flyer, there is the possibility that he might be a prisoner or that he escaped in some other way and had not been able to report to headquarters."

In late August 1941, Cyril and Marjorie received another letter, this from the R.C.A.F. records office giving some details relating to the previous official report that their son was "missing". According to the letter, his squadron reported that the last they had seen of "Jack's" plane, it was flying "inverted" or upside down over the North Sea. It also pointed out that this did not rule out the possibility that the flyers had not perished even if the plane fell into the sea. It was probable that the squadron had been over Germany and was returning. Whether John's plane was damaged before it began the trip, or whether it was damaged in the attack over Germany or the Low Countries, or it had been assailed by fighter-planes at sea, was not disclosed. Both Britain and Germany maintained floating first aid posts in the North Sea and many fliers, first presumed lost, had reached one of these floats and were rescued.

In early September of 1941, Sarnia Collegiate teacher Miss Mae Burriss received a letter that awaited her when she returned from her summer vacation. It was from John Hallam, the former student of Sarnia Collegiate, who at that time in September, was still reported as missing overseas. The letter was dated July 10, 1941 (two days before he was shot down). The letter was in acknowledgment of the receipt of copies of "School Daze," the Sarnia Collegiate periodical, concerning which John wrote,

*They seemed to bring back many pleasant memories of the times I had at the Sarnia Collegiate.... I am very comfortable here. Our squadron is living in a country mansion. Our hours are not as when I was training in Canada. The food is very good and we get plenty to eat. We have a garden here and we grow lettuce, carrots, beans, etc., which we use in the officers' and sergeants' messes. The garden is worked by us, in some of our spare time, so you see that flying is not our only task. I am not flying fighters as I had hoped to, but then someone has to fly the bombers, don't they?*

On September 17, 1941, Cyril and Marjorie Hallam received a letter from the officer in charge of records at the Royal Air Force headquarters in England. The letter stated that no further word had been received concerning their son who was first reported missing in mid-July and whose plane might have fallen into the North Sea. There had been a report recently that a resident in the Sarnia district had heard a German short-wave broadcast in which a name which sounded like "Halsam" was mentioned as a prisoner in Germany, and Sarnia, Ontario was given as the place of origin of the prisoner. Enquiries at Ottawa only elicited a response that this broadcast was not transcribed by the intelligence service there.

Any hope that John Hallam had survived was dashed when he would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing during air operations overseas, now for official purposes presumed to have died, overseas*. Twenty-one year old Sergeant Pilot John Hallam is buried in the Kiel War Cemetery, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, Grave 3.B.3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **HAMILTON, Thomas (#A/18184)**

Thomas Hamilton was born on July 24, 1916, the son of Alexander and Selena Hamilton, of Sarnia. He had four brothers: Charles, Robert, James and Herbert, the latter a Private serving at Camp Borden at the time of Thomas' death. Thomas attended public schools and Sarnia Collegiate in Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Thomas was employed by Holmes Foundry Company, listing his occupation as a machinist. When a recruiting station was opened in Sarnia shortly after the outbreak of war, Thomas was among the first to enlist, joining the Canadian Army. He married his wife Blanche Hamilton (nee Billard), and at wartime, they resided at 386 Savoy Street, Sarnia. Thomas and Blanche had a daughter together, Ann Hamilton. After his death, Thomas' Death Certificate recorded his residence address as Cemetery Road, Sarnia.

As a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, 1 Field Park Coy, Thomas went overseas on December 12, 1940. As part of his engineering unit, he had participated in the Dieppe raid two years prior to his death. Shortly before his death, Corporal Thomas Hamilton had sent a letter home to his relatives in which he said that he was in France, was getting along well, and asked his family not to worry about him. On August 9, 1944, Thomas Hamilton would lose his life while fighting during the Battle of Normandy, the result of a mine explosion. In mid-August of 1944, several hours after his wife Blanche and their daughter Anne left for a vacation with friends in Royal Oak, Michigan, word from the Department of National Defence was received in Sarnia that her husband, *Corporal Thomas Hamilton, had been killed in France on August 9 by a mine explosion*. Members of his family communicated the news to Blanche and she and her daughter returned home to Sarnia immediately.

Thomas Hamilton would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. In December of 1944, Thomas Hamilton was awarded posthumously the decoration C-in-C Certificate, for Good Service. Twenty-eight year old Thomas Hamilton is buried in Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave XIII.E.14. On Thomas Hamilton's headstone are inscribed the words, *Lovingly remembered by his wife, daughter, parents and brothers*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **HARRIS, John Michael (#R/63612) – Photograph page 382**

John Michael (Jack) Harris was born at Sarnia General Hospital on January 8, 1913, the youngest son of Michael George (born Arahova, Sparta, Greece) and Rosamond (nee Moore, born Chatham, Ontario) Harris of North Brock Street, Sarnia. At the time of John's birth, the family lived at 182 ½ Front Street, Sarnia, and father Michael listed his occupation as theatre owner and manager. John had two brothers--George (born 1910) and James, who a few years prior to his death had become a partner with in the operation of Sarnia's National Club. John was raised in Sarnia, attending school here, and he was interested in making model aircraft as a hobby. John later learned to fly in London, Ontario and he earned a civilian pilot's license. John had some military training in the U.S. Army, serving as a member of the U.S. Marines as a young teen in Honolulu from 1928-1930.

John Harris enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in May of 1940. John married Stella Matilda Logan, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Logan of South Mitton Street, Sarnia at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on December 17, 1940. At the ceremony, Mrs. George Harris served as the maid of honour, and John's brother George served as the best man. After the ceremony, an informal reception was held at the home of the bride's parents for immediate relatives; then the newlywed couple left on a short wedding trip. John and Stella Harris resided at 116 South Mitton Street, Sarnia.

John then went to the Toronto manning pool and later transferred to the RCAF #1 Wireless Training School in Montreal. He trained as a wireless gunner and later transferred to Jarvis Bombing and Gunnery School, graduating as a wireless operator/air gunner. Because of his civilian pilot experience, he was given a flying test at Rockcliffe airdrome, and then took a special course at Picton Air Base where he received his wings and graduated as a sergeant-pilot. At the #1 Wireless Training School, one of his duties was to fly new American built airplanes from Windsor to Montreal. Only several weeks prior to his death, John had spent a leave in Sarnia. At the time, he referred to his love for the air force and his work. When he returned to #1 Wireless Training School in Montreal where he was stationed as staff pilot flying out of St. Hubert's airport, his wife Mrs. Stella Harris, went with him.

On April 7, 1941, piloting his Menasco Moth aircraft #4824 while engaged in a two-hour wireless exercise, his aircraft crashed into a bush between Caughnawaga and suburban Chateauguay, near Montreal. His flying companion, LAC R.L.W. Orchard, a New Zealander, escaped with bruises and was shaken up. John Harris was killed. His death was the first to occur in the ranks of Sarnians who were serving in World War II with the RCAF. Eyewitnesses reported that the plane had been stunting for about 20 minutes at 1000 feet when its engine stopped. The engine faltered twice and then stopped again at about 700 feet before the plane side-slipped towards the ground. It was gliding down quite slowly. Harris tried to start the engine again, but it stopped a few moments later before it came down into a 10-foot bush, burying its nose into the wet earth. A truck load of soldiers were first to the scene. LAC Orchard was able to walk away after soldiers removed him from the ship, but Sergeant Harris was pinned between the engine and the pilot seat. John Harris died a few hours later after being admitted to hospital, due to a fractured skull and other injuries. His death would later be officially listed as, *Died in Notre-Dame Hospital*,

*YOU HAVE LEFT A LONELINESS THE WORLD CAN NEVER FILL.  
OUR LOVE WAS NOT FOR A LIFETIME BUT FOR AN ETERNITY.*

*Montreal, as result of flying accident.* John Harris had been scheduled to be overseas flying planes only weeks after the crash.

One day after the crash, the body of John (Jack) Harris left by train from Montreal for burial in Sarnia. His bride of less than four months, Stella Harris, who had gone to Montreal with her husband only a short time prior, also arrived in Sarnia accompanied by her mother. Recorded in the *Sarnia Observer* under the headline, "First Military Funeral of War Hero Held Here," a funeral with full military auspices was held at the Stewart Funeral Home. More than a thousand friends of Pilot John Harris and his well-known family paid their respects. At the crowded Stewart Funeral Home, Rev. Captain J.M. Macgillivray, minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in his sermon said, *Jack Harris was a clean living boy, a keen sportsman and a general favorite with all who knew him. He was among the first in this community to answer the call. He was an experienced airman and had flown planes before the war broke out, and he offered his services in the capacity in which he could be of most use. He thought not of the danger – he was eager only to serve the cause of liberty. He shall be missed by a large circle of friends, but our deepest sympathy goes out to his young wife, so recently a bride, and his father and mother and brothers in their bereavement.*

As the casket draped with a Union Jack which upon rested a wreath of Flanders poppies was brought out of the funeral home, past an honor guard, a plane's motor roared in the western sky. The Lambton Garrison Band, with muffled drums played a funeral march as the procession moved along College Avenue. The casket in a flower-filled hearse, was escorted by pallbearers along with officers of the 11th Field Company, the 26th Battery, members of the Royal Canadian Air Force and Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, and veterans of the last war represented by Sarnia Branch 62 of the Canadian Legion and the American Legion, Port Huron. At the cemetery, a large throng gathered at the flower-banked graveside. As the ceremony concluded, the firing party's three volleys rang out over the grave and "The Last Post" was sounded. Twenty-eight year old John Harris is buried in Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section E., Lot 176. On John Harris' headstone are inscribed the words, *Beloved husband of Stella M. Logan. Killed in service of R.C.A.F. 'Per Ardua ad astra.'*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **HARRIS, Victor Henry (#J/9742)**

Victor Harris was born on December 5, 1918, the son of John William Henry and Hannah Beatrice (nee Chappell) Harris, of Exmouth Street, Sarnia. Both his parents were born in England. He had one brother, Bert. Victor graduated from Sarnia Collegiate in 1938. When Victor was three years old, his family visited his relatives in England, returning to Canada in July 1922 aboard the passenger ship *Montrose*. The Harris family resided at 254 Queen Street, Sarnia at that time. Victor's Death Certificate lists his residence as Shadynook, Exmouth Street, R.R. #1, Sarnia, Ontario. In September 1938, Victor went to Haileybury School of Mines on a government-sponsored program where tuition, books and living allowances were supplied. The government-sponsored program was created to alleviate the shortage of qualified miners. In September 1939, he went to Michigan Mining and Agricultural Technical School in Houghton, Michigan. In 1940, he was working in a gold mine in Timmons, Ontario.

In the spring of 1941, Victor, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in Timmons. He trained at Toronto and Oshawa, and graduated from #16 Flying Training School in Hagersville, Ontario in January 1942. Victor became a member of RCAF #15 Squadron "Aim Sure", attaining the rank of Flight Lieutenant-Pilot. He was with the RCAF for about 2 ½ years and a veteran of many flights over Germany and other enemy territory. He was the "skipper" of his ship, a Stirling Bomber R9279, stationed out of Mildenhall, Lincolnshire, England. On February 26, 1943, Victor Harris' Stirling aircraft failed to return from operations over enemy territory. Seven of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed.

In early April of 1943, parents John and Hannah Harris in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing them that their son Victor Henry Harris was, *Reported missing after operations over enemy territory*. John and Hannah would cling to the hope that their son was possibly a prisoner of war, knowing that many months could elapse before authorities could definitely determine the fate of one listed as missing. Some time later, William and Hannah Harris would receive the telegram informing them that their son Victor was now officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-four year old Flight Lieutenant-Pilot Victor Harris has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey,

LIKE A HERO HE DIED IN BATTLE FOR CANADA AND FOR HIS FAMILY.  
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN BE HIS.

United Kingdom, Panel 172.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

**HEBNER, Clifford Vernon (#A/19360) – Photograph page 383**

Clifford Hebner was born in Gilbert Plains, Manitoba on May 11, 1913, the son of Frank (born in Huntsville, Ontario) and Minnie May (nee Burrows, born Neepawa, Manitoba) Hebner. He would have four brothers--Arnold Stewart (born 1904), Mervin Chester (born 1915), Frank (born 1925) and Ivan (born 1906)--and five sisters including Mabel (born 1907), Violet (born 1908) and Winnifred (born 1918). When Clifford was 23 years old, he would lose his father, Frank, who died in 1936. Clifford's brother, Mervin Chester, also born in Manitoba, would also join the army, serving as a Gunner with the Royal Canadian Artillery, 3rd Anti-tank Regiment.

On March 16, 1940, Clifford would marry Vera Hebner (nee Mantle), of London, England. Clifford and Vera Hebner would reside at R.R. #2 Sarnia, Ontario. He recorded his occupation as a stoker. Clifford enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, 1 Field Coy with the rank of Sergeant. Clifford Hebner would take part in the Dieppe raid of August 1942, where close to 5,000 Canadian soldiers took part and over 900 would lose their lives.

Brother Mervin Chester Hebner, a gunner with the Royal Canadian Artillery, who fought at Normandy on D-Day, would lose his life on July 11, 1944, at age 29 in Caen, France, during the first few days of the Battle of Normandy. Mervin is buried in Beny-Sur-Mer Cemetery, Normandy, France. Only three months later, on October 5, 1944, Clifford Hebner would lose his life in Belgium, in the early stages of the Battle of the Scheldt. For the widowed Minnie May, this was her second son lost in war. Clifford Hebner would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Belgium)*. Thirty-two year old Clifford Hebner is buried in Schoonselhof Cemetery, Belgium, Grave IV.B.15. On Clifford Hebner's headstone are inscribed the words, *Cliff and I lived a glorious life together in five short months. Vera*. On December 23, 1944, Clifford Hebner was awarded posthumously the Military Medal. The award states, *The King has been graciously pleased to approve the following award in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in the field.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2B, 2C, 2D

**HEGARTY, Hugh Francis (#J/4536)**

Hugh Francis (Frank) Hegarty was born in Culdaff, Ireland on August 23, 1917 in Donegal, Ireland. He was the son of Hugh Hegarty (born in Carea Donagh) and Catherine (nee Greene, born in Culdaffs Donegal) Hegarty, both from Ireland. Hugh had three sisters: Kathleen (born 1900), Mary Bridget (born 1906) and Margaret. He also had one brother, Mike, and two half brothers, Bernard and James Hegarty. Hugh came to Canada when he was just seven years old. He arrived at a port in Quebec in 1924, with his mother aboard the passenger ship *Saturnia*.

The Hegarty family resided at 417 Confederation Street, then 279 Rose Street, Sarnia during the war years. Hugh was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia. Hugh went on to graduate from Sarnia Collegiate High School and was well known in Sarnia, having been a mechanic at Sarnia Sports' Shop and later working at Keelans. Single at the time, Hugh Hegarty enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on September 7, 1940. Hugh Hegarty was a member of RCAF #407 Demon Squadron "To Hold On High", flying a Hudson aircraft AN586 as a Pilot Officer-Pilot. He and his squadron arrived overseas just one month prior to Hugh's death. Based out of a North Sea Coast bombing post, they were engaged in raiding German positions in the Netherlands.

On October 10, 1941, on a wet and blustery night, he and his crew were flying a Hudson Bomber "T for Tommy" for anti-shipping patrol off the Dutch coast, carrying 4 X 250 lb. bombs. The plane failed to return and they were presumed killed during the flying operation. Their plane and crew was the first loss sustained by the #407 Demon Squadron coastal command, and the first plane reported missing from an R.C.A.F. coastal command in Britain. Also on board the aircraft was another Sarnian. Flight-sergeant Charles John Frederick McCrum was the son of Mr. and Mrs. H.U. McCrum of Ottawa. The family, including Charles McCrum, had resided in Sarnia for several years, where Charles attended Sarnia Collegiate. Charles McCrum's father was the former chief inspector for the Canadian Immigration Service in Sarnia, and the family had moved to Ottawa only a few years earlier when Mr. McCrum was transferred to the capital.

The Hudson Bomber with Hugh Hegarty and its crew was never found. It was not until June of 1942 that

Pilot Officer Hugh Hegarty would be listed as, *Previously reported missing after flying operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Perishing with Pilot Officer-Pilot Hugh Hegarty were FS. Don S. Mather; Sgt. C.J. McCrum; Flying Officer J.W. Renwick (RAF); and Sgt. Billy Smith (RAF). Pilot Officer-Pilot Hugh Hegarty has no known grave. In June 8th of 1942, a requiem high mass was celebrated at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Sarnia for Hugh Hegarty. Twenty-four year old Hugh Hegarty has his name inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, United Kingdom, Panel 59. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as H.F. Haggerty.

The following is a newspaper account of the night on which the aircraft of which Hugh Francis Hegarty was a crew member went missing (*Hamilton Spectator*, October 31, 1941 by Douglas Amaron, Canadian Press);

*RAID BY CANADIAN SQUADRON ENDS WITH ONE PLANE LOST  
"T For Tommy" Does Not Return After Attack on French Coast  
Is Awaited in Vain*

*Darkness settled down over the air field as the last plane took off for the Netherlands coast. It was a cold night, with the salty rain blowing in from the North Sea, and Flight-Lieut. C.M. Warren, of Toronto, medical officer of the Royal Canadian Air Force coastal command squadron at the station, was bundled up like an Eskimo in a fur-lined flying jacket.*

*"You can't keep too warm on a job like this," he said. "I have to be here until after midnight and it can get mighty cold at that time of night."*

*The Canadians, grounded all the previous week because of even worse flying conditions, were out almost in full force. Some were over the Netherlands coast looking for Nazi shipping, some were on cross-country training flights, and some were practicing night landings.*

*In the distance searchlights played against the low-hanging clouds and the sound of a gun brought the station defence crew to their sand-bagged posts. Flashes of anti-aircraft fire several miles away light the sky.*

*There were German planes in the area, but no one paid much attention to them. Raids in that district are almost a nightly affair and only a handful of people stayed out in the cold to watch the fireworks display which lasted less than 20 minutes.*

*P.O. Bill Cameron, of Vancouver, brought his plane down for the night after a half dozen landings and muttered a few unkindly words about ground defences. He had flown through the barrage area and almost caught some of the shells meant for Nazi raiders.*

*"Damned indecent of them," he said as he landed. "They told me there was an enemy craft about so I followed him in. Then what did they do but fire at me. A fellow isn't safe anywhere these days."*

*More planes came back – P.O. Bill Shankland, of Vancouver, from a landing practice, P.O. John McCulloch, of Point*

*Pleasant, West Va., from a cross country flight, and P.O. Bob Wadds, of Toronto, from a flight over the North Sea.*

*"T for Tommy," with P.O. Frank Hegarty, of Sarnia, Ont., at the controls, and Sergts. Don Mather, of North Gower, Ont., and C.J.F. McCrum, of Ottawa, and an R.A.F. pilot officer in his crew, was the next plane due back.*

*An hour went by and there was no word from it. Sgt. Pilots Bob Mullen, of Ganora, Sask., and J.K. Abbott, of Montreal, arrived almost together. They too had seen nothing but the night, and had heard nothing of "T for Tommy."*

*P.O. Dale Cowperwaite, of Toronto, came in next after being reported several miles off course. "T for Tommy" was two hours overdue.*

*"A lousy night," Cowperwaite said. "The wireless went haywire, my lights went out, 'George' the automatic pilot wasn't working, the compass went off. In fact the only thing that worked was the engines. And we didn't see anything either."*

*The crews huddled around a big kitchen stove, drinking hot tea, eating meat pies and cursing the blackness of the night – one of the few on which they had returned with nothing to report.*

*Outside, Flight-Lieut. Warren stood on the edge of the darkened field beside his ambulance. The rain still beat down and the cold wind whistled around the low-lying buildings beside the sea.*

*There was still no word from "T for Tommy."*



*They waited another hour – Cameron, Shankland, McCulloch, Wadda, Mullen, Abbott, Cowperwaite and the crews, and Warren. Then, wearily and saying few words, they piled into their transport and drove slowly through the blackout to the operations room to turn in their reports.*

*These were brief and to the point and the briefest was in the space reserved for three young Canadians and an Englishman. There, for the first time since the squadron was formed, went down the one word – “missing.” “T for Tommy” didn’t come home.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, c

### **HORLEY, Wallace Carman (#V/31090)**

Wallace Horley was born in Dewar Lake, Saskatchewan on September 10, 1921, the son of Walter Carman Horley (born in Becher, Lambton, Ontario) and Rachel (nee Muirhead, born in Dumbarton, Scotland) Horley, of 114 John Street, Sarnia. Wallace’s father, Walter Carman, was employed in the Processing Department of Sarnia Refinery. Wallace had one sister, Evelyn Mary (born 1918), and two brothers, who at wartime, were both also in the Royal Canadian Navy: Stoker Petty Officer Alistair James Horley (born 1919) and Telegraphist F.A. Horley. Wallace also had a brother-in-law, Cpl. William Dellow who served with the Canadian Corps in Italy.

Wallace attended school in Port Lambton. Prior to enlisting, Wallace was employed at Imperial Oil Company, as a pipe fitter, and residing with his parents at 114 John Street, Sarnia. Single at the time, Wallace enlisted in the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve in March 1942, just over two years prior to his death. He trained in Windsor and went overseas in January 1944 where he was assigned to the crew of the *HMCS Alberni (K103)*, a corvette of the Flower class, attaining the rank of Stoker.

The *Alberni* had been commissioned for service by the Royal Canadian Navy in February 1941. She was the first western Canadian corvette assigned as a convoy escort. She played a prominent role in the Battle of the Atlantic when the depredations of German U-boats were at their peak. In her illustrious career, she was credited with one probable sinking of a Nazi submarine, had joined in on several other kills, had shot down a Junkers 88 bomber, and had rescued countless numbers of men from the sea after Allied ships were attacked. In April of 1944, she was one of seventeen RCN corvettes sent to the UK in support of *Operation Neptune*, the landings at Normandy. Wallace had written a letter to his parents saying that he had participated in the invasion of Normandy, France while aboard the *Alberni*.

On August 21, 1944, the *HMCS Alberni* was steaming south at 14 knots escorting a convoy in the English Channel southeast of the Isle of Wight. At 11:46 am, the *Alberni* was struck by a torpedo fired by German submarine *U-480*. The torpedo struck the ship on her port side immediately aft of the engine room. The surviving crew members were those positioned farther forward, but even many of them never reached the upper deck. Within moments of the attack the ship was awash. The stern sank first. The ship rolled to port, and then the bow went under. The *Alberni* disappeared in less than one minute. There was a strong wind and heavy seas at the time, and with the speed of the disaster, there was no time to release the ship’s boats and floats. Four officers and 55 members of the crew, representing 2/3 of the *Alberni*’s crew, were lost in the attack. For those in the water, after forty-five minutes of struggling in the heavy seas, thirty-one crew members were rescued by Royal Navy motor torpedo boats *469* and *470*, and taken to Portsmouth.

At the time, no cause was given for the loss of the warship. Wallace Horley was one of the crew members who lost his life in the attack. The *Alberni* was the 8th corvette and 18th Canadian fighting ship to be lost in World War II. In late-August of 1944, parents Walter and Rachel Horley in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing them that their son, *Stoker First Class Wallace C. Horley, R.C.N. is missing at sea*. No other details were provided. In mid-September of 1944, Ottawa released the casualty list in connection with the sinking of the *Alberni*, and Stoker First Class Wallace Carman Horley was among those listed as missing from the lost warship. Information released from Ottawa included that two-thirds of the crew were either dead or missing after the sinking, that the attack occurred while the vessel was pursuing “invasion duties”, and no cause was given for the loss of the ship. In December of 1944, Wallace Horley would be officially listed as, *Missing, presumed dead. He was serving in H.M.C.S. ‘Alberni’ which was sunk in the English Channel*. In early March of 1945, Stoker First Class Wallace Horley, along with Private Russell Jolly (included in this project), were honoured at a memorial service at Devine Street United Church. Both men were members of the congregation and both had died recently while on active service. Twenty-two year

old Wallace Horley has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Panel 12.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, O, P, T, U, V, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **HUMBLE, George Horace (#A/50455)**

George Humble was born on August 14, 1912, the son of John Humble and Beatrice Humble, of Ridgetown, Ontario. George would marry his wife, Mabel E. Humble, and they resided on London Road, R.R. #1 Sarnia Township. George and Mabel would have a daughter together, Diane. George enlisted in the First Kent Regiment, Canadian Army in November of 1940. He trained in London, Chatham and Paris. He transferred to a Nova Scotia regiment, going overseas in March of 1943, as a member of West Nova Scotia Regiment, R.C.I.C.. On December 10, 1944, Private George Humble would lose his life during fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. George Humble would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*.

On a Sunday afternoon in early February of 1945, London Road West United Church in Sarnia held a memorial ceremony for two members of the church who had lost their lives recently in the war. Rev. P.S. Banes presided over a ceremony honouring Private Horace Humble, who lost his life December 10, 1944 in Italy and Lance Corporal Robert John Wade, who lost his life January 4, 1945 in Italy (included in this project). Thirty-two year old George Humble is buried in Ravenna War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V.F.16. George Horace Humble left behind his parents John and Beatrice Humble in Ridgetown, his wife Mabel in Sarnia, and their four-year old daughter, Diane. On George Humble's headstone are inscribed the words, *Someday we shall meet you where there will be no more goodbyes. Loving wife and daughter.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **JAMIESON, Rowland Craig**

Rowland Jamieson was born in Forest, Ontario on January 15, 1905, the son of David C. (Rupert) Jamieson (born in Alabama) and Nellie W. (nee Doss, born in Missouri) Jamieson, of 111 Wellington Street, Sarnia. At the time of Rowland's birth, his father resided in Forest, Ontario and listed his occupation as baker. Rowland had two sisters: Roxy Pearl (born 1905) and Ruby J. (born 1906). In 1910, five year-old Rowland was living in Chandler, Oklahoma with his mother, now Mamie Jamieson (Doss), who listed her occupation as farmer, and his two sisters Roxy and Ruby. In 1920, fifteen year-old Rowland was still living in Chandler, Oklahoma, living with his maternal grandparents Riley (a farmer) and Thursey Doss, and their eleven year-old son Archie. In May 1924, nineteen year-old Rowland would return to Canada to live with his father David Jamieson, at 106 Christina Street, Sarnia. Rowland listed his occupation as clerk at that time.

Rowland would marry Laura Frances Jane (nee Lindsay) Jamieson, of Toronto. They would have one child together, a girl, Frances Craig Jamieson born July 14, 1933. Rowland joined the Navy, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, attaining the rank of Warrant Officer, Special Branch. He listed his occupation then as test engineer. Rowland was assigned to *HMCS Bytown*, the RCN base at Ottawa and his Division is listed as the *HMS Victory*.

During World War II, the *HMS Victory* was a shore base barracks in Portsmouth, England where the famous ship of that name sat in drydock. (The *HMS Victory* was the Royal Navy ship launched in 1765, made famous as Lord Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar). Men stationed at *HMS Victory* during the Second World War were there either attending a training course or waiting for assignment to another ship.

In January 1942, Rowland Jamieson was a passenger aboard the *Ringstad*, a Norwegian motor merchant ship of approximately 4,800 tons. The ship was originally constructed in April 1923 and named the *Talisman*, but in 1940, it was renamed the *Ringstad*. On this January trip, the *Ringstad* was on its way to St. John, New Brunswick from Cardiff and Belfast with a cargo of 2600 tons of china clay.

On January 24, 1942 at 3:25 pm, approximately 85 miles southeast from Cape Race, the *Ringstad* was straggling from its convoy due to several days of stormy weather, when it was hit on the starboard side in the foreship by one torpedo from German U-boat *U-333*. All on board abandoned ship in three lifeboats before the *Ringstad* went down in about 20 minutes. The German U-boat came up and from the conning tower offered food and water; then someone pointed in the direction of the nearest land, before the U-boat disappeared. The weather worsened and the boats were unable to stay together in the stormy and cold conditions. Two lifeboats containing 27

crew members and 3 passengers were never seen again. All were declared missing and presumed killed. One lifeboat containing the captain, twelve men, and one dog was spotted after five days by an escorting aircraft. The American destroyer *USS Swanson* was sent to assist. The lifeboat was covered in ice and the men had been constantly bailing as it had been constantly taking in water in the heavy seas. The exhausted and frostbitten men landed at Reykjavik on February 5, 1942.

Rowland Jamieson was part of the group that was never found and would later be officially listed as, *Missing and presumed dead by Naval Authority. He was bound for passage to Canada in a British Merchant ship which sailed from a United Kingdom port about the 7th January, and has been missing since the 24th January, 1942.* Thirty-seven year old Warrant Officer Rowland Jamieson has no known grave. His name is inscribed on Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 8.  
SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, P, U, W, 2C, 2D

#### **JARVO, Francis Alexander (#A/108262)**

Francis Jarvo was born on October 1, 1924 the son of Robert Edward Jarvo and Janet Mary (nee Morin) Jarvo, of Cornwall, Ontario. He had four sisters—three being, Vivian Catherine (born 1919); Camilla; and Melva--as well as three brothers, two of whom were Robert Basil and Joseph A. At enlistment, Francis recorded his occupation as an electrician's helper at Polymer Corporation, Sarnia. Single at the time, he would join the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On October 19, 1944, Francis Jarvo would lose his life while fighting in Belgium, during the Battle of the Scheldt. Francis Jarvo would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Belgium).* Nineteen year-old Francis Jarvo is buried in Schoonselhof Cemetery, Belgium, Grave III.K.19.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

#### **JENSEN, Jens Carlo (#C/31217)**

Jens Jensen was born in Aunslev, Denmark on April 17, 1920, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Anders Chris Jensen, of 138 North Forsythe Street, Sarnia. At age 11, Jens arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia on May 8, 1931 aboard the passenger ship *United States* which had left Copenhagen, Denmark. He would later become the husband of Mrs. Anna Jensen who, at the time of Jens' death, resided with his parents at 138 North Forsythe Street, Sarnia. Jens was a resident of Fitzroy Harbor, near Arnprior, when he enlisted in the Canadian Army in Ottawa in June 1941. At his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a truck driver, and his place of residence as 197 Brock Street, Peterborough, Ontario.

Jens Jensen went overseas on April 24, 1942 and was in England until the invasion of Normandy. On June 6, 1944, Jens Jensen participated in the D-Day invasion on Normandy, France. His father did not know his son Jens had participated in D-Day until he received a letter from him that was written in France. Only three months later, on September 18, 1944, while fighting in Belgium, Jens Jensen would lose his life. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Governor General's Foot Guards, R.C.A.C., 21st Armed Regiment, with the rank of Guardsman.

The week before being informed of his death, parents Mr. and Mrs. Anders Jensen in Sarnia would receive a letter from their son Jens in which he had written that, "he was in Belgium, and that he was getting along well". In early October of 1944, Mr. and Mrs. Anders Jensen in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Trooper Jens Carlo Jensen, was killed in action on September 18.* There was no indication where their son met his death.

Jens Jensen would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Belgium).* In July 1948, the Belgian government awarded Jens Jensen posthumously, the decoration "Croix de Guerre 1940 avec Palme." The award states; *The King has been pleased to grant unrestricted permission for the wearing of the following decoration which has been conferred upon the undermentioned in recognition of distinguished services in the cause of the Allies.* Twenty-four year old Jens Jensen is buried in Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Belgium, Grave IV.B.12.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **JOHNSTON, Jay Syver (#J/7987)**

Jay Johnston was born in London, Ontario on May 30, 1922, the son of John Eugene Johnston and Florence

(nee Goulder) Johnston, of 115 South Vidal Street, later 332 Confederation Street, Sarnia. Jay had a sister, Eloise and a brother, R. Eugene, who was eight years older. Jay, his sister and his older brother were all educated in Sarnia schools including Durand Street, George Street and Johnston Memorial schools as well as Sarnia Collegiate Institute. Single at the time of his enlistment, Jay enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on October 8th of 1940 at the age of eighteen. His older brother, Eugene Johnston, had enlisted in the army at the outset of war in September of 1939, becoming a Sapper with a Western Ontario unit of the Royal Canadian Engineers. One year after Jay's enlistment, in early December of 1941, Eugene had been overseas for more than a year, while Jay was stationed at an eastern command. In November of 1942, father John Johnston in Sarnia would receive the news that his son Jay had been promoted from the rank of pilot officer to Flying Officer. Jay would later attain the rank of Flying Officer, Wireless Operator/Air Gunner and would become a member of the RCAF #10 North Atlantic squadron, stationed in Newfoundland for some time.

War affected other members of the Johnston family. Jay's brother, Eugene, would serve in the infantry, and his life was never the same after his wartime experiences. Jay's sister, Eloise, married Michael Paithowski in November of 1943 who would serve in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, as a Petty Officer Stoker. Michael Paithowski and the entire crew of 89 other men lost their lives when a U-boat torpedoed the *HMCS Shawinigan* in November of 1944. Michael Paithowski's story is included in this project.

In early October of 1943, father John Johnston in Sarnia would learn from R.C.A.F. headquarters that his son Jay was part of a flying-boat crew that had emerged the victor in a running battle with a surfaced U-boat in the mid-Atlantic. The R.C.A.F. said that the submarine battle was one of a series of six running fights with subs in which the famous North Atlantic Squadron had recently engaged in. The flying-boat on which Flying Officer Jay Johnston was deployed went into the attack at a low level and dropped six charges in what one member of the crew described as a "perfect straddle". The bow of the sub was tossed clear of the sea and smothered in depth-charge "blossoms". Four more charges were dropped as the sub started sinking, with no further forward motion. Shortly after, air bubbles rose for some time and a large oil slick appeared on the surface several hundred yards wide. Some debris was also seen. Along with Jay Johnston, also aboard the successful flying-boat were Flt.Lt. Robert Fisher, WO2s James Lamont and J.A. Barabanoff and Sgt. E.M. Finn. Weeks later, all five of these men were aboard a Liberator bomber that would crash on October 20th, killing 24 members of the R.C.A.F.

In mid-October of 1943, Jay Johnston had advised his father John in Sarnia, that he was to start a leave on October 19th and that he would be back home in Sarnia a few days after that. On October 20, 1943, Jay Johnston was aboard a Liberator aircraft #3701 enroute from Gander, Newfoundland to Dorval, Quebec, when it crashed and burned on the west side of a 2,500 foot high foothill of Black Mountain, Quebec. So on October 20 and for a few days after, the Johnston family anxiously awaited Jay's arrival home for his scheduled leave.

Several days later, father John Johnston in Sarnia would receive a telegram from air force headquarters in Ottawa informing him that his son, *Flying Officer Jay S. Johnston, was missing after air operations*. The message gave no details of the operations in which his son was engaged when reported missing, but it said that further information would be forthcoming. For Jay's parents, there was some thought that their son may have been one of the 24 personnel on board the four-engine Liberator which had been reported missing, possibly crashing in the St. Lawrence River. The Johnston parents in Sarnia were hopeful that they would receive some encouraging news from Air Force Headquarters. On October 30th, John Johnston would learn in an announcement made by air force headquarters in Ottawa that his son's name, Jay Johnston, was included in the list of 24 RCAF members who were, *officially reported missing somewhere in Canada*.

Twenty-four members of the RCAF lost their lives in the Quebec mountain crash; six were members of the plane's crew and eighteen were passengers returning to an Eastern Canada base from Newfoundland on leaves. Initially it was thought that the Liberator bomber had gone down somewhere in the Gulf of St. Lawrence area, and an intensive air and water search followed. Unfortunately, the crash was not located until two and a half years after the mishap. Initially, the 24 men were buried at the crash site with simple white crosses for each airman. Years later, the men were reburied in a cemetery in St. Donat, Quebec. There is a Memorial Cairn on Black Mountain at the crash site that was erected in memory of the crew. The pieces of the Bomber airplane remain there as they fell. Along with Flying Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Jay Johnston, also killed were WO.s J.A. Barabanoff, W. Howlett; J.

FOR THE LIFE HE GAVE HIS COUNTRY HE WILL EVER BE REMEMBERED  
BY HIS LOVED AND DEAR ONES.

Silverstein; F.E. Jenkins; Cpl.s H.D. Beattie; R.D. Marr; H.K. Hambly; A.C. Johnston; P/O.s R.W. MacDonald; James Lamont; F/O. S.A. Sanderson; LAC.s C.L. Dynes; G.R. Patterson; A.J. Radcliffe; E.W. Read; Sgt.s W.G. MacNaughton; F.H. Elliot; E.M. Finn; J.A. Veilleux; FS. R.F. Ware; F/L.s J.A. Poirier; Robert F. Fisher; and Sgt. S.A. Wood. The tragic mishap was the largest single-crash loss of life in RCAF history.

In June of 1944, Flying Officer Jay S. Johnston who, at the time, was still reported as “missing”, was mentioned in dispatches in connection with the King’s birthday honors list. He was the only Sarnian in the list of several hundred Canadian servicemen. Two former Sarnia residents were also on the list: Sergeant Major Charles Webb, of Windsor, an employee at Sarnia General Hospital and an active member of the local Canadian Legion while living on College Avenue, was made a member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; and Brigadier A.C. Spencer, of London, formerly with the engineering department of Imperial Oil Company in Sarnia, was made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. A press release by the R.C.A.F. said that Flying Officer Johnston earned the award while a wireless operator air gunner in the Eastern Air Command. The fate of Jay Johnston would later officially be recorded as, *Previously reported missing in flying accident, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Newfoundland)*. Twenty-one year old Jay Johnston is buried in St. Donat Catholic Cemetery, Quebec, Coll. Grave Lot GE 34. He received an award: Mentioned in Dispatches. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as J.S. Johnson.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, o

### **JOLLY, Russell Earl (#A/107229)**

Russell Jolly was born on January 5, 1925, the son of Stuart and Jane Jolly, of 436 South Russell Street, Sarnia. He had two brothers, Orville and James, and during the war James was a Leading Aircraftman with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Russell also had one sister, Lois. Russell was educated in the public schools and Sarnia Collegiate in Sarnia. Before enlisting, he was employed by the Canadian Bread Company as a baker. Single at the time, he enlisted in the Canadian Army at London, Ontario on July 3, 1943. He went overseas as a member of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, R.C.I.C. as a Rifleman in March 1944.

Russell Jolly would lose his life two days after D-Day, on June 8, 1944 during the Battle of Normandy in the invasion of France. In late June of 1944, parents Stuart and Jane Jolly in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Russell E. Jolly, was killed in action during the invasion of France on June 8*. Russell Jolly would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. In early March of 1945, Private Russell Jolly along with First Class Stoker Wallace Horley (included in this project), were honoured at a memorial service at Devine Street United Church. Both men were members of the congregation and both had died recently while on active service. Nineteen year-old Russell Jolly is buried in Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave V.C.15. On Russell Jolly’s headstone are inscribed the words, *In the garden of memory we meet every day. Sleep on dear son till we meet again*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **JONES, Glyn (#A/18156)**

Glyn Jones was born in Bargold, South Wales on June 1, 1921, the son of David John Jones and Annie Jones, of 112 ½ North Christina Street, Sarnia. Glyn arrived in Canada with his parents when he was quite young. The Jones children included Glyn; his two brothers, Edward and Oliver (both would become members of the Royal Canadian Navy); and one sister, Esther. His family took up residence in Thedford and while there, Glyn attended the public school in that community. Glyn came to Sarnia when he was eleven and finished his education at Lochiel Street Public School and then Sarnia Collegiate. He also attended Central United Church. Prior to enlisting, he worked at a local Sarnia service station for a short time. War also affected his siblings. Glyn’s sister, Esther, married George Andrew, who joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and was later killed over Germany on December 20, 1943 (see George V. Andrew).

Glyn, single at the time, joined the Canadian Army on September 5, 1939, listing his occupation as a mechanic and his residence as 224 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. Both Glyn and his brother Edward joined the army together when war broke out. Glyn received the first part of his military training at Bright’s Grove. He was then transferred to London and later to Petawawa, where he had advanced training with the Royal Canadian Engineers. He was then assigned to the first Canadian Field Park Company and went overseas with this unit. Major Payne of Sarnia

was Glyn's Commanding Officer and happened to have been one of his teachers at Sarnia Collegiate. He related that Glyn was very popular with the men of his company. Glyn went on for further training in England. In late November of 1941, both Glyn and his brother had been overseas for about a year and a half, while brother Oliver, who had joined the navy in early 1940, had been to England and back several times.

Glyn's brother Oliver Jones, an Able Seaman of the Royal Canadian Navy had been in the local news just over a year prior to Glyn's death. He had given an interview to the *Sarnia Observer* in May of 1941 describing some of his experiences. The young sailor, who had worked for some time in the Sarnia General Hospital before signing up with the RCN in early 1940, was home on "survivors' leave" at that time, visiting his mother. In March of 1941, he was assigned to an ocean boat to take charge of an anti-aircraft gun crew. The ship on which he was serving, part of a convoy heading to England, had been sunk in the North Atlantic by a German submarine. He described how on a calm, moonless, starless night, with a moderate snow falling, several of the ships in the convoy were attacked, with one bursting into flames. Oliver Jones' ship was hit and sinking when the captain and men took to the lifeboats. They could see the burning ships, but the rest of the convoy had scattered as the attack started. They drifted for three hours before being picked up by a British destroyer. Not long after, they located the position of the "sub", dropped depth charges and the sub rose to the surface to surrender. Seaman Oliver Jones described the crew as, "Decent young fellows, the captain was about 22 and the men were all much younger, about 15 or 16."

Oliver Jones also described how prior to returning to Canada, he was on duty on the anti-aircraft gun at a barracks in Glasgow during the heaviest German air raid staged on the Clyde River port up to that time. "It was a terrible sight," he recalled, describing a falling German plane as a "ball of flame" and telling of watching bombs bursting along the docks on the Clyde. "But the people in the shelters were marvelous, singing while the raid progressed, from about 10:30 at night till 5:30 next morning, and the damage was heavy." While he was in Great Britain, Oliver was able to visit his sister and two brothers, including Glyn. It was the first time the three Jones brothers were together after a year's separation.

Glyn Jones and the Canadian Field Park Company were in France in 1942. Glyn and his unit were with the first troops that went into Dieppe, France in August 1942. Code-named *Operation Rutter*, later *Operation Jubilee*, the Dieppe raid was one of the darkest chapters in Canada's military history. Of the almost 5,000 Canadians who took part in the mission, more than 3,360 became casualties, including approximately 1,950 taken as Prisoners of War. Approximately 910 Canadians died on the beaches, in German captivity, or of their wounds after returning to England. It was during the raid on Dieppe, France on August 19, 1942, that Sapper Glyn Jones would lose his life. For a time after the raid, Glyn's mother Annie Jones in Sarnia would only get the news that her son Glyn was listed as, *reported missing* in the Dieppe raid. It was not until mid-December of 1942 that Mrs. Annie Jones would receive the news that her son Glyn was now officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Twenty-one year old Glyn Jones is buried in Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery, Hautot-Sur-Mer, Seine-Maritime, France, Grave E.57. On Glyn Jones' headstone are inscribed the words, "*Come ye bought, but not with gold, welcome to the sacred fold.*" *With love, Mam.*

At the end of January 1945, Glyn's brother Edward Jones would return home to Sarnia on leave after five years' service overseas. He was welcomed at the Sarnia station by his mother Annie; his wife, who resided at 375 Cameron Street; family members, including his brother and sister; a niece and two nephews; a long time friend of the family; a Red Cross member representing of the Canadian Legion Br. 62; and Harbour master George Andrew, who had lost two sons in the service (included in this project). He was also greeted by his small daughter, Sandra, whom he had never seen. In addition, Pipe Major James Stewart, a First World War veteran, who was approaching his 80th year, moved up and down the platform, in the full regalia of the kilts, playing the music of the bagpipes, as he did for all trains returning with veterans.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2B, 2C, 2D

### **KEE, Ross James (#J/23901)**

Ross Kee was born on January 18, 1921 in London, Ontario, the son of John Blake Kee (born on the Isle of Man) and Gladys Irene (nee Ross) Kee. Ross had three sisters and one brother who, at the time of Ross' death were living in Ottawa (Irene and Edna); Sarnia (Jean); and London, Ontario (brother Murray). Ross attended public schools and Sarnia Collegiate Institute. He was active in the athletics at SCITS, as he was a member of various rugby teams and was a football star there. He also played basketball with the young men's ushers club of St. Andrew's

Church of which he was a member. Prior to enlisting, Ross was employed at Holmes Foundry. Single at the time of enlistment, he recorded his residence address as 112 James Street, Sarnia. His parents, John and Gladys Kee, would later move to London, Ontario. Ross would join the Royal Canadian Air Force, graduating from Crumlin on February 9, 1943, and receiving his commission in mid-March of 1943. He would arrive overseas in England in mid-April of 1943 and became a member of RCAF #431 Iroquois squadron "The Hatiten Ronterios" (Warriors of the air), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer.

On February 20, 1944, Ross was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft LK905 that went missing from a night trip to Leipzig, Germany. Along with Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer Ross Kee, also killed were F/O.s J.A. Houston and M. Sonshine; P/O.s D.A. McKerry and R.E. Gillanders; and one of the crew, not Canadian. One Canadian, W.O. Harvey, was taken Prisoner Of War. In late February of 1944, parents John and Gladys Kee, residing in London, Ontario at the time, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Ross Kee was reported missing in action overseas*. Ross Kee would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Twenty-three year old Ross Kee is buried in Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery, Germany, Coll.grave 6. D.12-17.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **KELLY, Gerald Reginald (#A/106785) – Photograph page 383**

Gerald Kelly was born September 13, 1925, the son of John Allan Kelly (born in Wyoming, Ontario) and Alice Marguerite (nee Webster, born in Oil Springs, Ontario) Kelly, of 258 Queen Street, Sarnia. Gerald had three brothers--Harold John (born 1914); William Henry (born 1921); and Walter Allan (born 1923)--as well as five sisters: Alice Annabelle (born 1916, died at age 6); Baby Kelly (born and died October 1, 1920); Marion Cecilia (born 1928, later Marion Codling), Dorothy Maxine (born 1929, later Dorothy MacKinnon), and Jean Edith (born 1935, later Jean Olney). At the time of Gerald's death, his brother William Kelly was a Trooper in the army, and had returned from overseas about one year prior, and his other brother Walter Kelly was a Private stationed at a Canadian mechanized depot in London, Ontario.

Gerald attended Devine Street and Wellington Street schools before graduating to Sarnia Collegiate. He was also a former carrier boy for the *Canadian Observer* newspaper. Prior to enlisting, Gerald had been employed at Sarnia Refinery in early April of 1943, resigning one month later in order to enlist. Gerald, single at the time, enlisted in the Canadian Army on May 3rd, 1943, listing his occupation as machine shop practices. After training at Listowel and Camp Ipperwash, he proceeded overseas in April of 1944. Gerald would become a member of the Algonquin Regiment Infantry Battalion, R.C.I.C.

In April of 1944, Gerald would write a letter home to his mother. Following is a portion of that letter:

*April 21st, 1944*

*Dear Mother,*

*Received your most welcome letter yesterday and was certainly glad to hear from you. I never had a chance to answer it last night as I was at a regimental dance last night. They had a good hall for the dance and an army orchestra. The eats and tea were free and there was a fairly big crowd. As yet I have not received any cigarettes from home but I expect them any day now...*

*Mother as I told you before I don't want you to save any money for me. If you want to bank it (as you said in your letter for a rainy day) you can put it in, in your name but don't save it for me. My fifth Victory bond will be paid up at the end of this month and when you get it would you put it in the bank also in your name.*

In June of 1944, Gerald would write a letter to his sister Dorothy. An excerpt reads as follows:

*June 10, 1944*

*Dear Dot,*

*Received your most welcome letter and seeing as I was writing quite a few letters I thought I'd answer yours at the same time.... I like it over here alright Dorothy but its not the same as being back home.... We have a horseshoe pitch set up in our lines and we put in most of our spare time playing horseshoes. They hold bingos about once a week here in camp. They have something on nearly every night so you're never without something to do. I do my own washing, ironing and sewing and if you could see me doing it I know you would get a great laugh out of it.*

YOU WHO PASS BY, PRAY FOR THIS GLORIOUS HERO WHO LIES  
AT REST FAR FROM HIS LOVED ONES.

*I have not as yet met anyone that I knew back home so you can see just how much I would like to get Cliffs and Vernes address....I have been feeling fine and I hope everyone at home is the same.*

*Jay*

In August of 1944 (one month before he was killed), Gerald would write the following letter home:

*August 11, 1944*

*Dear Mom and Dad,*

*Have received several letters from you but this is the first chance I've had to answer them. As I said in my last letter, I received a thousand cigs from you a couple of weeks ago and they certainly came in handy. I have smoked more cigarettes these last couple of weeks than I've ever smoked before so you see they certainly come in handy.*

*As I've said in my other letters, mother, I can't write as often as I used to but I will write just as often as I can. I borrowed the pen here from one fellow, the ink from another one and the envelopes were given to me by still a different person. I am writing this letter in my slit trench so you can see mother, the writing facilities aren't any too good.*

*I have written to both Cliff Bendall and Bert Pask but as yet have received no answer. Will you say hello to Marion, Dorothy and Jeannie for me? Thank Marion for helping with the parcel and tell Dot that I haven't any pictures right now.*

*By the way, I don't know if I ever mentioned it before but when I was back in England I met Nelson Archer and he said to be sure to say hello to Dad. Well Mom, I am going to try and write quite a few letters today so I had better say so long for now.*

*Jay*

Gerald Kelly would be overseas for only six months before he would lose his life in Belgium, one day after his 19th birthday. He was killed while re-crossing the Leopold Canal in Holland in an attempt to rescue his wounded sergeant. In late September of 1944, parents John and Alice Kelly in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. Gerald R. Kelly has been killed in action overseas. Further information would be forwarded when received.* Gerald Kelly would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Belgium).*

In late September of 1944, Gerald's mother Alice Kelly would receive the following telegram from Ottawa:

*Mrs. Alice M. Kelly, 258 Queen St., Sarnia*

*Minister of National Defence deeply regrets to inform you that A106785 Private Gerald Reginald Kelly has been officially reported killed in action fourteenth September 1944 Stop If any further information becomes available it will be forwarded as soon as received.*

*Director of Records*

Also in September, Gerald's mother would receive the following letter from the Major of Gerald's Algonquin Regiment:

*September 15th, 1944*

*Major G.L. Cassidy, Algonquin Reg't, Can. Army Over.*

*Dear Mrs. Kelly,*

*It is a most difficult task for me to write this letter, containing, as you will already have been officially informed, the news of Gerald's death in action. Ever since he has been in my company he was everybody's favorite – the perfect soldier and gentleman and his loss is a grievous one to you as well as to us.*

*It may help you to know he died a hero's death. After 24 hours of the hardest fighting this unit has ever seen or known, during which time Gerald distinguished himself on several occasions for bravery, the unit was ordered to withdraw - across a water obstacle.*

*Gerald was already at the obstacle and about ready to enter a boat, when it became known that a wounded sergeant, who was supposed to have been carried by another party, could not be found. Gerald and another sergeant, without being ordered or asked, at once returned through heavy shell and machine gun fire to bring back the wounded party. He was on his return with the sergeant on his back when a shell struck close by, killing him instantly. The other rescuer was wounded, but managed to get back, and he told me this story.*

*I am arranging to have Gerald's actions mentioned in despatches. May we all unite our deep sorrow with yours, Mrs. Kelly, remembering always that God is with him, and that we were all fortunate to have known him even for so short a space.*

*Yours most sincerely, G.L. Cassidy*



Shortly after receiving the above letter, Mrs. Alice Kelly would receive another letter from Major G.L. Cassidy, informing her of the approximate location of her son's body:

*Dear Mrs. Kelly,*

*I must apologize for my delay in replying to your letter, but it is only very recently that a representative of the battalion was able to revisit the scene of Gerald's heroic death. You see, the occasion was our attempt to cross the Leopold Canal, the first one to be made, and one which, unfortunately, was not successful. We were forced to withdraw, and for the next six weeks the ground remained in enemy hands. But we do know now that the Germans buried all our dead there, although not all the graves are marked. I will attach a little diagram to show you the approximate location.*

*Please accept our grateful admiration for the superb courage you and other Canadian mothers have shown in adversity. You are our inspiration throughout.*

*Yours very sincerely, G.L. Cassidy*

In mid-October of 1944, Gerald's mother, Mrs. Alice Kelly, would receive the following letter from the Department of National Defence, Army:

*October 18, 1944*

*Dear Mrs. Kelly,*

*It was with deep regret that I learned of the death of your son, A106785 Private Gerald Reginald Kelly, who gave his life in the Service of his Country in the Western European Theatre of War on the 14th day of September, 1944.*

*From official information we have received, your son was killed in action against the enemy. You may be assured that any additional information received will be communicated to you without delay.*

*The Minister of national Defence and the Members of the Army Council have asked me to express to you and your family their sincere sympathy in your bereavement. We pay tribute to the sacrifice he so bravely made.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*A.C. Spencer, Brigadier, Acting Adjutant-General*

After being Mentioned in Dispatches, Gerald was awarded posthumously a certificate of recommendation in January of 1945, a certificate his mother Mrs. Alice Kelly received, in recognition of her son's bravery and devotion to duty. The Ministry of National Defense also expressed its sincere regret "that your son did not live to receive this award." The Commander-in-Chief's Certificate for Good Service reads,

*"It has been brought to my notice that you have performed outstanding good service, and shown great devotion to duty, during the campaign in North West Europe. I award you this certificate as a token of my appreciation, and I have given instructions that this shall be noted in your Record of Service."*

The award is signed by Bernard L. Montgomery, Field Marshall, Commander-in-Chief, 21st Army Group.

In July of 1945, Alice Kelly would receive a letter from the Department of National Defence, Army, Estates Branch. Based on her son's length of qualifying service, she was paid a sum of \$190.30 as a War Service Gratuity. The letter also stated that, "We regret to inform you that none of your son's Personal Effects were recovered at the time of his death."

In December of 1945, Gerald's mother would receive another letter from the Department of National Defence, Army. A portion of that letter reads as follows:

*Mrs. Alice M. Kelly, 258 Queen Street, Sarnia*

*Dear Madam,*

*Information has just been received from overseas that the remains of your son, A106785 Private Gerald Reginald Kelly, have been carefully exhumed from the original place of internment and reverently reburied in grave 4, row A, plot 3, of Adegem Canadian Military Cemetery, Adegem, Belgium. Marked map is enclosed. This is a recognized military burial ground and will receive care and maintenance in perpetuity.*

*The grave will have been marked with a temporary cross which will be replaced in due course by a permanent headstone suitably inscribed. While it cannot now be stated when this work of permanent commemoration will begin, before any action is taken you will be communicated with and an opportunity will be given you to submit a short personal inscription of your own choice for engraving on the headstone....*

*Yours faithfully,*

*C.L. Laurin, Colonel, Director of Records*

Nineteen year-old Gerald Kelly is buried in Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Belgium, Grave III.A.4. On Gerald Kelly's headstone are inscribed the words, *He is gone but not forgotten. Thoughts of him are always near.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, N, 2C, 2D, m

**KETTLE, Alfred Smedley (#A/2382) – Photograph page 384**

Alfred Smedley was born in Petrolia, Ontario on May 14, 1909, the son of Alfred Smedley Senior (born in Blackpool, England) and Edith May (nee Collier, born in Oxford, Ontario) Kettle, of Mandaumin, Ontario. Alfred had seven brothers: twins Earl and Harold (born 1900, although Harold died ten days after birth); John Robert (born 1901, died 9 months after birth); William Henry (born 1903); James Ernest (born 1905); Thomas Harrison (born 1908, died before age 1); and Richard (born 1910). Alfred also had two sisters named Annie May (born 1897) and Verna Maude Collin (born 1904). At the time of Alfred's birth, his father Alfred Smedley senior listed his occupation as a horse buyer.

Alfred, single at the time, joined the Navy and become a member of the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve, serving aboard the *HMCS Spikenard* and attaining the rank of Chief Petty Officer. The *HMCS Spikenard (K 198)* was a corvette of the Flower Class, commissioned by the Royal Canadian Navy in December of 1940. In early February of 1942, the *Spikenard* was part of convoy SC-67, sailing for the British Isles, part of an RCN escort to make the first "Newfie-to-Derry" run that would continue for the next four years (St. John's, Newfoundland and Londonderry, Northern Ireland).

About 9:30 pm on the night of February 10, 1942, the *Spikenard* was around 465 nautical miles west of Malin Head Ireland, following a zigzag pattern ahead of the convoy in rough seas. Two torpedoes fired by German U-boat *U-136* struck the port side in the bow near the bridge. Almost simultaneously, a torpedo smashed into the nearby tanker *Heina*. A nearby corvette, *Dauphin*, saw one explosion and moved toward the position where the *Heina* was on fire. It took two hours to rescue the *Heina* survivors from the oily water.

Aboard the *Spikenard*, fire had broken out, destroying the bridge, the wireless room and one of her lifeboats. Flames then spread to fuel drums aft of the mast, and fire raced up the superstructure and down into the belly of the ship. Men on the mess decks had to fight their way to the forecabin through a curtain of flames. Many of them, groping forward, stumbled into the gaping hole blasted in the deck plates. After a second explosion, with the ship's whistle set off by the blast, blowing constantly with an eerie shriek, waves engulfed the vessel. The *Spikenard* sank within five minutes. The other escorts in the group had been caught up chasing contacts and had not known the *Spikenard* was gone until she had not answered repeated radio calls. By dawn, there was no sign of the missing *Spikenard*. The commander, four officers and fifty-two of the crew were lost.

Incredibly, eight survivors were picked up clinging from a raft by *HMS Gentian* about 19 hours after the sinking. The eight survivors, many suffering burns, had picked up two other survivors after the second explosion, but both were so badly injured that they died shortly after being taken aboard. Alfred Kettle was one of the crew members who was lost in the sinking of the *HMCS Spikenard*. Also on board and lost was Russell Wilcox, who is also listed on the Sarnia cenotaph. Alfred Kettle's death certificate simply states for cause of death, *Loss of H.M.C.S. Spikenard, at sea*. Thirty-one year old Alfred Smedley has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 6. Alfred Kettle's name is also inscribed on the Petrolia cenotaph in the Town of Petrolia.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

**KIRK, Leslie Gordon (#A/104549) – Photograph page 384**

Leslie Kirk was born on July 6, 1921, the son of Thomas E. and Annie J. Kirk, of East Linton, Ontario. Single at the time of enlistment, he recorded his occupation as sailor and his residence address as 152 Dundas Street, Sarnia. Leslie joined the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Perth Regiment, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On September 13, 1944, Leslie Kirk would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. Leslie Kirk would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-three year old Leslie Kirk is buried in Coriano Ridge War Cemetery, Italy, Grave 11, C 3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

**KNIGHT, Edward Joseph Michael (KOREA) (#SA2506)**

Edward Knight was born on March 14, 1931, the son of John Knight and Violet Winnifred Wynne, of 183 Water Street, Sarnia. Edward's siblings (and ages at the time of his death) were brothers Donald L. (19); Clifford Jack (17); and Gerald (8); and sisters Mary (25); Charlotte (15); and Theresa (14). Raised in Sarnia, Edward attended Our Lady of Mercy Elementary School, and was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia.

Edward Knight enlisted in the Canadian army on October 24, 1951 in London, Ontario. He would arrive in the Korean theatre five months later and was due to return on rotation leave at Easter of 1953. Private Knight was a member of the Army, the Royal Canadian Regiment, 1st Battalion. On October 23, 1952, one year after he enlisted, Private Edward J. Knight would lose his life during fighting in Korea. Several days later, mother Violet Knight in Sarnia would receive word that her son, *Private Edward Knight, was killed in action in Korea on Thursday October 23.*

Twenty-one year old Edward Joseph Michael Knight is buried in the United Nations Cemetery in Busan, South Korea, Plot 21, Row 8, Grave 1346. He also has a memorial plaque on the Korea Veteran's National Wall of Remembrance in Meadowvale Cemetery, in Brampton, Ontario. This memorial has plaques for each of the 516 Canadian service men who died while serving with the Canadian Forces in the United Nations operations in Korea. SOURCES: B, D, E, H, L, N, 2D

**KNIGHT, Wilfred Leslie (J/47880) – Photograph page 384**

Wilfred Knight was born on September 1, 1925, the son of Charles Wesley Knight and Lucy Ann (nee Corrigan) Knight, of 107 Alfred Street, Sarnia. His brother, Patrick Knight, was also to join the RCAF, enlisting in September of 1942, and would become a Leading Aircraftman stationed in Nova Scotia at the time of Wilfred's death. Wilfred received his education at Sarnia Collegiate and, prior to enlisting, he was employed as a checker at Canadian National Railways. Enlisting in September of 1943, eighteen year-old Wilfred, single at the time, left his family in Sarnia for the Toronto manning pool. He would join the Royal Canadian Air Force, receiving his training as a wireless gunner at Ottawa, Calgary and finally Dafoe, Saskatchewan, where he graduated from on August 11, 1944. He would receive his commission as a Pilot Officer on August 16, 1944. Wilfred spent six months at Nassau, Bahama Islands, before he went overseas in February 1945.

Wilfred was a member of RCAF #160 Burma Squadron "Api Soya Paragasamu" (We seek and strike), attaining the rank of Wireless Operator-Air Gunner. The Burma Squadron was based on Ceylon Island off the south coast of India. Approximately one month after VE Day, marking the end of the war in Europe, on June 9, 1945, Wilfred was a member of a crew aboard Liberator aircraft BZ950 that took off for a secret destination. Nine minutes later, the aircraft crashed at Minneriya, Ceylon while returning to the airfield. In mid-June of 1945, Charles and Lucy Ann Knight in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Wilfred Knight has been reported killed in action overseas.* Wilfred Knight had been overseas for just under four months. Along with Flying Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Wilfred Knight, also killed were FS.s A.R. Thomson, M.M. Smith; and six of the crew and ten passengers, all not Canadians. Wilfred was believed to be the first Sarnian or district casualty in the continuing war against the Japanese since VE-Day in Europe. Wilfred Knight would later be officially listed as, *Killed as a result of a flying accident, overseas (Ceylon).* Nineteen year-old Wilfred Knight is buried in Colombo (Liveramentu) Cemetery, Sir Lanka, Grave 3.G.5. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**KNOWLES, George William (#J/12998)**

George "Ducky" Knowles was born in Kinkardine, Scotland on October 30, 1918, the eldest son of Gordon A. and Catherine Knowles, of 117 North Forsyth Street, Sarnia. He came to Canada with his parents, when he was a small child and lived in New Brunswick for five years. The family moved to Sarnia when George was six years old and so he attended Sarnia public and Sarnia Collegiate schools. While at Sarnia Collegiate, he played basketball and football, was a member of the signalling team and was manager of the senior rugby team for one year. He also played City League softball and baseball. George was a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and belonged to the Central Century Club, where he played softball, basketball and hockey. Prior to enlisting, he belonged to the Reserve Army, R.C.A., for over a year and was employed with Muellers Limited.

George enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force on March 9, 1941. In June of 1941, he went to the

Toronto Manning Depot of the R.C.A.F. and later trained at Camp Borden and the No. 1 Wireless School at Montreal. While there, he won a silver medal for proficiency by passing second in a class of 58 candidates, graduating as a Wireless Air Gunner. He then attended the bombing and gunnery school at Jarvis. He graduated on July 18, 1942, receiving his commission as a Pilot Officer. After his graduation, he was posted to the R.A.F. station at Greenwood, Nova Scotia, becoming a member of the RCAF #36 Operational Training Unit.

On October 8, 1942, George Knowles was part of a crew of seven in Hudson aircraft BW700 that was engaged in air exercises over the Bay of Fundy, when it crashed four miles north of Point George, Nova Scotia. The next day, parents Gordon and Catherine in Sarnia would receive a telegram from headquarters advising them that their son, *Pilot Officer Knowles is missing, believed killed, while engaged in air exercises over the sea*. No details of the crash were made available. Eyewitnesses would later report that the plane had just circled close to the fishing community Port George shore and was turning to retrace its course, when the roar of its engines ceased, and the aircraft, already flying at a low altitude, slid off to one side and smacked into the water. Reports were that the plane sank almost immediately. "It seemed to go right under," according to one eyewitness. "There was the sound of the crash, a cloud of smoke, and that was all." Rescue attempts from shore could not be made as boats had been hauled hard aground in preparation for winter storage.

Along with Pilot Officer-Pilot George Knowles, also killed were Sgt.s R.O. Barrett, D.W. Armstrong, and B. Desmarais; P/O. H.R. Woodman; F/O. J.C. McFarlane; and FS. D. Shackell (RAF). No trace of members of the crew was ever found. The waters at that point were reported to be deep and the current very strong when the tide was going out to sea. In late May of 1943, parents Gordon and Catherine Knowles in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. casualties officer stating, *Deeply regret to advise you that your son, pilot Officer George William Knowles, reported missing, believed killed, is for official purposes, presumed to have died October 8, 1942. Please accept my profound sympathy*. In June of 1943, George Knowles' name would later appear on the published R.C.A.F. casualty list as *Previously reported missing and believed killed on active service in Canada, now for official purposes presumed dead*. Twenty-three year old George Knowles has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Ottawa War Memorial, Ottawa, Canada, Panel 1, Column 5.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

#### **KROHN, Charles Henry (#A/107660)**

Charles Krohn was born in Sarnia on April 20, 1924, the only son of Roy and Lettie Krohn, of Shamrock Street, Sarnia. Charles attended Devine Street School and had two sisters, who at the time of his death were Mrs. Thelma Hamilton and Mrs. Dorothy Thompson, both of Shamrock Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Charles was a guard at Imperial Oil refinery. Single at the time, he enlisted in the Canadian Army in August 1943, in London, Ontario. His address was then listed as R.R. #1 Corunna, Ontario.

Charles Krohn went overseas in April 1944, as a member of 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, R.C.A.C., with the rank of Private. On September 23, 1944, Charles Krohn would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. His mother Lettie Krohn in Sarnia would receive a letter from her son Charles which had been written on September 21, 1944, two days before he was killed. In the letter, Charles wrote that, *we are really giving it to them now*, and that he expected to be home for Christmas.

In early October of 1944, Roy and Lettie Krohn in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Charles Henry Krohn has been officially reported killed in action in Italy on September 23rd. Further particulars would be furnished when available*. Charles would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-year old Charles Krohn is buried in Cesena War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V, G, 4. On Charles Krohn's headstone are inscribed the words, *Our only son. Sadly missed by mom and dad, sisters Dorothy and Thelma*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **LANG, Wallace Ewing (#J/43946)**

Wallace Lang was born on March 4, 1923, the son of John R. Lang (born in Lambton, Ontario, the son of Scottish parents) and Mae Elizabeth (nee Wallace, born in Buffalo, New York) Lang, of Sarnia. Wallace's father, John, was a veteran of World War I who had been gassed at the Somme. Father John listed his occupation as switchman with the steam railway. Wallace, who was the oldest child of three in the family, was brother to a sister,

Virginia (born in Michigan, later to become Virginia Wray) and a brother, Donald. At the time of Wallace's death, his father John resided in Detroit and his mother Mae resided at 270 Mitton Street, Sarnia.

Wallace, known locally as "Wally", received his education in Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. He was a *Canadian Observer* carrier boy for a while. In mid-November of 1939, he was elected local member for the Ontario Older Boys' Parliament. The election took place during a youth rally that was attended by approximately 100 men from Sarnia, Point Edward and Wyoming, held at Devine Street United Church and St. John's Anglican Church. His first duty was to attend the parliament for a week in late December in Toronto. Wally would be president of the Sarnia Boys' Work Board for two years, and he was active in promoting boys' sports in Sarnia. He also gave of his talents to activities at St. Paul's United Church and Sarnia Collegiate. Wallace also joined the Central Century Club a few months before enlisting. At the time of Wallace's death, his sister Virginia was in training as a cadet nurse at Lansing, Michigan. Prior to enlisting, Wallace was employed at Imperial Oil Limited.

Wallace Lang, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on March 10, 1943. He received his preliminary training at Lachine, Quebec; Truro, Nova Scotia; and Toronto, followed by a period of training at the Bombing and Gunnery School at Dafoe, Saskatchewan in November 1943. After completing his training at Dafoe, he took a six-week course in navigation at the A.O.S. at Winnipeg, Manitoba where he received his Bombardier Wings and commission as a Pilot Officer, in April 1944. Before going overseas, Wally took a Commando course at Maitland, Nova Scotia. Wallace Lang went overseas in May 1944, as a member of RCAF #429 Squadron "Fortunae nihil" (Nothing to chance).

During Christmas 1944, Wallace Lang was promoted to Flying Officer (and Air Bomber), and he was assigned to a squadron of Lancaster Bombers. He had almost completed a tour of operations over Germany and the Continent when the European War was terminated on May 8th of 1945. Though the war had ended, Wallace made the decision to continue on occupational flying duty. Nearly three months after VJ-Day, on November 5, 1945, Wally Lang would lose his life in a flying accident at Boulton Bridge in Yorkshire, England. Several days later, his mother Mrs. Mae Lang in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing her that her son, *Flying Officer Wallace E. Lang, has been reported killed in a flying accident at Boulton Bridge, Yorkshire, England on November 5*. No other details were given, but the message said that a letter would follow. Wallace Lang would later be officially listed as, *Killed as a result of a flying accident, overseas (England)*. Twenty-two year old Wallace Lang is buried in Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire, United Kingdom, Section G, Row K, Grave 2. On Wallace Lang's headstone are inscribed the words, *Father in thy gracious keeping leave we now our dear one sleeping*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

#### **LARSON, Paul Adoph (#M/50876) – Photograph page 385**

Paul Larson was born October 5, 1921, the son of G. Larson and Mrs. H. Larson, of Provost, Alberta. Paul Larson enlisted in the Canadian Army in the west, where he resided previously, and would earn the rank of Corporal. Corporal Paul Larson married Mary Louise Larson (nee Baikie) on August 14, 1943 in St. George's Church, Sarnia. Mary Louise was a Private of the C.W.A.C., the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Baikie of Sarnia. In the wedding party were Cpl. Harry Keen and Kay Baikie. Paul and Mary Louise Larson would have one daughter together, Patricia Ann Larson, born February 24, 1944 at Sarnia General Hospital, (while Paul was overseas).

On February 24, 1945, Corporal Paul Larson would lose his life during fighting in Italy, at the end of the Italian Campaign, as a member of Seaforth Highlanders of Canada overseas; ironically, Paul died on the exact date of his daughter's first birthday. In late March of 1945, Mary Louise Larson, who was residing with her parents Mr. and Mrs. Baikie, 120 Cobden Street, Sarnia, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Corporal Paul Larson, has been killed in action overseas*. Shortly after, his death was confirmed when Captain (the Reverend) H. Durnford, the chaplain of the unit, sent a letter telling Mary Louise of the high esteem in which her husband Corporal Paul Larson was regarded by his officers and fellow soldiers in the regiment. In mid-May of 1945, a short memorial service for Pte. Paul Larson was held during the morning service at St. George's Church, Sarnia. Paul Larson left behind his bride Mary Louise of one and a half years, and their one year-old daughter Patricia. Twenty-three year old Paul Larson is buried in Ravenna War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V.F.22.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

HAPPILY I MET EACH DAY AND FEARED NOT DEATH, SO GRIEVE ME NOT,  
FOR NOW I REST IN PEACE.

**LAVERS, William Wilfred Henry** (#R/83468) – Photograph page 385

William Lavers was born in Grand Mere, Quebec on August 27, 1919, the son of Robert Henry Lavers (born in Montreal) and Maria Theresa (nee Kennedy) Lavers. Both his parents were born in Quebec. On September 5, 1919, William was baptized at his parents' home parish in Granby, Quebec. His godparents were Wilfred Kennedy (represented by Elmer Cleary) and Lucy Kennedy. In 1938, William would lose his mother, and three years later William would graduate from Kennedy High School in Windsor, Ontario.

On July 28, 1941, twenty-one year old William Lavers would marry twenty-one year old Marie Delia Cloutier of Windsor, Ontario in St. Alphonse Catholic Church in Windsor, Ontario. Marie was the daughter of Theophile Cloutier and Mary Jane Langis. The newlywed couple would reside at 1363 Benjamin Avenue, Amherstburg (Windsor), Ontario. Together, William and Marie Lavers would have a daughter together, Lyn Lavers (later Westfall). William (wife Marie referred to him as "Wilf") would join the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a member of RCAF #75 New Zealand Squadron "Ake Ake Kia Kaha" (For ever and ever be strong), attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant-Observer.

On the night of September 10, 1942, William Lavers and his crew were flying over Germany in their Wellington bomber. On that fateful night, their plane was shot down and its remnants and crew never located or recovered. Along with Flight Sergeant-Observer William Lavers, also killed were FS.s F. Burrill, R.E. Gorman, and M. St. Louis. One RNZAK member of the crew was reported missing and believed killed. William Lavers would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-three year old William left behind his young wife, Marie Lavers, and their three-month old daughter Lyn, who never got to meet her dad. William and his crew have no known grave. William and the rest of the crew are memorialized at Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 105.

Years later, Williams widow, Marie Lavers, would marry Ed Westfall, a resident of Sarnia, and they became the parents of 10 children of their own. Lyn Westfall (Lavers), surrounded by the love of her 10 brothers and sisters grew up in Sarnia and Point Edward. Lyn Westfall created a painting to honour her late father, "Dies Irae (Day of Anger)", which can be found on You-tube.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, M, 2C, 2D, b

**LECKIE, John Lyle** (#J/38412) – Photograph page 385

John Leckie was born in Petrolia on March 28, 1917, the son of William Christopher Leckie (born in Lanark County) and Agnes May (nee Niblock, born in West Williams, Middlesex, Ontario) Leckie, of 376 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. John had one brother, Kenneth Paul (born 1910), and one sister, Marjorie Isabel (born 1913). John Lyle received his education at Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. He took a Technical course at Sarnia Collegiate and in 1936 he graduated in drafting. While at school he was on the Editorial Staff of the Collegiate Magazine. John Lyle was a member of Central United Church having served as an usher, and he was one of the older members of the Century Club, being very interested in boys' work. After leaving school he accepted a job in Peterborough and served a four-year apprenticeship for General Electric in practical training. Then he worked for De Haviland aeroplane plant in Toronto as a draughtsman.

John Leckie, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on June 2, 1942. He received his training at Toronto, the Bombing and Gunnery School, Fingal, and the A.O.S. at Malton, where he graduated as a Bombardier on Remembrance Day, November 11, 1943. He was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and, after a short leave at home, was sent to Maitland, Nova Scotia to take a Commando course. He was also stationed at Trenton, Three Rivers, and Lachine, before going overseas on March 28, 1944. John Leckie went overseas in April 1944. He had his O.T.U. in England, and in June 1944, he became a member of the crew of RCAF Lancaster squadron #153 "Noctividus" (We see by night), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer.

John was attached to an R.A.F. station and had twelve missions over enemy territory. On December 17, 1944, John and his crew of Lancaster aircraft PB633 went missing from night operations against Ulm, Germany. Their Lancaster crashed in France while returning from Ulm. In late December of 1944, parents William and Agnes Leckie in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer John Lyle Leckie was missing after air operations overseas*. Not long after, they were advised by the casualty officer at Ottawa that his body had been recovered. John Leckie would later be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations*,

*overseas (Germany)*. Along with Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer John Lyle Leckie, also killed were F/O.s H.H. Schopp and G.D. Hetherington. One of the crew, not Canadian, was reported missing and believed killed. Three other Canadians in the crew--FS. Taylor, Sgt.s Pratt, and H. Cuthbertson--returned to their unit on Dec. 28, 1944. Twenty-seven year old John Lyle Leckie is buried in Dieppe Canadian War Cemetery, Hautot-Sur-Mer, Seine-Maritime, France, Grave N.8. On John Leckie's headstone are inscribed the words, *He gave his life for others*.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

**LEE, Thomas Edwin (#J/89415)**

Thomas Edwin Lee was born on September 18, 1922, the son of Edwin Lee and Irene (nee Miller) Lee, of 244 North Christina Street, Sarnia. Thomas' siblings included brothers Joseph (who would also serve in the war), and Patrick; sister Mary Jane and another sister. Thomas had been a pupil at Sarnia Collegiate before enlisting. Fifteen year-old Thomas would lose his father, Edwin Lee, who died at the age of 39 on August 15, 1937. Single at the time, Thomas enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and received his wings at Crumlin in December 1942. Thomas went overseas the following month. In November of 1943, parents Edwin and Irene Lee in Sarnia would learn that their son Thomas had been recently promoted from sergeant air gunner to flight sergeant while on active service. He would become a member of RCAF #425 Alouette Squadron "Je Te Plumerai" (I shall pluck you), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer. Also in November of 1943, brother Joseph Lee would report for duty with the Royal Canadian Navy at Windsor. Joseph's wife would also reside at 244 north Christina Street, Sarnia.

In late January of 1944, Thomas Lee and his crew were part of a powerful R.A.F.-R.C.A.F. night raid over Berlin, Germany. The Canadian bomber group included a large force of Lancasters and Halifaxes in what they described as a "perfect" attack. One flying officer said he saw the streets of Berlin distinctly; another said fires were visible all the way through Denmark. Pilot Officer Jack Snelgrove of Regina said, "It looked like Sarnia, Ontario would if the entire Imperial Oil plant suddenly went up in flames."

On August 5, 1944, Thomas Lee and his crew were on air raid operations over enemy territory. On that day, their Halifax aircraft LL594 was shot down and crashed in the forest at Compiègne, France during a daylight trip to St. Leu D'Esserent, France, during the Battle of Normandy. This was Pilot Officer Bomb Aimer Lee's 26th operation. In mid-August of 1944, mother Irene Lee in Sarnia would receive a telegram from R.C.A.F. headquarters at Ottawa informing her that her son, *Warrant Officer Thomas Lee, has been reported missing after air operations over enemy territory on August 5.*

In mid-December of 1944, Irene Lee in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. casualty officer at Ottawa informing her that, *Information from International Red Cross states your son, Pilot Officer Thomas Edwin Lee, lost his life. Pending further information your son is to be considered missing, believed killed.*

Thomas Lee would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead*. Perishing with Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer Thomas Lee were Pilot Officer R.A. Reed; FS. W.B. Gracie; and F/O.s G. Beresford (RAF), L.G. Stamp (RAF), and WO. B. Clark (RAF). One Canadian, S/L. Philbin, was an Evader and Sgt. G.L. Milliard was taken Prisoner Of War.

The story of how her son was buried in France after being shot down on an air raid was told to Thomas Edwin Lee's mother, Irene, in a letter received, from an American woman who had just returned from France where she had witnessed the funeral. The letter telling of his burial was written by an Ohio woman, Mrs. T.J. Kirby, of Toledo, who stated that before leaving France, recently, she was entrusted with a little crucifix which had been placed on the body of Pilot Officer Lee after he met a glorious death at St. Maximin, Oise, France. The crucifix was placed there by the sisters of the Conde hospital at Chantilly, where the funeral took place. Here is the letter that Mrs. Irene Lee received verbatim:

*Well do I realize how you must have been felling when after all those many months of silence you received that holy relic of your beloved son. It is true that the only wound that never heals is that in a mother's heart.*

*We had some terrible bombing in July and August 1944 because that little French village of Saint Maximin was built right in the middle of large and deep stone quarries. Unfortunately for us, the Germans driven back by the speedy advance of the Allies during the battle of France, has started to stock large quantities of those V-1 bombs in the quarries and prepared launching platforms nearby to send their ghastly rockets against the approaching armies.*

*Thus, it became vital for the American and British airforces to destroy the quarries before the Germans*

could make use of the new weapon. Hundreds of planes came by night and day dropping powerful explosives until, at the end, not one house was left standing (the people had all been evacuated to nearby Chantilly) but the goal was attained as not one robot bomb ever got out of those quarries.

How the Germans reacted was awful and showed the importance they attached to the depot. To our horror we saw many planes brought down by their fire during those terrible days. Forgive me for recalling such things.

Your son was the only one among all those martyrs to have a special funeral. There must have been something about him to cause that exception. The Germans said they would permit the funeral to be held, according to the Catholic rites, under condition that nobody was to go to the cemetery.

But the sisters in charge of the hospital spread the word that at two o'clock in the afternoon there would be prayers and a service for a young Canadian aviator and just that verbal announcement was enough to bring practically all the people of Chantilly to the hospital.

The chapel was far too small and people had to stand on the surrounding grounds. Even the mayor of Chantilly was present.

I shall never forget the impression I received when entering the chapel to behold the casket draped in the folds of the French flag and surrounded by a bank of white flowers of all kinds. Everybody who could was bringing flowers and the good sisters did their best to make the decoration of the chapel beautiful and to do their most beautiful singing. What was most stirring was to see the emotion and profound respect of the people. There was not a mother there who was not thinking of that boy's mother and weeping with her.

At the end of the service, our venerable chaplain tried to say a few words, but his emotion was too great and his voice trailed away. He was only able to bless once more the body of your son. And then started the defile which lasted for two hours because so many persons took the time to go on foot or by bicycle to the cemetery in spite of the Germans.

The new cemetery of Chantilly is but a short walking distance from the town at the edge of a beautiful forest. Many people visit it on Sundays and the grave of your son is well taken care of. There is a cross and it was always decorated with flowers.

At the chapel of the Conde hospital, masses are frequently sung for the soul of Thomas Lee.

I hesitate to send this letter to you but yet I know there will be some sweetness and consolation for you to know what a splendid funeral your son had and how it came to be that a whole town, without knowing him, came to mourn for him.

Thomas Lee was killed on August 5, 1944, and his widow mother Irene Lee received the above letter just before Christmas of 1945. Twenty-one year old Thomas Lee is buried in Chantilly (St.Pierre) Communal Cemetery, Oise, France, Row 3, Grave 372.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **LEGARE, Joseph Raymond Wilfred (#A/107057)**

Raymond Legare was born in Quebec on January 8, 1923, the son of Arthur and Yvonne Legare, of Belcourt, Quebec. He was baptized shortly after in Belcourt, Quebec. He would eventually make his way to Sarnia, becoming an employee of Polymer Corporation and listing his occupation as a labourer. Single at the time, Raymond enlisted in the Royal Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Le Regiment de la Chaudiere, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On July 18, 1944, Raymond Legare would lose his life while fighting in France during the Battle of Normandy. Joseph Legare would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Twenty-one year old Raymond Legare is buried in Beny-Sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, Reviere, France, Grave XII.A.4. On Raymond Legare's headstone are inscribed the words, *Mort loin des siens son souvenir vivra Jesus donnez lui le repos eternal*. (Died, far from his loved ones. His memory will live on. Jesus, grant him eternal rest).

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

#### **LE GARE, Hector (#A/2084)**

Hector Le Gare was born in Chatham, Ontario on January 14, 1919, the only son of Hector O. Le Gare and Hazel D. Le Gare, of Toronto, Ontario. Hector had five sisters: Jeanne and Kay (both would move to Toronto); and Core, Violet and Grace (in Sarnia). Hector's father had operated a restaurant and pool room near the Bell Telephone building and pre-deceased his son. At the time of Hector's death, his address was listed as with his mother at 330 North Mitton Street, Sarnia. Hector was educated at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic school and then Sarnia Collegiate, where he played football and was reputed to be a good swimmer. Hector was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic



Parish, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Hector had navigating experience in the navy, having served six years on the Noronic, Huronic and Hamonic of the Northern Navigation division of the Canada Steamship Lines. He was a watchman on the latter vessel at the close of the previous navigation season after which he was employed at the Sarnia General Hospital until he enlisted in the summer. Hector was single when he joined the Navy in July of 1939, trained at an Eastern Canadian naval base before becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. Going overseas in October of 1939, he would become a member of the crew of the *HMCS Saguenay*, with the rank of Able Seaman.

The *HMCS Saguenay (D 79)* was an A-Class Destroyer commissioned for service in the Royal Canadian Navy in 1931. The *Saguenay* was the first warship ever to be custom built for the Royal Canadian Navy. In the early morning hours of December 1, 1940, the *HMCS Saguenay* was part of a group escorting a convoy about 300 nautical miles west of Ireland. Travelling at twelve knots and in a zigzagging pattern, she noticed a flare shot up from the dark sea that had been fired by a U-boat moving in to attack the rear of the convoy. The *Saguenay* increased her speed and made for the position of the flare. At approximately 3:50 am, the submarine was sighted half a mile distant. Almost simultaneously, a torpedo struck the *Saguenay*. The torpedo had been fired by the Italian submarine *Argo*. The *Saguenay* bow was blown off, and flames broke out and raced through the ship. The *Argo* surfaced again, circling to get in a second shot. Able Seaman Clifford McNaught demonstrated the kind of courage indicative of the remaining crew. Clifford was suffering from painful burns to his face, and his hands were horribly mangled. He nevertheless dashed forward to assist the short-handed gun crew by passing shells to them. The *Saguenay* crew was able to fend off the *Argo*. The British destroyer *Highlander* arrived within an hour or so to find the *Saguenay* limping slowly forward. Ninety men were transferred to the *Highlander* to reduce casualties in case of another torpedo attack. Throughout the night and most of the next day, a skeleton crew remained on board the *Saguenay* continuing to fight the fires.

By noon of the next day, the *Saguenay*, "the ship that would not sink" had managed to limp to a British port on one engine. The ship would be out of service for six months. A total of 21 of the *HMCS Saguenay* crew lost their lives in the U-boat attack, and another 18 were wounded. Two of the lost crew members were from Sarnia. Hector Le Gare was one of those killed in action in the damaging of the destroyer *Saguenay*. Also on board the ship was Paul Brown, who would also be killed in the attack on the ship, and his name appears on the Sarnia cenotaph. Hector Le Gare and Paul Brown were the second and third casualties from Sarnia to lose their lives in the Second World War. Hector Le Gare's death would later be officially listed as the result of, *Enemy action, at sea*.

Hector's widowed mother, Hazel Le Gare, had not seen her only son since he had enlisted, as he did not receive any leave. She had received a letter from him just before he sailed and a cablegram informing her of his safe arrival in England. A week after the attack on the *Saguenay*, Mrs. Hazel Le Gare would receive a telegram from the Minister of National Defence for Naval Affairs, informing her that Hector was missing. After receiving the telegram, Mrs. Le Gare retained hope that he would later be reported rescued. At an assembly at Sarnia Collegiate, Principal F.C. Asbury announced the loss of the two former students, which was followed by a period of silence in respect to the memory of the two Canadian sailors. Twenty-one year old Hector Le Gare is buried in Barrow-in-Furness Cemetery, Lancashire, United Kingdom, Sec. 7. R.C. Grave 2439. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as H. Legarrie.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **LIVING, Charles Henry (#J/12206)**

Charles Henry Living was born in Halford, Saskatchewan on June 27, 1914, the oldest son of Charles William Robert and Viola Georgina (nee O'Day, born in Wisconsin) Living. The family resided in Holly Village, Oakland County, Michigan. Father Charles senior was a carpenter by trade. Charles Henry had two sisters--Georgina (1 year older than Charles) and Clara--and three younger brothers: Fred Stevenson (born 1921 in Alberta); Paul; and Reese. He resided for most of his boyhood in Holly, Michigan where he attended high school and later attended St. Michael's College in Toronto. Charles then enrolled in Michigan State College, Lansing. Charles took up residence in Sarnia in 1938 and played football with the Sarnia Imperials, as a star snap and inside wing. Subsequently, he played football for the Toronto Argonauts prior to enlisting.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in May 1940 at Toronto. He received most of his training in Eastern Canada, and was awarded his wings and commission in a ceremony in Hagersville in May 1941. He would

marry Miss Mary Alyce Wocker of Sarnia, on April 17, 1943. They would reside at George Street, Sarnia, and later 135 North Broad Street, Holly, Michigan. He was stationed at Fingal Bombing and Gunnery School as staff pilot until November 11, 1943, when he left for overseas. While in England, he played football in exhibition games arranged between teams of selected stars in the Canadian and American armed forces. Also while overseas, he was promoted to the rank of Flight Lieutenant in August 1944. During that same month, on August 6, 1944, Charles's younger brother, Fred, was killed in action while fighting in France, Fred a member of the Canadian Army Lincoln and Welland Regiment.

Charles Henry was a member of RCAF #576 Squadron "Carpe Diem" (Seize the opportunity), attaining the rank of Flight Lieutenant-Pilot. On February 21, 1945, Charles was aboard their Lancaster aircraft ME735 that went missing during a night trip, an attack against Duisburg, Germany, during the Battle of the Rhineland. Pilot Officer J.A. Russell and three of the crew, not Canadians, were also killed. Two of the crew, not Canadians, were missing and believed killed. Eyewitnesses saw the plane crash in flames three miles south of Kevelaer, on the boundary of Germany and Holland, between the hours of 11:30-11:45 pm. No parachutes were seen to leave the aircraft, and all members of the crew lost their lives in the crash. In late February of 1945, Mary Alyce Living, residing at George Street, Sarnia at the time, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Flight Lieutenant Charles Henry Living, is reported missing after operational flights over enemy territory*. Charles Living would later officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Thirty year old Charles Living is buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany, Grave 1.H.12.

(\*The following article is courtesy of Dan McCaffrey, a local author, who wrote this column in November 2007):

*When local residents pause to remember the nation's war dead this Nov. 11, they might want to reflect for a moment on the story of Charles Henry Living.*

*Living, who was known to his friends as Hank, was a Saskatchewan native who came to our city in 1938 to play for the Sarnia Imperials football club. In addition to his athletic skills, he was a bright guy. In an era in which few people graduated from high school, he'd gone to St. Michael's College in Toronto and the University of Michigan. He married a Sarnia girl and became a much-loved local figure.*

*When war came, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. He wanted to go overseas but he was such a skilled pilot that he was assigned to a flight school, where he taught others how to fly. It was only in November 1944 that he was posted to a Lancaster bomber squadron in England. It was there that fellow pilot Frank Phripp found him one evening in early 1945.*

*Writing in the book "The RCAF at War," Phripp recalled hearing muffled sobs in the back of a hut. Going to investigate, he was in for a shock. Living was sitting in the dark, crying his eyes out.*

*"I had never seen a man cry, that was unthinkable among my Air Force friends," he wrote. "And if the idea had occurred to me, Hank Living was the last man I would have expected to be so broken up. Hank was undoubtedly the biggest guy on our squadron. He had used his size well when he played centre on the line for the Sarnia Imperials in the Ontario Rugby Football Union. He was known as 'Hi' Living in 1938 when he starred in the final game with the Montreal Nationals that won the Imperials the ORFU championship. Yet there he was on his cot in a dim corner of our hut in Lincolnshire and heaving uncontrollably."*

*Phripp put his hand on the Sarnian's trembling shoulder. For the longest time the two men sat silently. Then, slowly and almost unintelligibly, Living began to explain that he was afraid to keep flying, that he was sure he was about to be killed.*

*The problem was his great size.*

*"He explained there was no way he could squeeze through the pilot's escape hatch of the Lancaster with his parachute and Mae West (lifejacket) on," Phripp recalled. "He had tried every way possible with the help of trainers and his crew, and it couldn't be done."*

*Fearing he'd be trapped in his burning plane as it plunged to the ground, Living had asked to be reassigned to a different job, but had been turned down. At this point he could simply have quit. All aircrew were volunteers and no one could force them to fly. They would be stripped of rank and forced to clean latrines or to do other menial tasks,*

BELOVED BROTHER, WHO DIED FOR GOD AND NATIVE LAND,  
REST IN PEACE IN HEAVEN. A PRAYER.

*but they wouldn't have to face the deadly flak and fighters over Germany. But Living decided not to take the easy way out. Despite his fears, he kept flying until the night of Feb. 21, 1945, when his plane was shot down. Witnesses on the ground saw no parachutes emerge from the bomber as it plummeted to earth. Just as he had feared, Living had gone down with his aircraft.*

*If Remembrance Day is about recalling sacrifice and heroism, then Living's story is well worth remembering. It's easier to be brave if you have faith that you're going to make it, that death will always come to "the other guy." It's quite another thing to carry on after you've lost your nerve, when you're certain you're going to be killed. Hank Living did that. His courage should never be forgotten.*

\*Dan McCaffery is a reporter, historian and the author of eight books, including six books on military history. He can be reached at danval3@cogeco.ca

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, g

### **LOCHHEAD, Robert Lachlan (#J/90280)**

Robert "Bob" Lochhead was born in Toronto on June 27, 1924, the son of Fraser Absalon Lachlan Lochhead and Gertrude Wilhelmina (nee Ward) Lochhead, of Detroit, Michigan, formerly of 128 North Christina Street, Sarnia. Robert attended public school in Toronto, but his family moved to Sarnia when Robert was twelve years old, where he attended Sarnia public school and Sarnia Collegiate. He received his entire musical education in Sarnia and, being very interested in music, was a member of the Pressey's Boys Band for four years. During his musical career, Robert had been awarded a number of medals for solo work. He was also fond of swimming and horse back riding and was a member of the Central Century Club and attended Central United Church. Robert and his family resided in Sarnia for more than seven years before moving to Detroit in 1941, to reside at 8521 Mnt. Elliot, Detroit, Michigan.

At the age of seventeen, Robert enlisted as a bandsman in the Essex Scottish Regiment at Windsor, on January 23, 1941; however, when the Army authorities discovered his correct age, he was honourably discharged. Robert then went to Detroit where his family was living, and he worked there as a junior with an engineering firm. Upon reaching the required age of 18, the bachelor Robert enlisted in Windsor, joining the Royal Canadian Air Force on October 6, 1942. He received his training at Toronto, Trenton and Macdonald, Manitoba, where he won his Air Gunner's Wings.

Robert went overseas in September 1943, arriving in England on October 9, 1943, where he received his operational training on Wellington aircraft. He became a member of RCAF #431 Iroquois squadron "The Hatiten Ronterios" (Warriors of the air), flying Halifax bombers and attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Air Gunner. On April 23, 1944, he was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft MZ514 that was lost during night operations on attack on Dusseldorf, Germany. The bomber was found about thirty miles northwest of Dusseldorf. Perishing with Pilot Officer-Air Gunner Robert Lochhead were F/O P.G. MacGregor; P/O.s N.H. Lynch, F. Hatchman, and J.L. Priamo; and Sgt.s R.B. Corkill (RAF), and A. Howcroft (RAF).

In mid-May of 1944, Robert's parents Fraser and Gertrude received information, that their son, *Sergeant Air Gunner Robert Lochhead was reported missing in action over enemy territory after taking part in air operations over Germany*. Further word released from Ottawa informed them that Robert *had taken part in air operations over Duesseldorf, Germany on April 21, and failed to return from the mission*. It was not until one year later in April of 1945 that parents Fraser and Gertrude would receive the official notification of their son Robert's death. They were advised by the International Red Cross that the R.C.A.F. bomber on which Pilot Officer Lochhead was a member of the crew had been found about 30 miles northwest of Dusseldorf. Six bodies were recovered. One was identified as an airman from Guelph and another was an R.A.F. lad from Darlington, England. Four other bodies could not be identified and two others could not be found. The bodies were buried in a German cemetery on April 23.

Robert Lochhead would later officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Nineteen year-old Robert Lochhead is buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany, Coll grave 18.E.1-5. On Robert Lochhead's headstone are inscribed the words, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

**DIED FOR GOD AND HIS COUNTRY, AND FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE OPPRESSED.  
PRAY FOR HIM.**

**LONEY, George Victor Lawrence (#A/69237) – Photograph page 386**

George Loney was born in London, Ontario on April 4, 1916, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Loney of London, Ontario. The Loney family came to Sarnia in the early 1920s. George was educated at the Point Edward public school. George was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish. Prior to enlisting, he was employed at Electric Auto-Lite Limited. In July of 1937, George married Theresa McGinn (born March 1912) who was originally from Preston, Lancashire, England. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph and Mary McGinn, originally from England, living in Hamilton, Ontario. George and Theresa were married at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Sarnia, on July 31, 1937. At the ceremony, Marion Shortt of Point Edward served as bridesmaid and Orville Toole of Sarnia served as the best man. George and Theresa Loney lived at 240 Cobden Street, Sarnia. They would have three children together: Larry (Lawrence Joseph born 1938), Douglas and Marie.

George enlisted in the Canadian Army on April 20, 1942, and he received training at Chatham, Petawawa, Vancouver, Terrace and Wainwright. As a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery, 7 Medium Regiment with the rank of Gunner, he went overseas in August of 1943. One year after arriving overseas, George Loney would lose his life.

On August 8, 1944, George Loney died in France during the Battle of Normandy. In mid-August of 1944, Theresa Loney in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing her that her husband, *Gunner George Loney was killed in action in France on August 8*. At the time of George's death, he left behind his wife, Theresa, and their three young children: Larry, age five; Douglas, age four; and daughter Marie, age two. Twenty-eight year old George Loney is buried in Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave XI.H.16.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

**LOVE, John Frederick (#V/19486)**

John Love was born in Brandon, Manitoba on September 28, 1913, the son of Robin Love and Violet Love of Regina, Saskatchewan. His family later moved to Yorkton, Saskatchewan and John came to Sarnia nine years prior to his death. On February 14, 1936, John would marry Mable Patricia Rutter, the eldest daughter of Mrs. J. Rutter in Port Huron, Michigan. John and Mabel Patricia Love lived at 156 Cotterbury Street, Sarnia. The couple had one daughter together, Deanna Marie Love, born December 13, 1936 at Sarnia General Hospital. John enlisted in mid-1941, and at the time, he was an employee at the Electric Auto-Lite plant, recording his occupation as machine operator. When he enlisted, John's father was a resident of Detroit and his mother resided in Regina, Saskatchewan. John would join the Navy, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. He would become a member of the crew of the *HMS Grove*, with the rank of Stoker.

The *HMS Grove (L77)* was a Type II Hunt-class destroyer launched in May 1941 and commissioned by the Royal Navy in February 1942. On March 27, 1942, the *HMS Grove*, along with *HMS Aldenham*, *HMS Volunteer* and *HMS Leamington*, participated to sink the German U-boat *U-587* by depth charges.

In June of 1942, the *HMS Grove* was part of an escort during *Operation Vigorous*, a supply convoy from Alexandria to Malta. On June 12, 1942 at 5:37 am, the ship was struck by two torpedoes from German U-boat *U-77* and sunk north of Sollum, Egypt. The bow and stern structures were blown off and the ship sank in 14 minutes. Two officers and 108 men were lost, including Stoker John Love. Seventy-eight survivors from the *HMS Grove* were rescued by the *HMS Tetcott*. Prior to the sinking of the *HMS Grove*, his wife and daughter had not heard from John Love for six months. Approximately one week after the ship's sinking, his wife Mabel and their five year-old daughter Deanna back home in Sarnia, would receive a telegram informing them that John Love was reported killed in action overseas. John Love would later be officially listed as, *At Sea, missing, and presumed killed on active service. He was serving in a Royal Navy ship overseas*. John Love lost his life only one year after enlisting. Twenty-eight year-old John Love has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 9.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, P, U, 2C, 2D

**LOWRY, James (#R/78911)**

James Lowry was born in Northern Ireland on July 5, 1916, the son of John Lowry and Annie (nee Park) Lowry, both of Belfast, Ireland. James Lowry came to Canada approximately seven years prior to his death. He had 7 brothers--four were in Ireland, one was in Pittsburg, Pa., and two were in Vancouver, B.C.-- and two sisters, both

living in Ireland. Prior to enlisting, James was employed at the Mueller Limited plant in Sarnia. He would marry Pauline E. Lowry (nee Sayers), and they would reside on Exmouth Street, in Sarnia. James and Pauline had one daughter together, Judith Anne Lowry, born January 13, 1943 at Sarnia General Hospital. The family would move to R.R. #1 London Road, later 255 south Brock street, Sarnia.

At wartime, James enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He received his initial training at Toronto, elementary instruction at Crumlin, and service flying at Dunnville. He graduated and received his wings at Rockcliffe in December 1941 and was appointed staff pilot at Dafoe, Saskatchewan where he was stationed for eight months. He then went overseas in November 1942, as a member of RCAF #185 Squadron "Ara Fejn Hu" (Look where it is) and was promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer Class I-Pilot, effective June 23, 1943.

James Lowry had been in the air force for about 2 ½ years, last stationed in the Middle East, as a Spitfire pilot. On July 2, 1943, only days before his 28th birthday, Warrant Officer I-Pilot James Lowry would lose his life when his Spitfire aircraft EN404 went missing during an operational flight twenty miles south of Sicily. In August of 1943, Pauline Lowry in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Flight Sergeant James Lowry, has been reported missing on active service in the Middle East.*

In early December of 1944, Pauline Lowry, would receive information from Ottawa informing her that (though presumed dead) her husband, *Flight Sergeant James Lowry, has been promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer, Class One, effective June 23, 1943.* James Lowry would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Sicily).* James Lowry would leave behind his wife Pauline and their young daughter Judith Anne. Twenty-seven year old James Lowry has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Malta War Memorial, Malta, Panel 10, Column 2.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **LUCAS, William Eldon (#V/19180)**

William Lucas was born on October 29, 1918, the son of Thomas Henry Lucas (born in Camlachie, Ontario) and Lillian Mae (nee Martin, born in Sarnia) Lucas, of 368 Shepherd street, Sarnia. William had three siblings: James Wesley (born 1912); Helena Mae (born 1906, later becoming Mrs. Edmund Mackey); and Shirley Catherine (born 1924, later becoming Mrs. Charles Demars). William, single at the time, and recording his occupation as a chauffeur, enlisted with the Canadian Navy. In mid-November of 1940, he would begin his training at the Royal Canadian Naval depot in Windsor. One month later, Ordinary Seaman Eldon Lucas, still in training, would return to Sarnia from the barracks at Windsor, to assist two recruiting officers of the Windsor depot, in the interviewing of recruits for the Royal Canadian Navy. Recruiting in Sarnia for only one day, William Lucas explained to the young men that if they were accepted, they would be given a medical examination before going to Windsor. At the Windsor barracks, they would undergo training for a six-week period and then be transferred to one of the coastal naval bases. At that one day recruitment, more than one hundred young men from Sarnia, Petrolia, Wyoming and Courtright presented themselves at the armory for enlistment in the Royal Canadian Naval detachment. The average age of those accepted was 18 to 20 years, many of high school age.

William Lucas would become a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. In May of 1941, Eldon Lucas, who had been stationed at a Windsor training depot, was transferred to an Eastern Canadian naval training centre. He would become a part of the crew of the *HMCS Vision*, with the rank of Steward. The *HMCS Vision (S11/Z30)*, formerly the *Avalon*, was an armed yacht of 181 feet in length and a displacement of 422 tonnes, launched in 1931 and commissioned by the RCN in October 1940. In December 1940, she was sent from Halifax to operate out of Trinidad and Bermuda. William, a former scoutmaster, had been home on leave Christmas and New Year's of December 1941/January 1942.

On January 19, 1942, William was aboard the steamship *RMS Lady Hawkin* on its way to Bermuda, en route to join his ship. The *Lady Hawkins*, a Canadian luxury liner, had 109 crew and 212 passengers, mostly civilian, on board. The ship had no escort, only a small gun for defence, so it travelled in a zig-zag pattern for defence. On that date, at about 2:00 am in the morning, the unescorted *Lady Hawkins* was hit by two stern torpedoes from German *U-66* and sank after 30 minutes approximately 150 miles from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. One lifeboat, built for 63, escaped the scene with 75 persons on board. Five days later, the steamship *Coamo* picked up seventy-one survivors, four unfortunately having died during the five days at sea. The *Coamo* landed at Puerto Rico on January 28. Two

hundred fifty crew and passengers were lost in the sinking of the *Lady Hawkins*, including William Lucas. Steward William Lucas would later be officially listed as, *Missing, believed lost at sea on war services*. On October 29, 1944, two and a half years after Eldon Lucas was reported missing, the Remembrance Book at Devine Street Church was opened at the photograph of Eldon William Lucas in honour of his 26th birthday. Twenty-three year old William Lucas has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 9.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, 2C, 2D

**LYCHOWICH, John Louis (#A/107694) – Photograph page 386**

John Lychowich was born on January 20, 1918 and raised with his younger sister, Jean Engel, on a farm in Garson, Manitoba. Their parents were Polish immigrants Steve Lychowich (born in Galicia) and Rosalie (nee Hower, born in Austria) Lychowich. On John's birth certificate, the family last name is actually spelled "Lehovitz". After grade 7, John left school at age 14 to work as a farmer and labourer in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. John spent five years working on "mixed farms" and sometime in 1940 made his way to Sarnia. Here he found employment at the Polymer Corporation, working almost three years as a carpenter. During his time living in Sarnia, he managed to find love, making plans to marry Barbara Nemeth of Kitchener, Ontario. In mid-May of 1943, still single, John enlisted in the military, recording his address as Polymer Corp. Camp, Sarnia, and his occupation as a carpenter. He checked that he would prefer service in the Navy. John planned to return to Sarnia after the war, as Polymer Corp promised that once his service was complete, he would be employed with them.

In early June of 1943, John was convicted of theft and sentenced to one month imprisonment in the "county jail" at Sarnia. At the end of the month, he was released to the Military Police and attached to the Military Detention Barracks. On August 13, 1943, John enlisted in the Canadian Army at London, Ontario. John underwent training in Stratford and Camp Ipperwash. In mid-November, earning \$1.40 per day, he was granted a two week furlough and an allowance of .50 cents per deim in lieu of rations. On December 23, 1943, he was granted a five day Christmas leave, again with the .50 cents per deim allowance. At the start of the New Year, John earned himself a raise, to \$1.50 per day. In mid-January 1944, he was transferred for further training to Debert, Nova Scotia. Three weeks later, in early February, he was admitted to Debert Military Hospital, where he spent four days.

In early March of 1944, John embarked overseas, reporting for duty in the United Kingdom on March 15, 1944. He was assigned the rank of Private, attached to the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. In early June of 1944, John found himself a part of the 7th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Canadian Division, which was in the first wave of landings on Normandy Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. John survived those first couple of days of the invasion of France, the Battle of Normandy; however, on June 8, 1944, on his 94th day overseas, he was listed as "missing". It was learned later that John Lychowich had been captured by German troops and was one of as many as 156 Canadian soldiers who were executed by their captors. On Hitler's order, as retribution for the invasion on France, members of the 12th SS Panzer Division (Hitler Youth) brutally murdered prisoners in scattered groups in various pockets of the Normandy countryside in the days and weeks following D-Day. It was one of the worst war crimes in Canadian history.

On June 7, the Germans took prisoners from the North Nova Scotia Highlanders and the 27th Canadian Armoured Regiment to Abbaye d'Ardenne, an ancient stone church. Later that night, eleven of the Canadian prisoners were taken into the Abbaye's garden and shot in the head. The next morning, seven more Canadian POWs were taken outside and shot. On June 8, sixty-four Canadians, including several dozen members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, were taken prisoner near Putot-en-Bessin. The prisoners were marched to the Chateau d'Audrieu and, throughout the day, German soldiers murdered forty-five Canadians. One of those murdered on June 8, 1944 was John Lychowich. The murders of these Canadian soldiers and the consequent search for justice is documented in the book *Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy* by Howard Margolian.<sup>D, 2N</sup> The following is a portion of that book detailing the events of June 8th, beginning at about 2:00 in the afternoon:

*At the crossroads east of Pavie, the column (of prisoners) was ordered to a halt. The first thing Bremer's men did was to instruct the prisoners to remove their helmets. Then, while they kept their hands clasped behind their heads, each prisoner subjected to a thorough, sometimes rough, search. All papers and personal effects confiscated. Identification documents were taken by the NCO in charge, while photographs, money, and other personal items were tossed willy-nilly to the ground, although the Germans did make a point of pocketing cigarettes. At the*

*conclusion of the search, the prisoners, their hands still up, were marched another few hundred yards to the rear of a chateau.... Compared with the horrors of combat, the scene that greeted the prisoners on the grounds of the chateau must have seemed positively idyllic. Nestled among tall, leafy trees and other greenery, the chateau, named Chateau d'Audrieu, after the neighbouring village, recalled simpler, gentler times.*

Three prisoners--Major Hodge, Lance Corporal Austin Fuller and Private Frederick Smith--were brought to a command post where they underwent interrogation. About 2:15, a frustrated and angry German officer ordered them killed. They were marched single file, arms still raised, onto a path that led to a cluster of shrubs and small trees and then ordered to halt. After ordering them to face away from the firing squad, German soldiers executed them. Half an hour later, after more unsuccessful interrogations, three more Canadian prisoners were executed. This time, however, after being ordered to lie on their stomachs, they were shot point blank in the back of the head. The German executors then returned to the chateau kitchen for food and cider. Bremer, the German officer, still thought the interrogation and the execution of prisoners three at a time was inefficient. This pace would have them executing the Canadians until the evening.

*Between 4:30 and 5:00 in the afternoon, Leon Leseigneur, a local dairy farmer, and Eugene Buchart, one of his farm hands, were walking along a dirt road past the hen house of the Chateau d'Audrieu. Gazing to the right, they noticed thirteen unarmed Canadian soldiers standing in the chateau's orchard. All were members of 9 Platoon of the Winnipeg's A Company. They were Mrs. Jennie Meakin's boys, George and Frank, both of whom were corporals, as well as Privates William Adams, Emmanuel Bishoff, Lawrence Chartrand, Sidney Cresswell, Anthony Fagnan, Robert Harper, Herve Labrecque, **John Lychowich**, Robert Mutch, Henry Rodgers, and Steve Slywchuk. The prisoners were being guarded by a detachment of SS Troopers. Buchart noted with interest that there were several officers among the guard....*

*About forty yards past the hen house, Buchart and his employer headed into the pasture where the Leseigneur farm was situated. Just as they turned off the dirt road, the two men heard heavy bursts of gunfire. Buchart and Leseigneur instantly realized what this meant, but, after four years of brutal German occupation, they knew better than to investigate. Instead, the two men hurried back to the farm and tried to keep a low profile. A few minutes later, an SS officer and two troopers came by in order to appropriate Leseigneur's ladder. Forcing Buchart to carry the ladder for them, the Germans escorted him back towards their headquarters. As he passed the hen house and glanced left at the orchard, his worst fears were confirmed. The prisoners he had seen earlier were gone....*

Based on what Buchart and Leseigneur saw and heard, as well as forensic evidence, the final moments of the thirteen Winnipeg was reconstructed.

*Confined to the orchard by Bremer, the men of 9 Platoon probably milled about, exchanging small talk, bucking up each other's spirits. At around 4:30 PM, the guard detail was joined by several officers, with Bremer perhaps among them. A palpable tension would have filled the orchard. On orders from the most senior German officer (Bremer or a subordinate), the prisoners were lined up in a row. Facing them was a rough-and-ready firing squad, consisting of SS troopers with rifles, NCOs with machine pistols, and officers with sidearms. At the command to fire, the executioners opened up with a murderous fusillade. All of the Canadians went down with the first volley, although some clearly were not killed outright. Hearing the moans of Privates Bishoff, Labrecque, and Mutch, whose wounds were not fatal, an officer walked over to where they lay and finished them off with shots to the head. As he moved down the line of stricken men, kicking each of them to see if he showed signs of life, the officer discovered that Lance Corporal Meakin and Private Slywchuk had not been hit at all. Slywchuk had apparently timed his dive perfectly, whereas Frank Meakin had been saved when George, in a last act of brotherly love, had stepped in front of him, taking a burst of machine-pistol fire across the chest. There would be no more reprieves, however. As Meakin lay waiting next to his lifeless brother, he was given the coup de grace. Then the officer emptied his pistol into Slywchuk's head. As the echo of the last shots faded, an eerie silence descended over the orchard.<sup>32</sup>*

Three days after the D-Day invasion, the British army occupied the mansion at Chateau d'Audrieu and found a row of 13 Canadian soldiers lying dead along a fence.

On June 26, 1944, Mrs. Rosie Lychowich received the following telegram:

*"Minister of National Defence deeply regrets to inform you that A107694 Private John Louis Lychowich who was previously reported missing in action has now been officially reported killed in action eighth June 1944 stop if any further information becomes available it will be forwarded as soon as received."*

John Lychowich would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. His mother also received a War Service Gratuity from the Department of National Defence. The gratuity broke down as this: 301 days of Total Qualifying service = \$75.00 + 93 days of Qualifying Overseas service = \$23.25 + a 94 days Supplement for overseas service = \$9.89 for a Total Gratuity of \$108.14. His mother also received the three campaign medals that John was awarded while in service: 1939-45 Star; the France-Germany Star War Medal; and the 1939-45 CVSM and Clasp.

On September 12, 1944, John's fiancé, Barbara Nemeth in Kitchener, received the following letter from the Director of Records, National Defence:

*Dear Miss Nemeth:*

*In reply to your letter dated 19th August, 1944, I deeply regret to inform you that your fiancé, A107694 Private John Louis Lychowich, has been officially reported to have been killed in action in France on the 8th of June, 1944.*

*Yours truly, Colonel C.L. Laurin*

A memorial stele of white marble, with three mounted plaques, was erected in Audrieu, France, in memory of the members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles and supporting arms who were murdered while prisoners of war at the Chateau d'Audrieu June 8, 9 and 11, 1944. John Lychowich's name is among the 64 names inscribed on the plaque. Twenty-six year old John Lychowich is buried in Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery in Reviere, France, Grave XV.B.16. The men who fell on the beaches of Normandy and in the bitter bridgehead battles that followed are buried in Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery. John Lychowich is one of them. On John Lychowich's headstone are inscribed the words, *Requiescat in pace*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D, 2N, 3Z

#### **MACGREGOR, Donald Cameron (#R/102776)**

Donald MacGregor was born on November 21, 1914, the only son of Donald Cameron MacGregor and Margaret Ellen (nee MacEachern) MacGregor, of 208 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. Donald had one sister, Mary Turnbull, of Sarnia. Donald attended elementary school in Sarnia and Peru, where he lived for a few years while his father was employed in the oil industry. He returned to Sarnia and graduated from Sarnia Collegiate, where he was an outstanding athlete, a member of the school's football teams, swimming team and gymnastics team that won the junior championship of Canada in 1932. Donald was a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. For two years prior to enlistment, he had spent his summers as athletic and swimming instructor at the Lion's Boy's Camp at Seaforth. His hobbies in his later years had been golfing and swimming, and he became well known throughout the district as sound-truck assistant to Fred Smith. Donald, single at the time, was in his fourth year of a chemistry course at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, when he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Donald had flown over Sarnia during his elementary training flights from Crumlin airport, near London. After Crumlin, he graduated from Uplands Advanced Flying Training School, with a high rating as a fighter pilot. He arrived overseas less than two months prior to his death. Donald MacGregor was a member of the RCAF #286 Squadron, flying an Oxford aircraft DF253 as a sergeant-pilot. On May 11, 1942, his Oxford aircraft crashed at Dymonds Farm, Clyst, Honiton, near the aerodrome at RAF Station, Colerne, England. The next day, his parents Donald and Margaret in Sarnia would receive the telegram informing them that their only son had lost his life while on active service over England, with no other details given. Along with Sergeant-Pilot Donald MacGregor, two RAF members of the crew were also killed. Donald MacGregor would later officially be listed as, *Killed during flying operations, overseas*. Twenty-seven year old Donald MacGregor is buried in Exeter Higher Cemetery, Devon, United Kingdom, Section Z.K. Grave 54.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **MARTINDALE, Ralph Omar (#V/17891)**

Ralph Omar Martindale was born in York, Ontario on July 27, 1922, the son of Ralph Emerson Martindale and Ina Agatha (nee Renshaw) Martindale, of 413 Nelson Street, Sarnia. Both his parents were born in Haldimand, Ontario. Ralph Omar had one brother, Albert, and one sister, Geraldine. At his enlistment, Ralph Martindale, single at the time, and recording his occupation as machinist, joined the Canadian Navy. He would become a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, with the rank of Ordinary Seaman. In June of 1942, Omar Martindale



would come home to Sarnia while on leave to visit his parents and friends. After his leave, Ralph Omar Martindale would return to service, serving aboard the *HMCS Raccoon*.

The *HMCS Raccoon (S14)* was a 148 foot, 377 ton civilian yacht, originally built in 1931, and commissioned for military service by the RCN in June 1940. Beginning in the spring of 1942, the *HMCS Raccoon* was assigned to the naval base at Gaspé to patrol the river and Gulf of the St. Lawrence and to escort convoys of ships sailing from Quebec to Sydney, Newfoundland or Halifax.

In early September 1942, the armed yacht *HMCS Raccoon* was providing escort along with corvette *HMCS Arrowhead*, minesweeper *HMCS Truro* and two Fairmile launches *Q-64* and *Q-83* for the convoy *QS-33* in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The slow-moving convoy, bound for Sydney Nova Scotia, was unaware that two German U-boats, *U-165* and *U-517* were lying in wait on opposite sides of the river, by Cap Chat and Pointe-des-Monts, Quebec. Late on the night of September 6, 1942, west of Pointe-des-Monts where the St. Lawrence narrows to 50 kilometers in width, German U-boat *U-165* intercepted and struck the starboard side of the Greek steam merchant ship *Aeas* with one torpedo just under the bridge. The *Aeas* sank, two of the crew died, and the 29 others survived by abandoning ship and climbing into life rafts. One of her escorts, the *HMCS Raccoon* left the convoy at midnight, zig-zagging in search of the German U-boat. Shortly after, at 1:12 am (September 7), there was a loud explosion, as the *HMCS Raccoon* was also torpedoed by *U-165*, at almost point-blank range, causing her boiler to explode, sinking her in minutes. Ships in the convoy guessed they were hearing depth charges being dropped by the *Raccoon* as it pursued the U-boat. Explosions from both sinkings, which lit up the sky, could be heard for miles around; windows of houses close to shore were rattled by the detonations.

Three days later, only a few bits of debris from the *HMCS Raccoon* were found on the south coast of Anticosti Island, and one body was found. The body was that of a well-known McGill University footballer, Russell McConnell. The entire *Raccoon* crew of thirty-seven men were lost, including Ralph Martindale. Days after the sinking, parents Ralph and Ina Martindale in Sarnia would receive a cable informing them that their son Omar was reported missing when the Canadian patrol vessel *Raccoon* was lost while in convoy duty. Ralph Martindale would later be officially listed as, *At sea, presumed lost on board H.M.C.S. 'Raccoon'*. Twenty year-old ordinary seaman Ralph Omar Martindale has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 9.

Another sad story in the loss of the *Raccoon*, is that of Supply Assistant John Sheflin, one of Ralph Martindale's crew-mates, who also perished in the sinking. At the very moment that the *Raccoon* was going down, a train sped through nearby Riviere-la-Madeleine carrying John Sheflin's wife, Marguerite, and their two pre-school children. They had made a spur-of-the moment decision to move from Toronto to join family in Eureka, Nova Scotia, so that they could see John when he took his occasional shore leave. It would be years before his family discovered just how close together they were, before tragedy tore them apart forever.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **McCALLUM, Albert Robert (#J/7070) – Photograph page 386**

Albert McCallum was born in Parry Sound, Ontario, on January 29, 1919, the son of Gordon McCallum and Johanna Catherine (nee Morrison, born in Orville, Ontario) McCallum, of Palmerston, Ontario, later 555 Confederation street, Sarnia. Albert had one sister, Margaret Dorothy, born in 1921. Albert attended public school in Sarnia and then moved back to Parry Sound with his parents. After high school in Parry Sound, he entered the employ of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, being on the staff at Parry Sound and Seaforth. Albert, single at the time, enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force on November 14, 1940, recording his home address as 555 Confederation Street, Sarnia. He received training at Uplands, Ontario; Victoriaville, Quebec; Malton and Brantford, Ontario; Charlottetown, P.E.I.; and Debert, Nova Scotia. Sergeant-Pilot Albert McCallum would be awarded his wings as a member of the R.C.A.F. in early September of 1941, along with two other Sarnians, Sergeant-Pilot Wesley K. McDermid and Sergeant-Observers Howard Fraser Thompson (included in this project).

Albert McCallum would be one of the first group of Canadians to ferry Hudson aircraft to England. He continued training in the summer of 1942 at Loch Erne, Northern Ireland, on Catalina flying boats. Albert returned to Canada in August of 1942. He would spend a two-week furlough at his home in Sarnia to be with his family and friends. Afterwards, he departed for a post in Eastern Canada, temporarily attached to the Eastern Ferry Command of

the R.C.A.F. He would return overseas and serve with RCAF #119 squadron "By night and by day", attaining the rank of Flight Lieutenant-Pilot. In October of 1942, his parents Gordon and Johanna McCallum in Sarnia would receive news of their son Robert's promotion from pilot office to flying officer.

On December 14, 1942, Albert McCallum was promoted to flight lieutenant. On December 15, 1942, Albert was part of a crew aboard a Sunderland aircraft that did not return from an anti-sub patrol over the Atlantic Ocean. Its SOS was received giving their position as south-west of the Scilly Islands (an archipelago off the southwestern tip of the Cornish peninsula of Great Britain). In late December of 1942, Albert's parents Gordon and Johanna McCallum in Sarnia, would receive a letter from their son, dated December 14, 1942 in which he stated, "The weather has been bad but we expect to be out tomorrow to see some action." On December 15, 1942, Albert McCallum would be listed as, *missing after air operations overseas*. Perishing with Flight Lieutenant-Pilot Albert McCallum were P/O.s R.I. Law, B.D. King, and W.G. Milne. One RNZAF, and six RAF members of the crew were reported missing and believed killed.

In September of 1943, Albert McCallum would officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-three year old Albert McCallum has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 99. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **McCLURE, Donald Leonard (#A/103300) – Photograph page 387**

Donald McClure was born on March 23, 1921, the son of William Alexander McClure (born in Brooke Township, Lambton County, Ontario) and Edna Isabella (nee Bissell) McClure, of 249 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. For Donald's mother Edna, this was her second marriage. She had married Victor Ivinson in 1914, but he died in February 1916. They had one son together, Edward Leland Ivinson, born in February of 1916. Later in 1916, Edna married again, this time to William Alexander McClure, and the family lived in Humboldt, Saskatchewan. In August of 1921, William Alexander McClure, a local grocer, died at Sarnia General Hospital. For Donald, he lost his father when he was only four months old.

Donald had one sister, Alma, and three brothers: John William Alexander 'Jack'; James Kenneth (see below); and Edward Iverson. At the time of Donald's death, Jack was living in Sarnia; Edward was in Detroit enlisted in the U.S. Navy; and James was in the Canadian Army stationed on the east coast. Donald McClure was educated at Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate and attended Central United Church. During his high school days he was a member of the rifle team. Upon graduating from a technical course in machine shop, he was first employed at Goodson's and then was employed at Holmes Foundry prior to enlisting. One year before enlisting, Donald McClure married Ethel Marie McClure, and they lived at 249 Cameron Street, Sarnia. He listed his occupation as a core-maker.

Donald enlisted in the Canadian Army in June of 1942, and after receiving his training in London, Windsor, Kitchener and Camp Borden, he went overseas in December of 1942. His unit first trained in England, was then transferred to Scotland, and finally left for Sicily in June 1943. Don wrote home giving a very interesting story of this trip, describing Gibraltar and Algiers, where he visited for a short time. Trooper Donald McClure was a member of the 12th Canadian Tank Corps of the Three Rivers Regiment R.C.A.C., which took part in the invasion of Sicily. There were five in Don's crew and he was the co-driver of the tank. On July 30, 1943, as a member of an anti-tank corps with the Canadian Army during the Battle of Sicily, he would lose his life after his tank was hit. The other driver of the tank was killed instantly, two were wounded and one member escaped injury. Donald McClure was the first Sarnia fatality in the Sicilian campaign.

In mid-August of 1943, wife Ethel Marie McClure of Sarnia would receive a telegram informing her of her husband Donald's death in Sicily. The information from the Director of Records said that, *Trooper McClure had been officially reported died of wounds on a date not yet available*. It added that further word would be forwarded when received. Donald McClure would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Sicily)*. Twenty-two year old Donald McClure is buried at Agira Canadian War Cemetery, Sicily, Grave D,G,486. On Donald McClure's headstone are inscribed the words, *Until the day break and the shadows flee away*. For Donald's widow mother Edna in Sarnia, a little over one year later, she would lose a second son, James,

who was killed in Italy.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

**McCLURE, James Kenneth (#A/28723) – Photograph page 387**

James McClure was born May 15, 1920, in Norval, near Toronto, the son of William Alexander McClure (born in Brooke Township, Lambton County, Ontario) and Edna Isabella (nee Bissell) McClure, of 249 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. For James's mother Edna, this was her second marriage. She had married Victor Ivinson in 1914, but he died in February 1916. They had one son together, Edward Leland Ivinson, born in February of 1916. Later in 1916, Edna married again, this time to William Alexander McClure, and the family lived in Humboldt, Saskatchewan. In August of 1921, William Alexander, a local grocer, died at Sarnia General Hospital. James lost his father when he was just over one year old.

James had one sister, Alma, and three brothers: John William Alexander 'Jack', Donald Leonard (see above), and Edward Iverson. At the time of James' death, Jack was living in Sarnia; Edward was in the U.S. Navy and stationed at the Naval Station in Pensacola, Florida; and Donald who was also a member of the Canadian Army, had been killed in action prior to James. James was educated at Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. James (Jim) was very interested in farming, so after leaving high school, he spent three years on a farm. Following that, James McClure sailed for one season on the *S.S. Huronic*.

Single at the time of his enlistment, he recorded his occupation as a labourer. He joined in the Canadian Army on January 9, 1941, and was trained at Chatham, Windsor, London, Kitchener and Petawawa Camp. After completing training, James married Miss Norma Gehm, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Gehm of Wilcox, Saskatchewan on May 2, 1942 in a quiet ceremony at the military camp chapel at Petawawa. The couple were attended by Gunner Sidney Morr, R.C.A. and Gunner Lloyd Illman, R.C.A.. After their marriage, the newlywed couple resided at 215 ½ North Christina Street, Sarnia. James McClure would later be transferred to Debert, Nova Scotia, and was then posted to the east coast in Labrador in June 1942, serving with the 30th Anti-Aircraft Battery unit for 13 months. Part of this unit's role was to guard the airport in Labrador while it was under construction. Jim went from there to St. John, New Brunswick, with the Royal Canadian Artillery. In late July of 1943, James' younger brother Donald, a member of the Canadian Tanks Corp, would lose his life during the Battle of Sicily.

It was at this time that the army was short in Infantry Reserves. Due to this shortage, Jim returned to Ipperwash Camp in February 1944, where he had eight weeks training in an infantry course. He went overseas in May of 1944, arriving first in England and then in Italy early in July, as a member of the Perth Regiment R.C.I.C.. Not long after arriving at the Italian Front, James transferred to the Royal Canadian Regiment. On December 13, 1944, Private James McClure would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. In late December of 1944, Norma McClure, residing at 249 Cromwell Street, Sarnia, would receive word from Padre Goldring of M.D. No. 1 headquarters, London informing her that her husband, Private Jim McClure has been killed in action in Italy.

James McClure would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-four year old James McClure is buried in Villanova Canadian War Cemetery, Italy, Grave VII.A.10. Two months after James' death, on February 13, 1945, his wife Norma would give birth to their daughter, born in the C.E.E. Hospital in Petrolia. Baby girl McClure was baptized in Central United Church. For James' widowed mother Edna in Sarnia, this was her second son lost in the war. She had previously lost her son Donald, who had been killed in action the previous July in 1943 in Sicily. In mid-April of 1945, a memorial service was held for Private James McClure at Central United Church in Sarnia.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C

**McFADYEN, Gilbert Campbell (#R/220720)**

Gilbert "Bert" McFadyen was born in London on September 15, 1924, the son of George McFadyen and Isabella McFadyen, of 222 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. After moving to Sarnia at age seven with his parents and his brother Jack, Gilbert received his education in Sarnia public schools and at Sarnia Collegiate. He was an active member of the Young Men's Christian Association and also took a very active part in Central United Church, having served as an usher. Gilbert was also a member of the Central Century Club, being vice-president of the Club during the year 1942. He was working part time at Zellers when he left school to join the service. Gilbert enlisted in the

Royal Canadian Air Force on April 29, 1943. After training at Brandon, Manitoba and enjoying a short leave home in Sarnia, he left for the west coast on May 13, 1943, where he was stationed at No. 3 Repair Depot, Vancouver, British Columbia. He was a member of the RCAF, with the rank of Aircraftman 2nd Class, based at RCAF Headquarters, Western Air Command.

Only three months after enlisting, on July 24, 1943, he was aboard the RCAF vessel the *B.C. Star*, operating off the British Columbia coast. It was a former fishboat, 67 feet long, and had been under charter to the Royal Canadian Air Force for a year and a half. They were engaged in the coastal supply of the R.C.A.F., their job being to supply all the Air Force stations along the British Columbian coast. On that day, the vessel sank off Vancouver, British Columbia with a crew of Air Force personnel aboard. In early August of 1943, parents George and Isabella McFadyen in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Royal Canadian Air Force Casualty officials informing them that their son, AC2 Gilbert C. McFadyen, attached to a boat plying coastal waters, was missing after marine operations. Approximately one week later, it was confirmed that Gilbert McFadyen was a member of the crew of the missing boat, and it was believed that all personnel had been lost. Time of the disappearance of the vessel was not disclosed by air force officials, but it was believed to have been sometime during the previous two weeks.

In mid-August of 1943, Gilbert's father George McFadyen in Sarnia would receive a letter from G. Hollis Slater, whose son, Sergt. J.C. Slater, was among the ship's crew, saying that they are hopeful that the airmen were still alive. "It would appear," Mr. Slater said "that the ship left the mainland on July 24 for Cape St. James at the southern tip of the Queen Charlotte Islands and a day's run away. On August 5 the following message was reported to have been picked up by the radio at Ketchikan, Alaska, B.C. Star – Bread and water. Cumshaw Aliford, repeat." Reference to Cumshaw and Aliford were not clear, but Mr. Slater interpreted the message as meaning that the men were on Louris Island in the Queen Charlottes and are attempting to travel by land to Sandspit or Aliford Bay on the northeast of Moresby Island.

In March of 1944, Gilbert Campbell's name would appear on the official casualty list of the Royal Canadian Air Force as, *previously reported missing on active service, now presumed dead*. Aircraftman Class II Gilbert McFadyan was one of sixteen RCAF airmen lost when the *B.C. Star* vessel sank. There were no survivors. Also killed were LAC.s F.C. Mack, C.J. Sherlock, G.T. Stead, and H.F. Oakenfold; Sgt.s J.C. Slater, W.H. MacNeil, J.D. Hearfield, and P.E. Olsen; Cpl.s C.G. Glover and T.L. Polec; AC.s T. Vollhoffer, M.D. Onuski, and G.A. Davies; and FS.s R.H. Drouillard, and W.E. Mitchell. Eighteen year-old Gilbert McFadyen has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Ottawa War Memorial, Ontario, Canada, Panel 2, Column 5.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

#### **McISAAC, Charles Daniel (#B/157245)**

Charles McIsaac was born in Nova Scotia on May 7, 1916, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Hughie McIsaac. Charles would marry Margaret Virginia McIsaac, of Sarnia. At enlistment time, George recorded his address as 264 Spruce Street, Timmins, Ontario, and his occupation as gold and nickel mining. Charles joined the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On October 13, 1944, Charles McIsaac would lose his life during fighting in France. Charles McIsaac would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds, in the field (France)*. Twenty-eight year old Charles McIsaac is buried in Antwerpen Schoonselhof Cemetery, Belgium, Grave III.A.15.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

#### **McKEOWN, Victor Herbert (#J/19969)**

Victor McKeown was born in Co Armagh, Northern Ireland on May 7, 1911, the son of John McKeown and Mary Ellen (nee Hewitt) McKeown, of 355 George Street, Sarnia. Both parents were originally from Ireland. Victor had three brothers: Doug, a sergeant in the same unit as Victor in R.C.A.F.; and Joseph and Bill who would both later reside in Toronto. Victor also had three sisters who at the time of his death were Mrs. Alice Burr in Toronto, Mrs. James Struthers and Mrs. Ray Chalmers, both in Sarnia. Victor attended Sarnia Collegiate Institute and was a well-known athlete, active in lacrosse and hockey. Prior to enlisting, Victor was employed at the Dominion Salt Company in Sarnia and then moved on to De Haviland Aircraft, Toronto. Single at the time and residing at 11 Clarendon Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Victor enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in October of 1942. He received his wings in June of 1943, in MacDonald, Manitoba. He became a member of RCAF #434 Bluenose squadron "In

Excelsis Vincimus” (We conquer in the heights), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Air Gunner. He would arrive overseas in July of 1943.

Early in January of 1944, Pilot Officer Victor McKeown was one of a group of R.C.A.F. men who bombarded Mannheim, Germany. For more than eight hours, they withstood a temperature that fell to more than 35 degrees below zero but it didn't stop them from carrying out their part of the smashing attack on the important city. On January 29, 1944, Victor McKeown was a member of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft LK916 that was on a night bombing operation over Germany. It was the third day of a heavy aerial offensive on Germany. On that fateful night, their Halifax aircraft was blown up over their target of Berlin, Germany. Several days later, parents John and Mary Ellen McKeown in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualty office in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Sergeant Victor Herbert McKeown, has been reported missing after air operations overseas*. Victor's brother Doug, a member of the same unit, sent their parents an encouraging word. Doug McKeown cabled parents John and Mary Ellen not to worry about Vic - *His chances of being safe are very good*. Another set of Sarnia parents, Howard and Margaret Thompson, would receive the same information on the same day about their son, Arthur Cameron Thompson, who was also listed as missing in the same bombing raid over Berlin (included in this project).

Victor's brother Doug McKeown, who was a Sergeant-Air Gunner with the R.C.A.F., would arrive home in Sarnia in April of 1944 to spend a leave with parents John and Mary Ellen McKeown. He had been overseas for two years and three months. He had been injured in a crash in England a year and a half prior, spent six weeks in hospital and had been assigned to ground duty since. At the time of Doug's visit, he and the McKeown parents had received no further news of Victor's status, other than he had been reported missing on an operational flight over Berlin in late January of 1944.

In July of 1944, parents John and Mary Ellen McKeown in Sarnia would receive a letter from Flight Lieutenant J.L. Westman of the R.C.A.F. casualty office at Ottawa informing them that their son, Sergeant Victor Herbert McKeown had been advanced to pilot officer on January 23, 1944, but regretted no further information had been received as to his fate.

Victor Herbert McKeown would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Perishing with Pilot Officer-Air Gunner Victor McKeown were P/O.s W.K. Maxwell, C.T. Lee, and E.P. Devaney. Two of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and presumed killed. Thirty-two year old Victor McKeown has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 251.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **McKERNAN, John (#A/59800)**

John McKernan was born on August 2, 1921, the son of John McKernan and Eva May (nee Wells, born in Kent, Ontario) McKernan, of Sarnia. John had two sisters, Annie and another one. John was single at the time of his enlistment in the Canadian Army, recording his occupation as labourer and his place of residence as P.O. Dresden. John McKernan became a member of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On August 19, 1944, John McKernan would lose his life during fighting in France, in the final days of the Battle of Normandy. John McKernan would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Twenty-three year old John McKernan is buried in Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France, Grave IIA.E.14.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

### **McLAGAN, John Pettigrew (#A/50287) – Photograph page 388**

John McLagan was born in Leith, Scotland on March 22, 1908, the son of James I. McLagan and Robina McLagan, of Windsor, Ontario. John had three brothers who at the time of his death were Thomas in Windsor; James of the Chatham police force; and Edward in Pasadena, California. John was a member of Christ Anglican Church in Chatham and was affiliated with the A.Y.P.A.. Living at 262 ½ King Street, Chatham, he was a baker, employed at the Sunshine Baker in Chatham. In 1938, John would marry Rose Bazeley, who was born in Stapleford, England, but was residing in Sarnia. John and Rose McLagan would reside at 423 Davis Street, Sarnia and have one child together, daughter, Mary Anne.

John McLagan enlisted in the Canadian Army in July 1940, becoming a member of the 1st Kent Regiment. In March 1943, he was transferred to the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. He went overseas with the Essex Scottish, and participated with them in the D-Day invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. John was wounded at Caen in July 1944 and would spend six months convalescing in an English hospital. In January of 1945, he would rejoin his unit in Holland. Three months later, on April 30, 1945, John McLagan would lose his life while fighting for the Liberation of the Netherlands. One week after John McLagan's death in Holland, VE Day was declared, ending the war in Europe.

In mid-May of 1945, Rose McLagan in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Private John P. McLagan, was killed in action on the western front on April 30*. John McLagan would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. John McLagan left behind his wife, Rose, and their daughter Mary Anne. Thirty-seven year old John McLagan is buried in Holten Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave IX.B.12.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **McLAUGHLIN, Patrick Douglas (#A/28522)**

Patrick McLaughlin was born May 8, 1923, the son of James McLaughlin and Lenora McLaughlin, of 444 South Brock Street, Sarnia. Patrick was educated at St. Joseph's Separate School and the Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School. Prior to enlisting, he was a grocery clerk. Single at the time, he enlisted in the Canadian Army in April 1940 at London, Ontario, and then trained at London, Kitchener, Cornwall and Calgary. For fourteen months, he was in Labrador with the 30th Anti-aircraft Battery, after which it was disbanded. Patrick was then sent to Calgary where he trained with an armoured unit. Patrick went overseas in September 1944, first serving with the 30th Light Anti-aircraft Battery, and then with an armoured unit.

On February 27, 1945, while serving with the Royal Regiment of Canada, R.C.I.C. on the Western Front, Private Patrick McLaughlin would lose his life in Germany while fighting in the Battle of the Rhineland. In early March of 1945, parents James and Lenora McLaughlin in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. Patrick McLaughlin, was killed on the Western Front*. Patrick McLaughlin would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. Twenty-one year old Patrick McLaughlin is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave VII.B.12. On Patrick McLaughlin's headstone are inscribed the words, *At rest*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C

### **McLELLAN, Allan Joseph (#A/4167)**

Allan "Cap" McLellan was born on March 28, 1904 in Southampton, Ontario, the son of Captain Alex McLellan and Mary McLellan, of 286 South Vidal Street, Sarnia. Allan was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia. Allan McLellan resided in Sarnia for 40 years. In his younger days he was an outstanding softball and soccer player and was also prominent in other forms of athletics. He was employed by Imperial Oil Limited and prior to entering the Merchant Navy at the beginning of the war, was employed as a clerk in the Ontario Liquor Control Board store on Front Street, Sarnia. After serving for some time in the Merchant Navy, Allan transferred to the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. His division was the *HMCS Stadacona*, and Allan attained the rank of able seaman.

The *Stadacona* was originally a 682 ton, 196 foot yacht named *SS Columbia*, launched in 1899. It was commissioned by the RCN in August 1915, and renamed the *HMCS Stadacona*. The *Stadacona* was one of several private yachts acquired by the RCN during the First World War, its role that of a patrol vessel based out of Halifax. It was sold in 1924, ending its RCN naval duties. The Royal Canadian Navy Maritime Command base in Halifax, Nova Scotia became the *HMCS Stadacona* in 1925. During World War II, this RCN shore establishment served as a depot and training base, with machine shops, stores buildings, barracks, administration offices and drill halls needed to maintain the hundreds of corvettes being commissioned during the Battle of the Atlantic. The *HMCS Stadacona* is where Allan McLellan was listed as serving.

Two years after the end of war in Europe, on May 23, 1947, at the age of forty-three, Allan McLellan would lose his life at the Queen Alexander Sanitarium in Byron. He entered the sanitarium on discharge from the navy and

had been confined there most of the time since. His cause of death was officially listed as, *Far advanced pulmonary tuberculosis due to left broncho pleural fistula with pyoneumothorax. Death due to service.* Besides his parents, he was survived by his three brothers--Harold, John and Arnold--and two sisters: Mrs. Beatrice Birmingham of Sarnia and Mrs. Kenneth Haines (Ada) of Talara, Peru. His funeral was held on May 27, 1947 taking place from the McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home with a Requiem High Mass celebrated at St. Joseph's Church. Pallbearers were members of Sarnia Branch No. 62 Canadian Legion. Internment was at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Lot 11, Range 6, Grave D. On Allan McLellan's headstone are inscribed the words, *Beloved son of Alex and Mary McLellan.*

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, T, U, X, 2C, 2D

#### **McRAE, Howard (#A/105640)**

Howard McRae was born September 1, 1923, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard McRae senior, of 268 Cameron Street, Sarnia. His mother would pass away prior to Howard's death. In 1940, Howard was still living at 268 Cameron Street and working as a fireman. Howard McRae enlisted in the Canadian Army in December 1942, and went overseas in July 1943, as a member of the Lincoln & Welland Regiment, R.C.I.C.. The war in Europe ended in early May of 1945 and war with Japan ended in mid-August of 1945.

Howard McRae served in both France and Belgium. On November 9, 1945, Howard McRae was killed as a result of a motor accident in Holland. Three months after the war ended, in mid-November of 1945, Howard McRae senior in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing him that his son, *Private Howard J. McRae has died on November 9 as a result of a motor accident overseas.* No other details were contained in the telegram, but it advised that details would be given in a letter to follow. Father Howard McRae senior had last heard from his son several weeks prior, where at the time, he was stationed in Holland. Twenty-two year old Private Howard McRae is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XVI.B.2.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2C

#### **MEERE, Leonard Raymond (#R/205555)**

Leonard Meere was born in Birmingham, England on September 5, 1924, the son of Thomas W. Meere and Edith Meere, of 386 South Brock Street, Sarnia. Leonard had two older brothers: Arthur Ernest Meere and Jonathan F. Meere. The family was originally from Birmingham, England and arrived in Canada on May 14, 1927 aboard the passenger ship *Aurania*. Leonard was only two years old when he arrived. Upon arriving in Canada, Father Thomas Meere listed his occupation as labourer-bricklayer. After arriving, the Meere family first resided at Thomas' mother's residence at 385 King Street, Toronto. The Meere family moved to Sarnia in 1928. Leonard Meere graduated from Sarnia Collegiate, and prior to enlisting, was employed by the Union Gas Company of Canada Limited in Sarnia. He also met, fell in love, and had plans to marry Gwen Robinson of Wallaceburg.

Leonard enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on February 16, 1943, training at both Brandon, Manitoba and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, before attaining the rank of Leading Aircraftman-Pilot. On September 23, 1943, while part of RCAF #6 Elementary Flying Training School in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Leading Aircraftman - Pilot Leonard Meere lost his life while training in his Tiger Moth aircraft 1168. He had been carrying out a routine exercise alone in the plane at the flying training school where he was a student pilot, when it crashed accidentally ten miles north-west of the aerodrome at Prince Albert.

Not long after the crash, parents Thomas and Edith Meere in Sarnia would receive a cable informing them that their son Leonard Raymond Meere had been killed in a flying accident at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. At the time of Leonard's death, both his brothers were also in the military. Arthur Meere was a Corporal of the RCAF, Dunnville, and Jonathan Meere had been overseas with an armoured tank corps for two years. Upon his death, Leonard was also survived by his grandmother, Lucy Denton of Toronto, and his uncle, Albert Meere of Toronto, the only other living relatives in Canada.

Two days after his death, Leonard's mother received the birthday present her son had sent her. It was a small green leather prayer book with a golden cross on the front. On the outside cover was printed "Common Prayer Hymn Book of Canada", and inside was his hand written message, "*Happy Birthday, Love - Len*". One day later, the family would receive a communication from the commanding officer of the flying training school at Prince Albert. It read,

*"I would like you to know, that as an honor to one who sacrificed his life in the course of duty, the remains were enfolded in the Royal Canadian Air Force ensign, before being placed in the casket.*

*With sincere sympathy, yours very truly, A.T. Chesson."*

Leading Aircraftman-Pilot Leonard Meere and Pilot Officer Hugo Farner (who died September 24 on an instruction flight in Quebec and is included in this Project) were buried barely a wingspan apart in Sarnia's first double military funeral. Hundreds of relatives and friends attended both services, which drew thousands who lined the routes of the funeral march to the Lakeview Cemetery. Pallbearers, honorary pallbearers and a firing party came from R.C.A.F. flying school at Centralia and the Sarnia Air Cadet Squadron band played at both funerals and also provided an escort party. The service for both began at the Robb Funeral Home; then the service for Leonard Meere was continued at St. George's Anglican Church where it was officiated by Rev. F.G. Hardy. The service for Hugo Farner was led by Rev. J.M. Macgillivray at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. From the churches, led by the firing party, the band and the escort party, the corteges started for the cemetery at a slow march. At Lakeview, they again slow-marched to the gravesides, with the band playing Handel's "Dead March in Saul". After the services at the gravesides conducted by the ministers, the firing party delivered three volleys, with the band playing "Abide With Me" between them. Then the two buglers who accompanied the firing party from Centralia, stepped to the end of the graves and sounded the "Last Post".

One of those in attendance at the funeral of Leonard Meere was his young fiancée, Miss Gwen Robinson. Nineteen year-old Leonard Meere is buried at Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section E. Lot 141. On Leonard Meere's headstone are inscribed the words, *Rest in Peace*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **MELLON, Ralph Jackson (#R/205716)**

Ralph Mellon was born on May 29, 1924, the son of Allan Alexander Mellon and Jessie May (nee Jackson) Mellon, of 205 ½ North Front Street, Sarnia. Father Allen Mellon was employed with the Canadian National Railway. Ralph Mellon attended Sarnia Collegiate Institute and prior to enlisting, was employed at Electric Auto-Lite and the Wise Engineering Company. Ralph, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in November 1942. He would graduate as a gunner from No. 9 Bombing and Gunnery School at Mont Joli, Quebec in the spring of 1944. Sometime before graduating, Ralph would lose his mother, Jessie May Mellon. Ralph Mellon would become a member of RCAF #431 Iroquois Squadron "The Hatiten Ronterriios" (Warriors of the air), attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant-Air Gunner.

It would only be one year after graduating as a gunner that Ralph Mellon would lose his life. On April 25, 1945, Ralph Mellon was a part of a crew aboard Lancaster aircraft KB831 on its way to Germany. Their Lancaster aircraft KB831 and a Lancaster aircraft KB822, both from the #431 squadron, were in a mid-air collision over the Baltic Sea on their way to target Wangerooge, Germany. This was the last trip of the War for this squadron. Lancaster KB831 casualties were Flight sergeant-Air Gunner Ralph Mellon along with F/L. R.J. Stingle; B.D. Emmet; F/O. W.E. Hanna; WO. C.R. Mark; Sgt. F. Smith (RAF); and one other RAF airman.

In late April of 1945, father Allan Alexander Mellon in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Department for National Defence for Air in Ottawa informing him that his son, *Flight Sergeant Ralph Jackson Mellon, was reported missing in action recently after air operations over enemy territory*. A little over one week after receiving this telegram, VE Day was declared on May 8, 1945, ending the war in Europe. Ralph Mellon would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Twenty year-old Ralph Mellon has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 282.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **MENDIZABAL, Rodolfo (#J/15049)**

Rodolfo Mendizabal was born in Toronto, Ontario on March 5, 1918, the son of Augustus Ranulfo Mendizabal (born in Oruro, Bolivia) and Mary Willamena (nee Dafoe, born in Madoc, Hastings Co., Ontario) Mendizabal, of 496 London Road, Sarnia. Rodolfo had one sister, Mary Isabel, born June 2, 1920 in Toronto; however, she died very shortly after birth. His father Augustus was a long-time language teacher at Sarnia Collegiate. Rodolfo attended Renfrew Public School from 1925-1929 and then a Sarnia Public elementary school from 1929-



1931. He attended Sarnia Collegiate from 1931-1936. While at SCITS, Rodolfo was the Boys Sports editor for the yearbook and was a member of the first aid team; the gym team; the rifle team; and the school band where he played the clarinet. As part of the Sarnia Collegiate cadet service, he won second prize at the provincial indoor pistol matches at Listowel. While part of the rifle team, he won a special gold medal for shooting accuracy and a Dominion Marksman gold ring. After high school, he attended the University of Toronto, studying geology from 1936-1940. In the summer of 1939, he worked for the Dominion Salt Company Limited (where Centennial Park in Sarnia is now).

On August 29, 1940, Rodolfo enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He was sent to Camp Borden to begin his training, which would continue for close to nine months. He would go to England in July of 1941. On January 22, 1942, he was wounded in the leg during a battle and managed to land his torn up aircraft on damaged landing gear. On January 29, 1942, his Hurricane II aircraft crashed due to landing gear technical problems, and he survived unscathed. Sometime in the early part of 1942, Rodolfo wrote a letter to his parents in Sarnia informing them that he had been transferred to a Royal Air Force squadron in Calcutta, India.

In early March of 1942, a stranded Mendizabal, two Australians, a New Zealander, and a Dutchman made a daring escape from the soon-to-be “Japanese held” Java, in a makeshift Lockheed 10 aircraft. They patched together the wrecks of two damaged Lockheed 212 transport planes into a single airplane that could barely fly. They then flew in stages from Java to Sumatra, across the Bay of Bengal to Ceylon, alighting to refuel at the few pockets of territory still in friendly hands. The following is a verbatim account of their escape, as written by the New Zealander in the group, Sergeant Pilot Doug L. Jones of the New Zealand RAF. The account was sent to Mr. and Mrs. A.R. Mendizabal in a letter and printed in the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* on March 22, 1943, one year after the events. The following is a portion of that article:

#### *Rodolfo Mendizabal and Four Flying Companions In Thrilling Air Escape*

*An epic story is told in a New Zealand paper of how Rodolfo Mendizabal, son of Mr. and Mrs. A.R. Mendizabal, along with four companions, escaped from the Japs after the fall of Java. The task seemed so hopeless that none of those who knew what these young men were attempting, had any idea that they would succeed. The boys in the escapade were all sergeant-pilots, Rodolfo Mendizabal, the Canadian; Stuart Munroe and Alan Martin, Australians; Doug L. Jones, a New Zealander, and a Dutchman, whose name is unknown. Together, they feature in the best aerial escape story of the war. After the fall of Java, with Japanese troops a few miles away, they joined together the undamaged sections of two shattered aircraft and braving the hazards of distance and Jap Zeros, flew from Java to Sumatra and then on across the Bay of Bengal to Ceylon. Their story, which can now be told, throws new light on the last days of the Netherlands, East Indies. Here is their story, as told by Sergeant Pilot D.L. Jones, NZRAF.*

*“Fresh from Durban, I was in the last convoy into Singapore, and was bombed 26 times by as many as 50 Jap planes. Our convoy was one of the last to leave. We were there for three days, then came out on the same ship as we went in on. There were no planes for us to fly at Singapore, so there was no use in staying there. Anyway, the Japs had already landed on the island and the evacuation was in full force. In Java we were sent to Buitenzorg, 35 miles in from Batavia. We waited there hoping to get planes to fly. It soon became obvious that we were not to get any. When the Japs began attacking the island in earnest, they issued us all with rifles and ammunition with the idea of making a stand somewhere-sort of backs-to-the-wall stunt. This idea didn't appeal to us much, so a few of us got working on our own”.*

*“They were short of transport to shift the camp, so half a dozen of us went into Balavia to see if we could pick up any lorries. Batavia by this time was a deserted city. The Japs had landed troops on each side of it. All around the docks there were sunken vessels, which had either been bombed or scuttled. The Dutch had sunk a large vessel across the harbor mouth to stop ant ship getting in. We found some lorries after a while, but the trouble was none of them would go-which was why they were left. But we each managed to repair a lorry and get back to camp. At 4 a.m. next day we were awakened, and told to get moving as the Japs were down the road. Fortunately, a few transports had come up and they were able to take the whole camp to the town of Garut, 140 miles away. We were there a week waiting for word to come through to tell us which port to go to. We did not know at the time that there wasn't an open port in Java. (Already blockaded Java's “escape port”, Tjilitjap on the south coast, was completely destroyed by Jap bombers on March 5, a few hours after I left in the last ship to get away from Java)”.*

*“At 10 p.m. on March 7 we received instructions that the town we were in was an open city, and we were to hand in our arms and await occupation. We asked the C.O. of our unit if he would let a few of us escape as best we could. He said he wouldn't. We told him to come back in half an hour and we would hand over our arms. In that half-hour we worked like mad, loading up our cars with food and ammunition. We had a couple of machine guns, which we had picked up at a bombed-out drone, a couple of Tommy-guns and dozens of rifles. We started out, reached the coast next day, and traveled along it, keeping a look-out for boats. Near a small native village called Pamaunpouk we found a deserted aerodrome with damaged aircraft scattered over it. A Dutch pilot and four of us sergeant-pilots looked them over and found a twin-engined Lockheed 10 with its tail blown off, but its engines in running order. Searching further, we found another machine of the same type, with the nose and wings smashed, but the tail untouched”.*

*“We all hit on the same idea at once. With the few tools we had we started. I used a 6d for a screwdriver, and got tied up in knots with ballraces, and lockingpins and God knows what! We found that the tail part of the good machine was strained out of alignment, and we finished up tying it together with rope. We fitted a machine-gun in the turret and another in the nose, firing forward. There was plenty of petrol lying around the field in drums. We also found couple of spare wing tanks with a capacity of 40 gallons apiece, which we strapped inside the fuselage with bits of bamboo and string after plugging up some holes with cork and bits of wood. I bashed a hole in the side of the fuselage, fitted a piece of bowser-hose through, and jammed one end in the tank in the wing, with the idea of feeding petrol from the tanks into the fuselage. Next day at 9 a.m. we were ready. After figuring out the range of the plane, we found we could not quite make Australia, so we agreed to fly up the coast of Sumatra, as we had been told the top end was still in Dutch hands”. “While we were repairing the plane, word came through that the Dutch government had capitulated, and that all members of the army were to proceed to Bandoeng to be demobilized. Before going, the Dutch destroyed the airfields-and a real job they made of it. They dynamited the whole field. We found the only clear patch ran in zigzag fashion barely the width of the undercarriage and with an overloaded plane it seemed a 10 to 1 chance that we wouldn't get off. The Dutchman had flown Lockheeds before, so he took the controls. At the extreme end of the field we revved the engines up until they were about to shake themselves to pieces, let off the brakes and away we went. We zigzagged down the field with craters whistling by under our wing-tips. I looked ahead and thought we couldn't get off without hitting the fence at the end. I still don't think we would have, had we not hit the lip of one of the craters, which bounced us into the air. We cleared the fence by inches, got over the beach and out to sea. We flew 800 miles up the coast of Sumatra, then turned inland in the hope of finding an airfield. Later we discovered it was Medan airport. It was cluttered up with obstructions so we guessed it was still in Dutch hands. We couldn't see any signs of life, so we took it we had caused an air-raid alarm”.*

*“We lowered our wheels and began to circle the field, wagging our wings. Soldiers appeared as if by magic and began clearing away the obstructions. Cars began to come in from the city packed with civilians and in a few minutes, hundreds of people were clearing the field so we could land. The Dutch treated us like kings. Next day we returned to our plane determined to try to get to Ceylon. The governor had given us codes, which we were to deliver to the admiralty if we got there, so as to re-establish contact with Sumatra. At Kuta Raja, on the northern tip of Sumatra, we had the same trouble in landing, but eventually got down OK. The Dutch immediately grabbed our machine, pushed it under cover and threw camouflaging over it, as they said the Jap reconnaissance plane was due over in five minutes. They set their watches by this plane, and at exactly 9 a.m. over she came. She circled us twice and then made off in a devil of a hurry. We guessed we had been spotted, so we started filling up as quickly as we could. We had just about finished when a lookout reported nine Jap bombers headed our way. We filled up in double-quick time while the Dutch soldiers were pulling off the camouflage and our Dutch pilot was revving up. Right in front of us was a whopping big hill, behind which we could see the Jap bombers heading toward us. The only thing to do was to turn as soon as we were in the air. We did it! We must have missed the trees on that hill by mere inches. We turned out to sea as fast as we could go with two of the Jap bombers armed with cannons diving down on us. But we were just those few seconds too soon for them. We just managed to keep out of range, and in the end gradually drew away from them. The old bus had a marvelous turn of speed when pushed. We owe our survival to that. We set what we thought was a course for Ceylon, but the only map we had was one of the world torn from a magazine. We had a job transferring petrol from the cabin to the wing tanks, but in the end found that by banking the plane over, we could gravity-feed it in”.*

*“It was well into the afternoon when we did sight land. I was at the controls at the time and didn't know whether it was Ceylon or India. Knowing Colombo was on the other side of the island, I headed inland and ran slap-*

*bank into hills and a hailstorm. Eventually we hit the coast and followed it down. Very soon we saw a large town and seaport ahead-Colombo. Then we had an uncanny bit of luck. There were a large number of warships in the harbor and on sighting us they started to challenge us with a signalling lamp. The correct thing to do when so challenged is to fire what we call 'colors of the day' with a Verey pistol. We had a Verey pistol on board and cartridges, but there are dozens of colors to choose from and they change the color every day. We had to shoot something off, so I picked up a two-star red, fired it and waited. We expected every gun in the harbor to open up on us, but nothing happened. We found the landing field and landed. We found out later that the colors of the day were a two-star red-just what we had fired. The trip from Java to Medan took seven hours ten minutes, and we landed with ten minutes petrol supply left. The flight from Kuta Raja took eight hours and we landed with 15 minutes supply left".*

In December of 1942, Rodolfo Mendizabal was part of a special escort. One of the highest ranking officers of the R.C.A.F., Air Vice-Marshal Harold Edwards was on an inspection tour of R.C.A.F. and R.A.F. establishments in India and Middle East theatres of war. It brought him to front-line fighter and bomber stations from which many Canadians were flying against the Japanese in Burma. He met airmen who called themselves, "the Canadians closest to the Japanese forces." Vice Marshall Edwards travelled in a Hudson bomber escorted by fighters. One of the fighters was piloted by FO Rodolfo Mendizabal, of Sarnia, a veteran of Singapore and East Indies campaigns. At the time, Mendizabal did not claim any victories over the Japanese, but said that he had seen "plenty" of them.

In early February of 1943, Augustus and Mary Mendizabal in Sarnia would receive word from the Canadian government that their son Rodolfo had been missing for several months in the eastern theatre of war. No other information was provided. A few weeks later, Augustus and Mary would be advised by the government that the report of their missing son issued weeks earlier was incorrect. In a telegram, the Hon. C.G. Power, Minister of National Defence for Air, relayed a cablegram that he had received from Air Vice-Marshal Edwards in England in regard to Rodolfo Mendizabal. The vice-marshal said that Rodolfo had been an escort pilot with him while on a tour of India during December of 1942, and at the time Rodolfo was safe and well. The vice-marshal expressed his profound regret that there had been an official report that their son had been reported missing on air operations for several months. The commander said that he would endeavour to obtain further information about the Sarnian's whereabouts. He was later reported safe and had been in Burma since October 1942.

Rodolfo was later promoted to the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot, as a member of RCAF #5 Squadron "Frangas Non Flectas" (Thou mayest break but shall not bend me). On August 10, 1943, Flying Officer Mendizabal would lose his life when his Hurricane aircraft KW859 went into a high-speed stall and crashed four miles east of the Amarda Road Station at Subhanauika Bridge, India. Rodolfo Mendizabal's name would appear on the official R.C.A.F. casualty list approximately one week later. No other details were included in the official report and no information was available locally as his parents Augustus and Mary Mendizabal were vacationing in Haliburton. The last word the parents had received from their son indicated that he was still in the Far East and there was some speculation as to whether he took part in the Sicilian campaign.

Rodolfo Mendizabal would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (India)*. He was buried in the Amarda Road Cemetery, exhumed, and reburied in the New Cemetery at Balasore, India. Twenty-five year old Rodolfo Mendizabal is buried in Madras War Cemetery, Chennai, India, Grave: 9.B.7.

Of the four fellow airmen who had survived the March 1942 escape from Java with Mendizabal, only one was to survive the war. Also killed in wartime service were Sgt. Stuart Munroe, RAAF, in Queensland in May of 1942; Sgt. Alan Martin, RAAF, in New Guinea in August of 1942; and Sgt. (later F/O) Douglas Jones, RNZAF, at Rabaul in January of 1944. Only the Dutchman, Frederik Pelder would survive the war.

In March of 1945, the "FO. Rodolfo Mendizabal Shooting Trophy", named in honour of the young flier, was presented during assembly in the auditorium of Sarnia Collegiate Institute, to Pte. Angus Young, of the Army Cadet Corps. The young cadet achieved the highest shooting scores in a contest held in the collegiate rifle range, among entrants from the three Sarnia cadet corps-Army, Navy and Air. Rodolfo's father, Augustus Ranulfo Mendizabal, who was a member of the Collegiate Institute teaching staff, presented the trophy, a silver statue of an athlete upon a mahogany base.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

**METCALFE, William Stuart (#A/50101)**

William "Bill" Metcalfe was born in Sarnia on February 21, 1921, the son of Karl Steadman Metcalfe and Julia Stuart Metcalfe, of Port Huron, Michigan. His grandfather was Lieutenant Colonel W.W. McVicar. William attended public school in Petrolia, Central High School in London, and then finished his education at Sarnia Collegiate Institute. He was a member of Central United Church and also of the Central Century Club, serving as the club's pianist on Sunday afternoons. After high school, William obtained first class honours in his second year at Toronto Conservatory of Music. When William enlisted, he recorded his place of residence as 309 North College Street, Sarnia and his occupation as a grocery clerk.

William joined the Canadian Army on August 13, 1940, in Sarnia, with the Kent Regiment. He trained at Chatham, Wolsey Barracks in London, and Kingston where he took a P.T. course. William was then transferred to the trade school at Hamilton, where he took a special course in Wireless. From there he was sent to Camp Borden with the 5th Canadian Armored Division, going overseas in October 1941. Overseas with the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals 5th Canadian Armored Division, he had the rank of Signaller. He trained in England and while there he married Helen R. Appleby on February 17, 1943 at Chelsea, Middlesex. The new Mrs. Helen Metcalfe was originally from Petrolia, Ontario. William and Helen would have one son together. Later, at the time of William's death, his wife Helen and son resided in England.

William went on to serve a year and a half in Italy, with the British 8th Army in the Central Mediterranean Forces, and was also in Belgium and Holland. In late 1943, not long after his arrival in Italy, William wrote a letter to his grandfather in Sarnia, Lt. Colonel W. W. MacVicar. The following are portions of that letter:

*I never saw so much filth and poverty anywhere. These towns are beyond all imagination. The first few days here were beautifully warm, and we thought there was something to this "Sunny Italy" business, despite the fact that the nights almost "did us in". Don't know when I ever ran into such bone-biting coldness. You can put on everything you own, and still shake like a model T Ford.*

*Then came the rains, and believe me, it has everything that England ever showed us in the way of rain beaten by a mile. We are bivouacked in a vineyard, using pup tents as a home. They aren't too bad except that every time you touch the canvas when it is raining, the water pours through in torrents, and being so low we are always touching them, so, there being no room upward, we decided to go down, and now are sleeping some three feet below the surface of the ground in something that is a cross between a tent and a dugout. It is not bad, though, and actually it is comparatively dry and quite warm. We are thankful that conditions are no worse than they are. They definitely could be very much worse. The food is good and can be supplemented with all kinds of oranges, apples and nuts.*

*The one thing here worth mentioning is the music one can hear anywhere in the streets. It seems to be the only thing these people can do properly, and they do it under the least provocation. Some poor broken specimen of humanity shuffling along will suddenly burst forth in a flood of song that would put Nelson Eddy to shame, and when they get about half "vino-ed" up you should hear them.*

*Speaking of "vino", it is no wonder these people got licked at every turn of the wheel if they have been drinking that brew ever since they were infants. It's vile! About the only thing I can say for it is that it would make good ink.*

Approximately one month after VE Day, marking the end of war in Europe, on June 4, 1945, William Metcalfe would lose his life in Groenigen, Holland. In mid-June of 1945, Lt. Col. W.W. McVicar in Sarnia would be notified of the death of his grandson, Signaller William Stuart Metcalfe, which occurred in Holland on June 4. William Metcalfe would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, in the field (Holland), cause of death drowning*. Twenty-four year old William Metcalfe is buried in Holten Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave VI.B.13. William Metcalfe's name is also inscribed on the Petrolia cenotaph in the Town of Petrolia.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

**MILLER, David Douglas (#R/68104) – Photograph page 388**

David Miller was born on November 5, 1915, the eldest son of Douglas Martin Miller (born in Oil Springs, Ontario) and Iva Ellen (nee Shephard, born in Bickford, Ontario) Miller, of 394 Campbell Street, Sarnia. Father Douglas was a railway employee. David had four siblings: Clifford Stanley (born 1916); Lloyd Gordon (born 1918, died two years later); Nadine Anne (born 1920); and Claire. For a time prior to his enlistment, David operated a service station at the corner of London Road and Vidal street. David would marry Jessie Marguerite Irwin, the eldest

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Irwin of Port Colborne, at St. Paul's United Church on February 16, 1941. At the ceremony, Miss Wilma Irwin, sister of the bride, served as bridesmaid and Alex Hodges served as the best man. A reception was given by the bridegroom's parents, and afterwards, the newlywed couple left on a motor trip to Toronto and Niagara Falls. David Miller got married while home on a 24-day leave; then he had to return to an eastern RCAF depot.

David enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and in March of 1941, he had left Fingal Air Training School for a destination in Eastern Canada. After his enlistment, David's wife Jessie went to Port Colborne to reside with her parents. David would become a member of RCAF #148 Squadron "Trusty". On September 28, 1942, he was part of a crew aboard a Wellington aircraft. On that day, it failed to return from operations over Tobruk, North Africa. Perishing with Flight sergeant-Wireless operator/Air Gunner David Miller was Sgt. D.A. Mitchell. In November of 1942, parents Douglas and Iva Miller in Sarnia would receive the news that their son David was reported missing, that he had not returned from an operational flight in the Middle East several weeks ago. In Port Colborne, David's wife, Jessie Marguerite Miller, would also receive the news that her husband was reported missing after not returning from operations in the Middle East.

David Miller would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. In June of 1943, his wife Marguerite Miller who was now residing at 294 Campbell street, Sarnia, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, Flight Sergeant David Douglas Miller, is presumed to have died on September 28 of the previous year during air operations over Tobruk in Africa. Twenty-six year old Flight Sergeant David Miller has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Alamein Memorial, Egypt, Column 264. David Miller Citations: Etoile de 1939-1945, Africa Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-1945, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp, Operational Wings post humously awarded on February 28, 1947.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **MILLS, Thomas Gordon (#A/105836)**

Thomas Mills was born on July 9, 1921, the youngest son of Gordon Mills and Gretchen K. Mills, of 104 Norman Street, Sarnia. Thomas' father, Gordon, was on the staff of Marketing Accounting Department at Sarnia Refinery. Thomas, who had one brother, Robert, was a former student of Sarnia Collegiate. He was later employed in the Drum Plant at Sarnia Imperial Oil Limited Refinery, listing his occupation as a machinist. He enlisted in the Canadian Army on January 18, 1943, receiving training at Listowel and Camp Ipperwash. Thomas married Mrs. Gladys Mills (nee Wells) and they would have a son together. At the time of Thomas's death, his wife and son were residing with Mrs. Mills' parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. Wells, at 128 Penrose Street, Sarnia.

Thomas went overseas on July 18, 1943, and while in England, he transferred to the Perth Regiment R.C.I.C.. Private Thomas Mills arrived in Italy in October 1943. His parents Gordon and Gretchen in Sarnia had received letters from Thomas on September 9 and 15, 1944. In the latter letter, Thomas said that he was out of the lines at the time but that he expected to return to them soon. On October 1, 1944, Private Thomas Mills would lose his life during fighting in Italy, near Rimini, during the Italian Campaign.

In mid-October of 1944, parents Gordon and Gretchen Mills in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Thomas Mills, has been killed in action on September 1 in Italy*. No details of his death were given. Since parents Gordon and Gretchen had received letters written by their son on September 9 and 15, they believed that there was an error in the transmission, and that his death should have read October 1. Thomas Mills would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. In late October 1945, a stained glass window in memory of Pte. Thomas Gordon Mills was unveiled and dedicated at a morning service in Canon Davis Memorial Church. Twenty-three year old Thomas Mills is buried in Cesena War Cemetery, Italy, Grave III, G, 8. On Thomas Mills' headstone are inscribed the words, *Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, O, 2C, 2D

#### **MISENER, Everett Paul (#R/122986)**

Everett Misener was born on December 30, 1921, the youngest son of Captain Robert Scott Misener (born in Brucefield, Huron, Ontario) and Olive Elizabeth L. (nee Glass, born in Sarnia) Misener, of 286 North Vidal Street,

Sarnia. Father Captain Robert Misener was employed with Sarnia Steamships Limited, Port Colborne, Ontario. Everett had five siblings: William Austin Miles (born 1903, but died at 6 months old); Ralph Scott (born 1908) who would serve in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police reserve in Winnipeg; John Erwin, who enlisted with the navy in the fall of 1940, and would become a Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, and would serve at an Eastern Canadian port, in the North Atlantic, the North Sea, the English Channel and the Irish Sea; Inez Mildred Elizabeth (born 1905); and Dorothy Olive (born 1916). Years later, both sisters would marry, their names changed to Mrs. J.B. Pierson, of Montreal, and Mrs. J.A. France, of Sarnia.

Everett attended Sarnia Collegiate and was a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church where he was actively associated with the Young Men's Ushers Club of the church. After high school, Everett continued his education at Ridley College for two years. He interrupted his studies to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July of 1941. He went to a manning pool in Toronto and, after attending the initial Training School at the Eglinton Hunt Club, did elementary flying in Windsor; attended Bombing and Gunnery School at Jarvis; and was engaged in service flying at Uplands Air School at Ottawa. Just prior to his graduation, Everett was able to take a few days away from Uplands to be the best man at the wedding of his brother John. John Erwin Misener of the RCNVR, married Catherine Patricia Marie Taylor of Sarnia on August 15th, 1942. The wedding took place in the chapel of HMCS King's College in Halifax, where John had graduated as a sub-lieutenant that morning. Three years later, in mid-August of 1945 only days after VJ-Day, Lieutenant John Misener was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his part in the sinking of a German submarine in early March of 1945.

Everett Misener graduated from Uplands a little over a week later, receiving his wings on August 26, 1942. He then began an instructor's course at RCAF #3 Flying Instructor School, Arnprior, Ontario. Just over one month after receiving his wings, on October 11, 1942, Sergeant-Pilot Everett Misener was on a solo cross-country training flight aboard his Cornell aircraft #10505, from Arnprior to Kingston, Ontario. Everett Misener would lose his life when his Cornell aircraft crashed seven miles north-west of Watertown, New York, while endeavouring to make a forced landing on a three-lane highway. The circumstances of casualty were officially listed as, *Low Flying. Possibly of vision being obscured temporarily by the sun in his eyes. Aircraft struck high tension wires and crashed into tree.*

A few days later, Everett's funeral was held in Sarnia with military honors. Following a service at the Misener home for family and friends, a public service was held in St. Andrew's Presbyterian church that was largely attended. The Rev. J.M. Macgillivray of St. Andrew's, assisted by Flight-Lieutenant O. Nimmo, were in charge of the church service. In part of Rev. Macgillivray's eulogy he said, *This sad bereavement has brought the horrors of war closer to us. Today we mourn the loss of another one of our fine young men who has given his life for the cause. Paul represented the finest type of Canadian manhood. He was clean, strong, vigorous and every inch a man. He had the stuff that makes good airmen and he was beloved by all who knew him. It is hard to think that a young life has been snuffed out. He gave all he had – his years of success to come – for the things most precious to him. His sacrifice is nonetheless real because he did not fight the foe overseas. He gave his life for his country, his family, for you and for me.* As the funeral party made its way to the cemetery, it was accompanied by a R.C.A.F. band and escort from the air base at St. Thomas. At the cemetery, a firing party fired a volley and the "Last Post" was sounded. Twenty year-old Everett Misener was buried in Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Section E. Lot 121.

In mid-November of 1942, still mourning the recent loss of their son, the Misener family had to deal with a painful error made by the Department of National War Services. On November 18, 1942, a letter was received at the Misener home from the National War Services with a notification that Everett Paul Misener was to report for medical examination prior to his call to service in the military. There had been reports that there were similar cases of this kind of tragic error not only in the Sarnia-Lambton district but across the country. Captain Robert Scott Misener took the matter up with the authorities so that steps would be taken to prevent further hurt to members of such families. Following is the letter that Captain Robert S. Misener, the father of Everett Paul Misener, wrote and sent to the Department of National War Services, in London, Ontario and to the Minister of the Department of National War Services in Ottawa:

*Dear Sir,*

*Your notice of call No. A-73816 for my son Everett Paul Misener was received at my home on November 18, 1942.*

*On October 11 of this year, my family and I experienced one of the greatest sorrows a family could suffer. We lost our youngest son on active service with the R.C.A.F. This boy had voluntarily offered his services to his country in*

*July, 1941, in order that he too might share in the struggle of all free men against oppressive tyranny. He worked hard so that his family, his country and all free peoples might the sooner see peace and happiness emerge out of today's chaos. His ambition was realized on August 26, 1942, when he received his wings. Now he, too, could join those thousands of other brave young Canadians who hammered at the foe in every corner of the globe. Such was what he wanted, but destiny intervened and his young life was cruelly cut off before the realization of his fondest hopes for us all.*

*The late Sgt. Pilot Everett Paul Misener, whose military call was received last week, needed no call to arms. He knew his duty; he gave his life for his country.*

*Such was the man whose memory you have insulted, though perhaps unintentionally, with a call to service. As his father, my wrath transcends my sorrow. I denounce with all my strength the gross carelessness and utter incompetency of the clerks in the department you represent. I blame no less the superior officers and executive chiefs of the department for their negligence and inefficiency in permitting such errors to be made by members of their staff. Worse, if they know that such conditions exist, I condemn them for their unforgivable lack of consideration for their fellow men by not ensuring against a repetition of such occurrences.*

*So that their feelings may be spared at least this additional wound, I feel that I speak on behalf of all parents, and others concerned, in the same position as I am, in saying that such careless and inefficient methods should be dealt with immediately.*

*Yours truly, R.S. Misener*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **MONTEITH, Charles Clarence (#A/108948)**

Charles Monteith was born in Petrolia on June 27, 1915, the son of Bert Monteith (born in Delaware, Ontario) and Gerturde May (nee Finch) Monteith, of Petrolia. Charles had four brothers and one sister, who at the time of his death were Lorne Nelson (born 1923) and Walter, both in Petrolia; Morley, who had been overseas with the Governor-General's Foot Guards for three years and was in Germany at the time; Melvin Bertram, was born in June 1914, but died a month later; his only sister, Leatta Viola (later Mrs. Alfred Hall) who was living in Petrolia. Prior to enlisting, Charles was employed as a mechanic at Lambton Motors and then worked at Dow Chemical of Canada Limited. Charles married Edith Helen Ferguson, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. D.L. Ferguson at the Wyoming Parsonage on April 24, 1937. Miss Leta Monteith served as bridesmaid and Alfred Hall served as the best man. Following the wedding ceremony, a wedding dinner was served at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. J.M. Gillatly. After the ceremony, Charles and Edith Monteith left for a wedding trip to Detroit. On their return, they resided in Thamesville. Charles and Edith would have three children together--sons Robert and Reggie and daughter Edna. At the time of his enlistment, the couple resided at 422 George Street, Sarnia.

Charles enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming an instructor with a Canadian Armoured Corps at Camp Borden before going overseas. He arrived overseas on March 28, 1945, a member of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps with the rank of Trooper. Less than three weeks later, on April 14, 1945, Charles Monteith would lose his life in an English hospital. Only days later, wife Edith Monteith in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Department of National Defence informing her that her husband, *Pte. Charles Monteith has died in an English hospital after a brain hemorrhage*. She had received previous telegrams informing her that he was seriously and dangerously ill. Charles Monteith would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died as result of brain haemorrhage, England*. Less than one month after Charles' death, VE Day was declared, ending the war in Europe. He would leave behind his wife Edith and their three children, sons Robert and Reggie and daughter Edna. Twenty-nine year old Charles Monteith is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 51.C.1.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

#### **MORRIS, Howard Paul (#J/14392) – Photograph page 389**

Howard Morris was born on September 19, 1921, the son of Lloyd David Morris and Marie Adams (nee Hickimbotham) Morris, of 568 North Christina Street, Sarnia. Howard's father, Lloyd, was an employee of the Pumping Department at Sarnia Refinery. Howard received his education in Sarnia public schools and was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate. He was a member of Central United Church and the Central Century Club. Howard was very interested in church affairs and, besides ushering on Sundays, one year was chosen Junior Member of the Board of

Stewards. The construction of model aircraft was his favourite hobby, and he also enjoyed golf and badminton. He was very interested in hunting and camping and had belonged to a local Boy Scout Troop. For several years Howard played in Robinson's and Pressey's Boys' Bands and, in the course of his musical career, had been awarded several medals. After graduating high school, he was employed at Woolworths and Sarnia Imperial Oil Limited Refinery.

Howard, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on August 6, 1941 and received his training at Toronto, Fingal, Goderich, Camp Borden, and the A.O.S. at Crumlin. At Crumlin, he received his Navigator Wings on September 25, 1942. For standing third in his class, he was commissioned as a Pilot Officer. In early October of 1942, Howard Morris would spend a leave in Sarnia with his family and friends. In late October of 1942, parents Lloyd and Marie Morris in Sarnia would receive a cablegram from their son, telling of his safe arrival overseas. Shortly afterwards, Howard received his O.T.U. on Wellington bombers. Howard Morris attained the rank Navigator and was assigned to be a member of RCAF #426 Thunderbird squadron "On Wings of Fire", flying Lancaster bombers. He was navigator for the C.O. of the Squadron, Wing Commander Crooks, until the Commanding Officer was killed.

In June of 1943, parents Lloyd and Marie Morris in Sarnia would receive news that their son Howard Paul Morris was promoted to Flying Officer from pilot officer. The RCAF #426 Thunderbird Squadron took part in many raids over Germany. On a December 16, 1943 raid over Berlin, Germany that Thunderbird Squadron took part in, 30 bombers were lost, including four of the RCAF. Howard Morris and the crew of Lancaster aircraft DS779 returned from the operations over Berlin, and the pilot let down through low cloud. The aircraft crashed at Hunsingore near Marston, Moor, Yorkshire, England.

Several days later, parents Lloyd and Marie Morris in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualty office at Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Howard Paul Morris, was killed on December 16 while on active service overseas*. No details of the air operation in which Howard was killed were given, but it was intimated that a letter would soon follow. Perishing with Howard Morris were WO. R.D. Stewart, and four RAF members. One Canadian, Sgt. Jamieson was injured. Howard Morris would later be officially listed as, *Killed after air operations, overseas (England)*. Twenty-two year old Howard Morris is buried at Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire, United Kingdom, Section C, Row G, Grave 6.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, S, 2C, 2D

### **MYLES, Edwin Robert (#J/24295)**

Edwin Myles was born in Sarnia on August 31, 1920, the only son of Edwin William Myles (born in Dorset Cranbourne, Surrey, England) and Emily Edith Myles (born in England), of 103 Rose Street, Sarnia. Edwin had one sister, Edith. When Edwin was eight years old, he and his mother Edith visited England together, returning to Canada on September 10, 1928 aboard the passenger ship *Ausonia*. Upon return, the family returned to 213 Tecumseh Street and then to 103 Rose Street, Sarnia. Edwin attended public school in Sarnia and was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate Institute. While attending high school, he was a member of the signal corps and was captain for a time. Edwin was a member of St. John's Anglican Church. He was an active worker in the local Boy Scout Association for ten years. He was Scoutmaster of the 2nd Kinsman Troop for a time. In recognition of his efforts, he was made a King Scout in 1937, an honour which permitted his name to be entered in a souvenir book of permanent record at Dominion headquarters of the Boy Scout Association.

Edwin would marry Marjorie Lorraine Drinkwater, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E.W. Drinkwater, on June 20, 1941 at St. John's Anglican Church in Sarnia. At the wedding ceremony, Miss Millicent Miller served as bridesmaid and the flower girl was Miss Edith Myles, the sister of the groom. Serving as best man was Bill Drinkwater, a brother of the bride. A reception was held at the YMCA for forty-six guests and, following that, the newlywed couple left on a motor trip to northern points. On their return, the couple resided at 223 Devine Street, Sarnia.

Edwin joined the Royal Canadian Air Force at Toronto on February 16, 1942. From a Toronto manning pool he went to the Initial Training School at the former Eglinton Hunt Club, and later he was posted to the Elementary Flying School at St. Catharines. He was then transferred to the Service Flying School at Hagersville, where he received his commission as pilot officer graduating from Hagersville on March 5th of 1943. At the ceremony, he was presented with an R.C.A.F. identification bracelet for graduating from the St. Catharines school with the highest



marks on ground school work. After graduation, he returned to Sarnia on leave to visit his parents Edwin William and Emily Myles and his wife Marjorie. He would leave Sarnia on March 19, 1943 to take an instructor's course at Arnprior. While there, he was a member of RCAF #3 Flying Instructor School, Arnprior, Ontario, with the rank of Pilot Officer-Pilot. He would be with his unit only a short time.

Less than one month later, on April 3, 1943, Edwin Myles and another officer, Pilot Officer R.W. Moeller, were flying in a Cornell aircraft FH740. They were engaged in a routine mutual instruction instrument cross-country training flight. On that date, Edwin would lose his life when the aircraft flew into the ground in dense bushland about 95 miles west of Ottawa. The other officer in the aircraft was uninjured although the plane was completely destroyed. Just one day after the crash, Edwin's parents and his wife Marjorie, who were all residing on Rose Street, would receive news from R.C.A.F. headquarters in Ottawa that Edwin was instantly killed when in an R.C.A.F. training plane crash near Ottawa. The name of the other occupant of the plane was withheld by air force authorities. Edwin Myles remains arrived in Sarnia two days later.

A military funeral was held in Sarnia for Pilot Officer Edwin Myles under R.C.A.F. auspices. The funeral was held at the Robb Funeral Home, with a service conducted by Rev. J.A.E. Blackwell, rector of St. John's Anglican Church. From the funeral home, the cortege proceeded to St. John's Church where a public service was held. A party of R.C.A.F. officers and men from the Technical Training School at St. Thomas attended the funeral. Honorary pallbearers included five fellow Flying Officers and active pallbearers included six fellow Flight Sergeants. Accompanying the funeral party to internment at Lakeview cemetery was the R.C.A.F. band. At the graveside, a firing party fired a volley while the band played "Abide With Me" and "The Last Post" was sounded. Rev. Blackwell speaking from the text read, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith, we are met here once again to pay a last respect to one whom Almighty God has been fit to take. ...." He then said, "Is there any text more fitting to describe Pilot Officer Myles' life than the words which I have chosen; his faith which he kept to the end, cultivated and developed among you who knew him so well; his devotion to any task assumed; his steadfastness in his purpose and dependability in any task must serve as an inspiration to strengthen us to follow his example. Intermingled with the natural sorrow of our hearts will be the pride and joy in the memory of one who fought a good fight and kept the faith as a son, a husband or a companion."

Some time after the funeral, his parents would receive the circumstances of casualty report that stated, *At the time of the accident, in which deceased lost his life, he was engaged in a mutual instruction instrument cross-country flight with Pilot Officer R.W. Moeller. Deceased was in front cockpit acting as pilot when aircraft crashed into the ground in swamp bush country four miles northwest of Cormack near Eganville, Ontario. Death was instantaneous, but second pilot was uninjured.* Twenty-two year old Edwin Myles is buried at Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia Ontario, Canada, Section E. Lot 122. On Edwin Myles' headstone are inscribed the words, *There is comfort in the thought that a loving God knows best.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C

#### **NASH, Charles Arthur (#R/90884) – Photograph page 389**

Charles Nash was born on November 21, 1918, the only son of Albert Clarence Nash (an employee of the City) and Lillian Kate (nee Kerry, born in Otford, Kent, England) Nash of 194 Elgin Street, Sarnia. Besides Charles, Albert and Lillian had four daughters. Charles attended Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate and was a member of St. George's Anglican Church. Prior to enlisting, Charles had learned the brick-coating trade while in the employ of R.B. Bawtenheimer and was employed in Brantford and then North Bay. Charles was single at the time he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on June 23, 1941 in North Bay. Charles graduated in May of 1942 from the Mountain View R.C.A.F. School, with the rank of sergeant-air gunner. That same month, he would enjoy a leave at his home in Sarnia before going overseas. Just prior to going overseas, Arthur would have to spend some time in an Eastern Canadian hospital of the R.C.A.F. to be treated for an infected foot. In July of 1942, his parents Albert and Lillian Nash in Sarnia would receive a cable from their son Charles, telling them of his safe arrival at an English port.

Once overseas, Charles Nash would become a member of RCAF #83 squadron "Strike to Defend", Pathfinder Force, attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II-Air Gunner. Approximately one year after his last visit to Sarnia, Charles would lose his life. On June 12, 1943, Charles was a member of a crew aboard Lancaster aircraft R5868 that failed to return from operations over Munster, Germany. Not long after, parents Albert and Lillian

YOU WERE MINE AND I LOVED YOU. SADLY MISSED BY HIS MOTHER.  
"GOD'S WILL BE DONE"

Nash in Sarnia, would receive a telegram from Ottawa that their son, *Sergeant Charles Arthur Nash was reported missing after air operations overseas June 12*. His parents had received a letter from their son Charles only days earlier. Perishing with Warrant Officer II-Air Gunner Charles Nash was F/O. C.G. Miller. Five of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed. Several weeks later, Charles Nash would officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-four year old Charles Nash has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 180. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as G.A. Nash.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, f

**NEAL, Donald Leland (#A/17881)**

Donald Neal was born on November 27, 1918, the son of Guy Elmer Neal (born in Lambton, Ontario) and Annie Duncan (nee Alexander, born in Lambton, Ontario) Neal, of R.R. 1, Courtright, Ontario. Donald had three brothers--two of whom were William Alexander (born 1915) and Miltin Stockdale (born 1916)—and two sisters. Donald was a former student of Sarnia Collegiate. Enlisting in the army in March of 1943, Donald recorded his occupation as a labourer and his marital status as single. He joined the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Perth Regiment, R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. When he arrived overseas in January 1944, Donald cabled his parents in Courtright that he had made it safely.

On September 27, 1944, Donald Neal would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. In early October of 1944, Guy and Annie Neal in Courtright would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Donald Neal, was killed in action with the Perth Regiment in Italy on September 27*. Donald Neal would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-five year old Donald Neal is buried in Cesena War Cemetery, Italy, Grave VII,F,8. Donald Neal's name is also inscribed on a Memorial plaque on the interior wall of St. Stephen's Anglican Church in the Village of Courtright.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, N, 2C, 2D

**NORTHCOTT, John Henry (#A/20182)**

John Northcott was born on April 17, 1921, the son of Jack Northcott and Iva Luxton Northcott. John would marry Johanna Northcott, of Sudbury, Ontario. When he enlisted, he recorded his place of residence as Stokes Bay, Ontario and his occupation as a truck driver. He would join the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers 11 Field Coy., with the rank of Sapper. On May 2, 1943, John Northcott would lose his life in England due to an accident. John Northcott would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, accident, due to being run over by a train, cause of death a fractured cervical spine, England*. Twenty-two year old John Northcott is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 34.I.10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, 2C, 2D

**O'CONNOR, James Michael Barry (#R/68264)**

James O'Connor was born on January 22, 1919, the eldest son of James Phillip O'Connor (born in Oil Springs, Ontario) and Angela Loretta (nee Barry, born in St. Mary's, Perth, Ontario) O'Connor, of 236 Proctor Street, Sarnia. James had three brothers--John Edward (born 1923); Patrick William (born 1924); and Joseph Peter (born 1932)--and two sisters: Mary Catherine (born 1921) and Margaret Lorraine. At the time of James' death, John Edward was a Private attached to national defence headquarters in Ottawa, and brother Patrick was a Stoker First-Class of the RCN (who would serve in WWII and Korea – see below).

James O'Connor was raised in Sarnia, attended St. Patrick's Catholic High School and was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Sarnia. In early July of 1941, James O'Connor would marry Helen Grace Hood, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hood of Winnipeg, at St. Mary's Academy in Winnipeg with the ceremony officiated by Flying-Officer (Rev. Father) Vinet, chaplain of the R.C.A.F. school at Winnipeg. When James enlisted, he recorded his address as 231 Harkness Street, Sarnia. He enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force at Sarnia in 1941 and went overseas in August of that year. James would become a member of RCAF #419 Moose squadron "Moosa Aswayita" (Beware the moose), attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II, Bomb Aimer, flying in a Halifax aircraft JB929.

In August of 1942, parents James and Angela O'Connor would receive a letter from their son James. In it, he revealed how he was in one of the recent big R.A.F. raids on Bremen. The following is a portion of that letter:

*“The most fun I’ve ever had was one night recently coming back from Bremen. Incidentally, I got direct hits on my target with bombs of the 4,000 pounds size which are absolutely guaranteed to wake the baby and scare the chickens. Anyhow, on my way back, we met a stooge in a Me. 109, who, incidentally, didn’t see us, for he came belting towards us, head on, off to the starboard a bit. I was in the front turret, as I’m front gunner as well as bomb-aimer. I got in two nice long bursts from my guns square into him. He never fired a shot just went into a long dive. Wish I knew whether he went all the way down or not but we didn’t linger to check up. We just went down in another long dive in the opposite direction, in case there were others about. They find it pretty tough chewing to tackle a heavy bomber down on the deck, so we dove from 15,000 feet down to ground level, low enough in fact to scrape our trailing aerial on the coast of Holland. The trailing aerial is 15 feet in length, so you can realize we were plenty low. The searchlights and flak couldn’t depress low enough to get at us and it sure was funny watching the gun and searchlight crews digging themselves into their holes and trying to pull them in after we zipped over them, or should I say, passed them?”*

James O'Connor also had words of praise for a watch that his father had given him before he went overseas:

*It’s still keeping time right to the second. In fact it’s a better timepiece than the air ministry chronometer our navigator was given. He often uses my watch to get our exact turning point. James added, I’ve been in 13 raids and have only 17 more to go. I’m nearly half through now. I wouldn’t mind if it was 170 if I could get home between them.*

Approximately eight months after he mailed the above letter to his parents, on the night of April 28, 1943, his Halifax aircraft was lost to enemy action while it was laying mines at Skaggerak, Norway. Perishing with twenty-four year old James Michael O'Connor were WO.s G.K.A. Smallwood and J.G. Acker; Sgts. R.R. Gourde and J.A. Allen; and FS.s L.J. Murphy and J.W. Carley. In early May of 1943, parents James and Angela O'Connor in Sarnia would receive word that their son, *Flight Sergeant James Michael Barry O'Connor was reported missing after air operations overseas*. James and Angela O'Connor would later receive the news that their son James O'Connor was officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*.

Helen, James’s wife, was residing in Toronto when she received a letter from Wing Commander M.M. Fleming in February 1944. The commander informed Helen O'Connor that her husband, *James Michael O'Connor was the bomb aimer of an aircraft detailed to perform an operation on the night of April 28, 1943. The operation was generally successful, but unfortunately the aircraft failed to return and nothing had been heard of it.* Wing Commander Fleming added: *Flight Sergeant O'Connor was with us for 7 months and had 24 operations to his credit. Some of these were among the Moose Squadrons most hazardous and successful, and against the enemy’s most heavily defended targets. Your husband was a great favourite with all sections of the squadron. His cheery manner and keen sense of humour coupled with his reliability, will certainly make his loss felt for a considerable time. As you are probably aware, he took quite a prominent part in our station sports and activities, in fact, he was such an all-around man that this squadron and the air force as a whole will find him hard to replace.*

In December of 1944, parents James and Angela O'Connor in Sarnia would receive official information advising them that their son Flt. Sgt. J.M. Barry O'Connor, who has been missing since April 28, 1943, was promoted to warrant officer as of November 2, 1942. Twenty-four year old James O'Connor has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 180. Parents James and Angela O'Connor would lose a second son, Patrick William, in the Korean War.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

#### **O’CONNOR, Patrick William (KOREA) (#A/800440) – Photograph page 390**

Patrick O'Connor was born on February 5, 1924, the son of James Philip O'Connor (born in Oil Springs, Ontario) and Angela Loretta (nee Barry, born in St. Mary’s, Perth, Ontario) O’Conner, residing at 356 Cameron Street, Sarnia at the time of his death. Patrick had three brothers--James Michael Barry (born 1919); John Edward (born 1923); and Joseph Peter (born 1932)--and had two sisters: Mary Catherine (born 1921, later Mrs. Lloyd Mathers) and Margaret Lorraine. At the time of Patrick’s death, the oldest brother in the family, James Michael Barry, had lost his life in WW II, as a member of the RCAF (see above).

Patrick O'Connor was born and raised in Sarnia. He was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic parish, Sarnia, and was educated at Our Lady of Mercy School and St. Patrick's Catholic High School, graduating in 1941. He was a veteran of World War II, serving four and a half years with the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, as a Stoker 1st Class. It was while patrolling the Atlantic that Patrick received word that his brother James Barry was missing in action with the Royal Canadian Air Force. James Michael Barry O'Connor was killed when his Halifax aircraft failed to return from a night operation on April 28, 1943.

One of the ships that Patrick O'Connor served on during WWII was the Royal Canadian destroyer, *H.M.C.S. Gatineau (H61)*, dubbed one of the "seagoingest" ships in the Canadian service. The ship had been tagged with this nickname because since being commissioned by the RCN in June of 1943, it had spent more than 80 percent of her time at sea. Among the crew during that time were local men Stoker Patrick William O'Connor; Seaman Petty Officer A. Horley (son of Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Horley of 131 John street, Sarnia); Able Bodied Seaman Arthur Forbes (of Forest); and Able Bodied Seaman A. Whitmarsh (of Dresden). By August of 1944, the *Gatineau* had spent months carrying out convoy sweeps, anti-submarine patrols, forays with the enemy, strenuous rehearsals for D-Day and patrol operations in the English Channel during the assault on France. The *Gatineau's* experiences during that time included the probable destruction of an enemy E-boat in the English Channel, "assists" in successful attacks on two U-boats and the shooting down of a number German robot bombs (V-1's). Lieutenant Commander Harold Groos said it was likely the men of the *Gatineau* that had seen the first of the V-1 bombs in use during their operations in the English Channel a few days after D-Day.

Patrick would marry wife Vera Irene (nee Moore) O'Connor at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church at noon on October 19, 1946. Vera Irene was the daughter of Mrs. Janet Moore, 213 Cromwell Street, and the late W.R. Moore. At the time of their marriage, Patrick's parents, James and Angela, were residing at 236 Proctor Street. Patrick and Vera Irene would have four children together. Their daughter, Terri Patricia, was born August 16, 1947 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Sarnia; their first son, Michael Moore, was born January 14, 1949; and twin sons Jon and Gerald who were born December 21, 1949 at St. Joseph's Hospital. Patrick, Vera and their children resided at 735 Oak Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Patrick worked as a driver-salesman with a local Sarnia bakery.

Patrick enlisted for service in the Korean War with the Canadian Army on August 21, 1950 in London, Ontario, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment – "D" Company. Following initial training with the regiment, he was transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, before sailing for the Korean war-zone. Private Patrick O'Connor was in Korea for only one month, and was in action just five days before losing his life on May 30, 1951, less than one year after enlisting. He was the first Sarnia man to be killed in the Korean War. The reality of the Korean War hit home in Sarnia with the May 31, 1951 *Sarnia Observer* front page headline, "Sarnia Man, 27, Father of Two, Dies in Korea" (Patrick was the father of four children).

On May 29, 1951, just one day before he was killed, Patrick O'Connor wrote the following poem:

*Korea*  
*There is blood on the hills of Korea*  
*T'is blood of the brave and the true*  
*Where the 25th brigade battled together*  
*Under the banner of red, white and blue*  
*As they marched over the fields of Korea*  
*To the hills where the enemy lay*  
*They remembered the Brigadier's order*  
*These hills must be taken to-day*  
*Forward they marched into battle*  
*With face unsmiling and stern*  
*They knew as they charged the hillside*  
*There were some who would never return*

A LOVING SON AND BROTHER WITH GALLANT MEN AT REST WHO SERVED THEIR COUNTRY,  
GAVE THEIR BEST.

*Some thought of their wives and their mothers  
 Some thought of their sweethearts so fair  
 And some as they plodded and stumbled  
 Were reverently whispering a prayer  
 There is blood on the hills of Korea  
 It's the gift of the freedom they love  
 May their names live in glory forever  
 And their souls rest in heaven above*

Patrick O'Connor was fatally wounded on "Hill 466" in Korea while trying to render first aid to a wounded comrade under intense machine gun fire from Communist forces. He and another stretcher-bearer ignored danger in their desire to help the wounded of the Royal Canadian Regiment. The two men were killed almost instantaneously, Vera, his widow, learned from officers of the regiment, by his widow Mrs. Vera Irene O'Connor, who was residing at 735 Oak Avenue, Sarnia. Reverend A.J. Ruth, Roman Catholic chaplain with the Royals, wrote about Patrick O'Connor, *He died as a soldier trying to help a wounded comrade and your children may be justly proud of their father.* Mrs. O'Connor also received letters from Lieut. D.A. Strickland, praising the heroism of the 27-year-old veteran of the Second World War. Lt.-Col. Keane, officer commanding, Second Battalion, R.C.R.'s wrote Mrs. O'Connor: *Your husband was a very fine man, well-liked by all, and with a courage that can only be part of a fine moral character.* Lieut. Strickland described the action thus: *On the day Pat was killed, my platoon was leading an attack on 'Hill 466'. Half way up the mountain my forward section came under intense fire which killed two and wounded four others. Pat and his partner came running up the hill to get the wounded but another burst of fire hit them both. He died as he had lived, trying to aid others with his wonderful unselfishness.*

A few days after receiving the news of Patrick O'Connor's death, the Rev. Father A.N. Nolan, pastor of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, led a memorial military mass at St. Peter's Church. Twenty-seven year old Patrick O'Connor is buried in the United Nations Cemetery in Busan, South Korea. He also has a memorial plaque on the Korea Veteran's National Wall of Remembrance in Meadowvale Cemetery, in Brampton, Ontario. This memorial has plaques for each of the 516 Canadian service men who died while serving with the Canadian Forces in the United Nations. Patrick O'Connor has many well-deserved citations: 1939-1945 Star; France and Germany Star; Defence Medal; War Medal 1939-45; Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp; Korea Medal; and United Nations Service Medal Korea. For parents James and Angela O'Connor, Patrick was their second son lost to war, the first being Warrant Officer Class II James Michael Barry O'Connor of the R.C.A.F, killed in April of 1943. On the November 11, 1952 Remembrance Day ceremony held in Victoria Park in Sarnia, over thirty wreaths were laid at the foot of the Sarnia cenotaph. The first wreath laid on the cenotaph that day was brought up by Mrs. Vera O'Connor, the widow of Patrick William O'Connor and mother of their four children.

SOURCES: A, B, D, E, H, L, N, 2D

### **OLIVER, William John (#J/23152)**

William John (Jack) Oliver was born in Sarnia on October 25, 1923, the son of George Wilfred Oliver and Della (nee Hume) Oliver, of 123 Proctor Street, Sarnia. William had three brothers: Kenneth; Clare; and Lieutenant W. Ray, who was a member of the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Artillery Unit. Growing up in Sarnia, William Oliver attended public school and Sarnia Collegiate. Music was one of his hobbies, and he played in the school orchestra and cadet band while at Sarnia Collegiate, and was a member of the Lambton Garrison Band. William was also a member of the Devine Street United Church and the Young Men's Club of St. Andrew's Church. Prior to enlisting, William was employed in the Inspection Laboratory at Sarnia Imperial Refinery.

William Oliver enlisted on November 1, 1941 with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He received his training at Brandon, Hagersville, Belleville, St. Eugene and at Uplands, receiving his pilot's wings at Uplands, Ottawa on January 22, 1943. Between the time he received his wings and his commission he took an R.A.F. reconnaissance course at Charlottetown. William went overseas on May 9, 1943, as a member of RCAF #6 Operational Training Unit and was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot in July 1943.

On October 6, 1943, William Oliver was killed when he accidentally fell from the roof of the St. George Hotel, George Street, Edinburgh, Scotland. Not long after the accident, parents George and Della Oliver in Sarnia would receive a cable from R.C.A.F. headquarters in Ottawa informing them that their son, Pilot Officer W.J. Oliver

had been killed on active service overseas. No details were given as to how he met his death, although it was stated that the funeral would be held at East Fortune near Edinburgh, Scotland.

William Oliver would later be officially listed as, *Killed while on leave. (Fell off roof of hotel), overseas (Scotland)*. Not long after his death, a memorial service was held for William Oliver in Devine Street United Church, officiated by its pastor Rev. Arnold Mathews, assisted by Rev. J.M. Macgillivray of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. The memorial service in Sarnia occurred at the same time that William's funeral was being held in Scotland. His brother Lieutenant W. Ray Oliver, who was overseas with a Royal Canadian Artillery Unit at the time of his brother William's death, was able to attend the funeral. Nineteen year-old William John is buried at Haddington (St. Martin's) New Burial Ground, East Lothian, United Kingdom (Scotland), Section E, Grave 18.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, O, 2C, 2D

#### **OTTAWAY, Ernest Edward** – Photograph page 391

Ernest Ottaway was born in Alberta on August 29, 1912, the son of Ernest Augustine Ottaway (born in London, England) and Lillian Florence (nee Dochstader) Ottaway, of Lincoln Park Avenue, Sarnia. Father Ernest Augustine was born in England, but his family immigrated to Calgary, Alberta, in 1904, when he was 15 years old. He married Lillian Florence in Calgary in 1911 and served as a soldier during World War I. The Ottaway family included Ernest Edward and his three younger sisters, two being Virginia and Ruby Gertrude. Ruby was born in March of 1915, but died 6 months later. Edward's early childhood was in Calgary, Alberta. The family came to Sarnia in October of 1920, residing at 112 north Christina Street. Not long after, nine year-old Ernest would lose his father, Ernest Augustine, age 32, who died in September of 1921, the result of his service overseas. He had been gassed in France and died as a result of congestion of his lungs.

Ernest Edward Ottaway was a member of St. George's Anglican Church. Prior to enlisting, Ernest Edward Ottaway was employed in Sarnia as a printer. He was employed for ten years with the Frontier Printing Company, and about a year with the Canadian Printing Company. Ernest, a member of the local militia unit before enlisting, was one of the first men to enlist in Sarnia in 1939, joining the Canadian Army, 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers as a corporal. Not long after, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

Ernest would marry Gertrude Leila Hallam, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hallam at Canon Davis Memorial Church, in Sarnia on October 10, 1936. The groom's sister, Miss Virginia Ottaway, served as bridesmaid and William E. Baldwin served as the best man. After the ceremony, Ernest and Gertrude Ottaway left on a wedding trip to the United States and, on their return, they resided at 413 Nelson Street. At wartime, the couple resided at 163 ½ north Forsythe Street, Sarnia. Ernest and Gertrude would have a daughter together, Marlene Diana, born in April of 1938, and the family would later reside at 149 North Brock Street, later 302 George Street, Sarnia.

After helping to train troops at Petawawa camp, Ernest went overseas with the Royal Canadian Engineers, 11th Field Company, attaining the rank of Sergeant-Major. In August of 1942, after being overseas for more than two years, Ernest would spend his 30th birthday still overseas, somewhere in England, far from his wife and daughter. In April of 1943, Ernest returned to Canada to take an officer's training course and was pleased to be home in Sarnia, in time for his daughter Marlene's fifth birthday. When he arrived in Sarnia by train, he was met by his wife and daughter; Sergeant-Major Alf. Luckins with whom he had served overseas; and two members of the Canadian Legion. Although she had not seen her father for almost three years, little Marlene Diana rushed toward him as he alighted with two other soldiers. "She knew him instantly," her mother said. Ernest said, "My one worry from the time I left England was whether I would make the grade in time for her birthday. Now we'll have a nice little party."

While in Sarnia, he told a reporter for the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* of some of his experiences. On more than one occasion he had been close to exploding bombs. He was so close to one that it lifted him bodily, together with the truck he was driving, and deposited both of them in a nearby field, after the truck had neatly cleared a four-foot hedge. Miraculously, Ernest escaped injury. "The bomb exploded about 40 feet away from the truck one night as I was driving to the barracks," he said. "Owing to the noise of the engine I did not hear its approach. I didn't know what happened until I found the hole made by the bomb in the road." He said that he was in London on several occasions when "Jerry came over" as he put it. He said that the approach of a high explosive bomb can be likened to the noise made by an express train. Half an hour after he arrived at an English camp, a lone plane came over and strafed the barracks with machine guns. Just about a month before he returned to Canada, he was machine-gunned

again with other soldiers stationed at a point on the south-east coast of England.

Approximately one year before his death, he would return to Canada to secure his commission in the infantry, receiving his certificate at the Canadian Army Officers' Training Centre at Brockville in July of 1943. He was then posted to Camp Ipperwash for advanced training, graduating in late August of 1943 with the rank of Lieutenant. In December of 1943, Ernest would spend a Christmas leave at home in Sarnia with his wife and daughter. It would be the last Christmas they would spend together. Ernest Ottaway then returned to England in March of 1944, acting as commander of his new unit from April to August of 1944, when he went to France. Lieutenant Ernest Ottaway came to the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada R.C.I.C. on October 10, 1944 as a replacement officer. In a letter to his wife Gertrude in Sarnia, he indicated that he first participated in the fighting on October 16. Ernest Ottaway would lose his life only five days later on October 21, 1944 while leading his platoon of Alpha Company during the Battle of the Scheldt at the town of Schoondijke, in Belgium. The Scheldt Campaign was the first stage of the Liberation of the Netherlands.

In late October of 1944, Gertrude Ottaway in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the director of records in Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Lieut. Ernest Edward Ottaway has been killed in action overseas*. No other details were provided. Ernest Ottaway would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Holland)*. In mid-November of 1944, widow Gertrude Ottaway in Sarnia would receive a letter of condolence from the officer commanding the 1st Battalion, Queen's Own Rifles, relating the circumstances in which her husband Ernest, met his death. The following is the letter from Lieut.-Col. S.M. Lett, commander of the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Rifles of Canada:

*It is with great personal regret and sorrow that I have to write you concerning the death of your husband on October 21 during the battle of the Scheldt pocket. The battalion had driven the enemy from the village of Ijzendijke and was pursuing them into the heavily defended belt based on the town of Oostburg. "A" company, to which your husband was attached, was given the job of "feeling out" the enemy defences in the area of a large farm, which was manned by several machine-guns and a number of snipers. During the course of the patrols that were necessary to get this information your husband, while leading his platoon forward, exploded an anti-personnel mine in the ditch up which he was crawling, killing him instantly.*

*Although Edward had been with us only a few days, we already knew that we had been lucky in getting an officer of his caliber. We are all very sorry to lose him in this way, as we were convinced he had a future with the regiment. I can assure you that he died carrying out his duty, leading his platoon into an action which we all knew was an extremely dangerous and hazardous one. We have indeed lost a very fine soldier. May I offer you, on behalf of myself and the regiment, our sincere sympathy in your great loss.*

Ernest Ottaway left behind his wife Gertrude and their seven-year old daughter Marlene. Ernest Edward Ottaway and his father Ernest Augustine Ottaway both died at the age of 32, each as a result of war. In early December of 1944, a memorial service in Ernest Edward Ottaway's honour was held in St. George's Anglican Church, Sarnia during the regular morning Sunday service. Rev. F.G. Hardy, the choir and congregation paid a solemn tribute to his memory, which included the singing of a favourite hymn of his, "Unto the Hills Will I Lift Up Mine Eyes" and the recital of appropriate prayers. Thirty-two year old Ernest Ottaway is buried in Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Belgium, Grave II.E.7. On Ernest Ottaway's headstone are inscribed the words, *In loving memory of my dear husband who was killed in Oostburg, Holland.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, 2B, 2C, 2D

### **PAITHOWSKI, Michael Joseph (#V/17380)**

NOTE: Michael Paithowski spelled his surname with a "w" in it. The rest of the family spelled the surname with a "u".

Michael Paithowski was born in Hamilton, Ontario on December 7, 1917, the son of Michael Paithouski Senior (nicknamed "Tato") and Rosa Paithouski, of 589 South Vidal Street, Sarnia. Rosa Paithouski (nee Doskevitch) was born in Lvov, Poland. Rosa had a previous marriage to Paul Lukasevich and Rosa and Paul had two children together: Peter Lukasevich (born 1901) and Mike Lukez (born 1907, changed his name from Lukasevich), who would later become half-brothers to Michael Paithowski. Rosa would leave Poland for Canada, leaving behind her husband and two children. Peter Lukasevich and Mike Lukez would later come to Canada, arriving in their

twenties in Sarnia and later moving to Windsor.

Michael Paithouski Senior (“Tato”) was born in Vilshanka (near Kiev), Ukraine. When Tato emigrated from Trieste, Ukraine to North America in 1909, his first stop was Ellis Island, New York. Tato’s last name was actually Piatkowski, but the immigration officer recorded it as Paithouski, which it was to remain afterwards. Tato Paithouski then made his way from New York to Montreal and later to Hamilton. It was in Canada that Tato married Rosa. Tato and Rosa would have three children: Mary (born 1915 in Montreal); Michael Joseph (born 1917 in Hamilton); and Nicolas Joseph (born in Hamilton). Eventually the family would come to Sarnia, residing at 589 South Vidal Street. Tato worked as a boiler foreman at Imperial Oil’s Refinery.

The Paithouski siblings and their spouses were busy people. Michaels’ sister, Mary, years later married Earl Wynne, who became a sergeant in the army and went off to war in September 1939. Michael’s brother, Nick, graduated from Queen’s University as a civil engineer in 1940. In his first year at Queen’s, he was voted the Most Valuable Player on the school’s junior football team. At Queen’s for three years, Nick was a regular lineman winning the Johnny Evans Trophy as MVP in the 1939 season. Nick would play centre and linebacker for the 1940 Sarnia Imperials where he was an all-star and won the 1940 Imperial Oil Trophy for league MVP. In 1941, Nick would play for the CFL Regina (later Saskatchewan) Roughriders. In April of 1942, Nick enlisted with the Royal Canadian Engineers, later becoming a lieutenant. He would arrive overseas in approximately August of 1943. During his time overseas, one of Nick’s highlights was playing in a famous football game in London, England: the February 13, 1944 Tea Bowl, before over 30,000 fans in White City Stadium, where the Canadian army soldiers defeated the U.S. army soldiers. The U.S. requested a rematch but D-Day got in the way. As a platoon leader with the Royal Canadian Engineers, he was responsible for supplying the equipment and building of bridges, 51 of them in 45 days in France, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands between March 24 and May 5, 1945. After the war, the United States military authorities recognized his distinguished service and bravery in Europe, awarding Nick the USA Bronze Star for his efforts. After the war, Nick would go on to play two seasons with the Hamilton Tigercats (Wildcats at the time), in 1947 and 1948. He would work as a civil engineer for the Federal Department of Transport.

Nick Paithouski would return to Sarnia to start a family with his wife ‘Effie’ Barbara Paul and they were successful, when Effie gave birth to Joseph and Janet. Effie Barbara Paul was the daughter of Lt. Charles Marr Paul and Frances (nee Williams) Paul. Barbara Paul was born in London, England in November of 1917 during a Zeppelin Air Raid. Eleven months later, baby Barbara and her mother Frances left Southhampton, England bound for New York aboard the *RMS Olympic* (one of *Titanic*’s sister ships), under the constant threat of U-boat attack. The British Government had paid for their tickets, a special deal for English wives and children of Colonial soldiers to reduce the number of people to feed. When mother and daughter Marr arrived in Sarnia, Frances would receive a telegram informing her that her close sister had died back in England. Frances’ husband Charles was still fighting in Europe.

Nick would be inducted into the Sarnia-Lambton Sports Hall of Fame for football in 1984 and the Queen’s University Football Hall of Fame in 1987. Lieutenant Nick Paithouski would be inducted into the Canadian Veterans Hall of Valour in Carleton Place near Ottawa on May 15th of 2010.

Nick Paithouski’s induction into the Hall of Valour was doubly moving for Nick, his wife Barbara and their families. Barbara’s father, Lieutenant Charles Marr Paul, was also inducted into the Hall on the same day. Charles Marr Paul was born in Sarnia and was one of the first Canadians to leave for battle in the First World War, leaving Val Cartier with the CEF on October 3, 1914. Charles joined the 8th battalion of the 90th Winnipeg Rifles, nicknamed the Little Black Devils and would later be credited with saving many lives. Lieutenant Charles Paul received the Military Medal for courage and gallantry under fire while holding the line during the first German attack with poison gas at Ypres in April 1915. He also earned a Meritorious Service Medal for saving more lives during the Battle of the Sommes in 1916. His unit was also at Vimy Ridge and Paschendaele in 1917 and the following year he would be made Officer in the field. After returning to Sarnia with his British bride, Frances Williams, Charles and Frances would raise eight children: Francis, Robert, Elva, Lillian, Edna Jean, Edith, Elizabeth and Effie Barbara who would become Nick Paithouski’s future wife. A letter that Charles Paul wrote to his mother from the Front in April of 1915 is included in the “Sarnia and Canada War History Notes” section of this project.

Michael Joseph was a member of St. Joseph’s Catholic Parish, Sarnia. He married Miss Eloise Victoria Johnston (born 1920), the only daughter of John Eugene Johnston and Florence Johnston of 332 Confederation Street on November 30, 1943 at St. George’s Chapel in Sarnia. At the wedding ceremony, Mrs. Hazel Smith served as the



matron of honour and George Kumchy served as the best man. Following the ceremony, the immediate families were entertained at the Colonial Hotel for a reception before the newlyweds left on a short wedding trip. On their return, the couple resided at 332 Confederation Street and then later 215 Confederation Street, Sarnia. Michael and Eloise would have one child together, a son, John Michael, born August 22, 1944.

Michael's wife Eloise (nee Johnston) had two brothers, both of whom would serve in the war. One brother, Eugene, would serve in the infantry, and his life was never the same after his wartime experiences. Her other brother was Jay Syver Johnston, who would become a Flying Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Michael's brother-in-law Jay Johnston would lose his life when the Liberator aircraft in which he was in, crashed into Black Mountain in Quebec in October of 1943, taking twenty-four R.C.A.F. lives, the largest single-crash loss of life in the history of the RCAF. The plane was listed as missing, and its remains were not found until after the war. Jay Johnston's story is included in this project. Michael and Eloise would marry just one month after Eloise had lost her brother Jay.

Recording his occupation as a fireman, Michael Paithowski enlisted in the Canadian Navy and became a member of Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, initially serving aboard the *HMCS Drumheller* and later aboard the corvette *HMCS Shawinigan*. He attained the rank of Petty Officer Stoker. The *HMCS Shawinigan (K136)* was a Flower-class corvette commissioned on September 19, 1941 at Quebec City. It was one of the sturdy little "work horses" of the RCN and was to become the 9th corvette and 19th Canadian warship lost in the war. She was in the navy's convoy escort and patrol fleet. Her sea miles totalled more than 150 000, and she had been one of the busiest vessels of her class, escorting convoy runs in the Atlantic Ocean and off the east coast of Canada. Few ships of her class spent more time at sea during the period when German U-boats were most active in the North Atlantic. During the two years prior to her sinking, she did not lose a ship under her charge. Men who served aboard her had been acclaimed for fighting efficiency, for rescue work and for attacks on enemy U-boats. She escorted hundreds of thousands of vital war supplies and shipping to Allied ports.

Before he joined the *Shawinigan*, Michael would return to Sarnia on leave a few weeks, to visit his parents, his new wife and his friends. It would be the only time he would see his young son Johnny. When he returned to duty, Michael would send his new wife Eloise and their young son three letters while aboard the *Shawinigan*. Less than one year after getting married, Michael Paithowski would lose his life.

On November 24, 1944, the *HMCS Shawinigan* and a United States Coast Guard Cutter *Sassafrass* escorted the ferry *Burgeo* from Sydney, Nova Scotia to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland. Ferries on this route were always escorted after the tragic loss of the ferry *SS Caribou* two years earlier. In mid-October of 1942, the passenger ferry *SS Caribou* had been torpedoed on the same route, and 136 lives were lost including ten children. The three ships in November 1944 made an uneventful crossing to Port aux Basques, at which time the *Shawinigan* detached to continue doing an independent anti-submarine patrol in the area. The *Shawinigan* was scheduled to rendezvous with the *Burgeo* the following morning for the return to Cape Breton. But the *Shawinigan* never made it. On that fateful November 24 moonlit night, the *Shawinigan* maintained radio silence while performing anti-submarine patrol, in the Cabot Strait between Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island. Nearby, German U-boat *U-1228* was trying to repair a faulty snorkel without success and had decided to return to Germany for repairs. As soon as *U-1228* decided to head back into the Atlantic, she sighted and attacked the *Shawinigan* with a Gnat torpedo. It was *U-1228's* first recorded attack on enemy shipping.

Four minutes later, the *Shawinigan*, with its entire crew, disappeared in a plume of water and a shower of sparks. The ship had no time for any message to be sent. The next morning, the *Burgeo* left Port aux Basques on schedule in the fog, but could not find the *Shawinigan*. Keeping radio silence and not informing command of *Shawinigan's* failure to appear, the *Burgeo* made for Sydney, arriving on November 25 at 6 pm at night. When *Burgeo* arrived unescorted, the navy knew something had happened to *Shawinigan*. A day or so later, searching ships came upon fragments of wreckage and six bodies, which were all that remained to indicate what had happened to the *Shawinigan*.

Seven officers and 84 crew members, including Michael Paithowski, were lost. There were no survivors. There was one other Sarnia native on board and lost, twenty-three year old Leading Coder William John Anderson, who is included in this project. In late November of 1944, parents Michael Senior and Rosa Paithouski in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the Department of National Defence informing them that their son, *Petty Officer*

*Michael Paithouski has been reported missing at sea.* The message contained no other information and intimated that a letter would follow. The message was received exactly one year to the day that Michael had married Eloise Johnston.

On December 7, 1944, in a dispatch from Ottawa, the Hon. Angus L. Macdonald, Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, announced the loss of the *H.M.C.S. Shawinigan*, while on operational duty in the North Atlantic. He gave no details but said the ship's complement had been lost and five bodies have been recovered and identified. It was announced locally that two Sarnia seamen, Michael Paithouski and William Anderson were members of the crew of the *Shawinigan* and were reported missing. In mid-February of 1945, the Paithouski family in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Petty Officer Michael Paithouski, who was reported missing at sea last November is officially presumed lost.*

Later, the Navy would inform the Paithouski family that Michael Paithouski was officially listed as, *Missing, presumed dead, when the ship in which he was serving, H.M.C.S. 'Shawinigan' was lost while on operational duty at sea.* It was not until after the war ended and *U-1228* surrendered, did the details of what had happened to the *Shawinigan* that night become uncovered. Twenty-six year old Michael Paithouski has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 12. On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as M. Paithouski. The page displaying Michael Paithouski's name in the Book of Remembrance in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, Ottawa is open each year every September 1st.

Michael left behind his new wife Eloise and their three-month old son Johnny Paithouski. For Eloise, she did not have clear closure of her brother's death or her husband's death until after the war ended. Eloise would go on to be employed at Bell Canada as a switchboard operator, working midnight shifts and leaving their son Johnny to be cared for by Michael's sister Mary and her husband Earl Wynne. Years later, Eloise would marry Tom Rue, a Norwegian Merchant Marine, stationed in Canada.

On June 14, 1997, at Trois Rivieres, Quebec, the Prime Minister of Canada Jean Chretien and his wife would take part in a Royal Canadian Navy ceremony to officially commission the new *HMCS Shawinigan (704)*. In attendance were Johnny Paithouski and his wife Paulette. They were there with other families who had lost loved ones on board the *HMCS Shawinigan* on that fateful night in November of 1944. Johnny had married Paulette, her second marriage, and she had a son from her first marriage, Shawn. A number of years later, with his step-son's full approval, Johnny in the first legal case of its kind in Ontario, adopted Shawn who then became Shawn Paithouski. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, 2A, 2C, 2D, 3E, o

#### **PARSONS, Arthur Edward (#J/11636) – Photograph page 391**

Arthur ("Ted") Parsons was born on November 26, 1916, the son of Arthur Edwin Parsons and Olive Sarah (nee Cornish) Parsons, of 286 Kathleen Avenue and later 263 North Vidal Street, Sarnia. Ted's parents were originally born in England. He had two brothers and two sisters: John, Tom, Gwen and Shirley. Prior to enlisting, Ted had been employed in a jewelry store in Timmins and then had been working in Windsor for six months. Single at the time of his enlistment, Ted joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in March of 1941. In late May of 1942, Pilot Officer Ted Parsons had received his commission from the R.C.A.F. and spent a furlough of two weeks with his mother in Sarnia before leaving for Lachine, Quebec. In March of 1943, his mother Olive Parsons in Sarnia would receive news that her son Arthur Parsons had been promoted to flying officer from pilot officer by the R.C.A.F. somewhere in England.

Ted Parsons would become a member of RCAF #77 Squadron "Esse Potius Quam Videri" (To be, rather than to seem), attaining the rank Flying Officer-Navigator. On May 1, 1943, Ted was a member of a crew aboard a Halifax aircraft that was lost to enemy action while engaged in night operations over enemy-held territory. Perishing with Arthur Ted Parsons were FS. T.D. Scarff; and Sgt.s I.D. Crawford (RAF), L. Hannam (RAF), R. Shepherd (RAF), and G. Watson (RAF). In early May of 1943, mother Olive was notified by personnel in Ottawa that her son, Flying Officer Ted Parsons, was reported as missing after air operations overseas. Later, Ted Parsons would be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead.* Twenty-seven year old Arthur Ted Parsons is buried in Muiden General Cemetery, Netherlands, Row E, Grave 85. SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

IN MEMORY OF OUR SON WHOM WE LOVE SO MUCH. GOD KEEP HIM.  
MOTHER AND FATHER.

**POLAND, Brent Donald (AFGHANISTAN) (#B88172022) – Photograph page 391**

Brent Poland was born October 26, 1969 in Sarnia, the first child of Donald Eldridge and Patricia Evelyn Poland of Camlachie, Ontario. His grandparents were Bill and Evelyn McKenna of Wyoming, Ontario, and Eldridge and Amy Poland (Dawson) and Goldie Dawson of Brigden, Ontario. Brent had a younger brother, Mark Thomas Poland, born September 13, 1971. As youngsters, Brent and Mark were always on the go growing up in Errol Village along with their cousin Terry. The Poland boys enjoyed sports, playing baseball, soccer, hockey and Brent was an avid downhill skier. The boys loved being outdoors, and with father Don being a Scout leader, they worked their way up from Beavers to Ventures. Their maternal grandparents had a cottage on an island in Lake Temagami (northeast of Sudbury) where the boys spent time fishing, swimming, boating and canoeing. Brent attended Huron Church Camp where he progressed from a camper to a camp counsellor and eventually a canoe leader.

Brent's younger brother, Mark, who attended Errol Village School and St. Clair High School, would also join the military. After completing grade 11, Mark joined the 1st Hussars as a Private in the reserves. He enrolled at the University of Western Ontario in Honours Political Science and transferred to Officer Cadet status while earning his first degree. During his summer breaks from university, Mark attended Armour Officer Training and graduated as a Lieutenant. After graduating, he worked for the military as a public affairs officer and the personal assistant to the brigade commander. While studying at UWO law school, Mark received a one year deferment to serve with the Royal Canadian Dragoons in Bosnia beginning in the fall of 1994 until spring 1995.

In Bosnia, Mark was a liaison officer with "A" Squadron, Royal Canadian Dragoons. He was responsible for communicating between the Canadian army and the local Serb army. In the fall of 1994, while in Bosnia, Mark was one of over 50 Canadian soldiers who were held captive by the Serb army as a shield against NATO bombing of the Serb forces. Mark and his fellow Peacekeepers were eventually released after 16 days and would return to Canada.

Upon returning, Mark was promoted to Captain in the 1st Hussars. He returned to law school, graduating in 1998 and articling with Siskinds Law Firm in London before being called to the bar in February 2000. Mark transferred as a reservist to Judge Advocate General's (JAG) branch in the military while practicing law. He earned a Masters of Law (LLM) and was promoted to Major within the JAG branch. While working as assistant Crown Attorney in Kitchener, he transferred back to the 1st Hussars, this time as regimental 2nd in command. Mark completed his advanced Combat Arms Officer's Courses and transferred to the Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada where he is currently the District Coordination Officer (DCO). Married to Susan Dube, Mark, Susan and Shelley, Susan's daughter from a previous marriage, are currently living in Kitchener where Mark is a crown attorney for Dufferin County. About 13 months after Brent lost his life in Afghanistan, Mark and Susan had twins – Sophie Poland and Brent Lucas Poland.

Brent attended Errol Village Elementary School where he enjoyed reading and, like his father, was interested in history. Evening television at the Poland house often involved news programs, a routine that helped Brent develop a solid general knowledge base and an understanding of Canada and World affairs. In grade eight, he would spend a couple of weeks in Quebec on a French exchange. Near the end of grade ten, the Poland family travelled to Europe, rented a car and spent six weeks travelling through the continent. The trip further enhanced Brent's love for history, a trend which continued through high school and university. Brent Poland graduated from St. Clair High School in Sarnia and then went on to earn two university degrees. His first degree was a Bachelor of Arts History diploma from York University. After achieving that degree, Brent traveled to Europe where he taught in a small village in the Greek mountains, before heading for Italy to help his aunt at an agriturismo, a resort where guests stay on a working farm. He then returned to Toronto to obtain his second degree, a Bachelor of Media Arts Honours diploma from Ryerson University. After earning his second university degree in 1998, Brent worked for a time in office environments, a type of work for which he quickly lost enthusiasm.

In 2002, at the age of 32, Brent joined the Canadian Armed Forces to, as his family members stated "follow his heart and his passion." Having two university degrees, he immediately entered the officer stream, completing basic officer training at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. Brent had his heart set on being in the infantry and attended the required four-phase combat arms training, competing with men and women significantly younger than he was. Unsuccessful in the final phase of the gruelling combat arms training, yet still determined to be in the infantry after four years in the military, he resigned his officer's commission and re-enlisted as a corporal. Despite the lower rank, he achieved his goal of being an infantry soldier, and was

assigned as a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment, 2nd Battalion, based at CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick. Then his focus shifted to another one of his goals: getting to Afghanistan.

Once he knew he had a permanent posting, Brent bought a house in French Lake, New Brunswick, not far from his base in CFB Gagetown. At his own home, he could finally be re-united with his beagle-mix hound “Shorty”. He had acquired Shorty while studying at Ryerson University and the “badly behaved hound” had been living with Don and Pat Poland in Errol Village since Brent had joined the army. Brent was anxious to get his dog back and introduce him to the wide-open spaces and fields of his country home. Not long after, Brent received the news that he was being deployed to Afghanistan. Brent was thrilled to be going overseas and excited about the upcoming adventures awaiting him in the mountains and on the dusty plains of Afghanistan. At a Christmas dinner party shortly before his departure, one of the guests began leaning on Brent about why he wanted to go to Afghanistan, suggesting that Canadians had no business being there. Brent calmly pointed out that the guest had two little girls and asked how she would like it if they were never given the opportunity to go to school and to get an education, as had been the case in Afghanistan for years. Brent’s response terminated the conversation.

In April 2007, Corporal Poland’s “Hotel Company” of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment was serving with NATO’s International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In the weeks prior to Brent’s death, the men had been part of *Operation Achilles* – providing security for massive convoys of soldiers and material being moved westward from Kandahar City into Helmand province, where the British had a major offensive operation against the Taliban. NATO was trying to re-open a hydro electric dam in order to supply the region with electricity. During this operation, the men would have been on high alert.

On April 8, 2007, Easter Sunday, the 2nd Battalion was escorting a convoy of troops and supplies through the desert to British soldiers in Helmand province. It was its third escort in three days and the company was looking forward to a much-deserved rest. About 1:30 pm on that day, the light armoured vehicle (LAV III) that Corporal Poland was travelling in struck a roadside IED (improvised explosive device), triggering a massive explosion. The attack occurred around 75 kilometres west of Kandahar. Corporal Poland and five other comrades from 22 Bravo section, who were all sitting in the rear passenger compartment of the vehicle, were killed instantly in the explosion. Perishing with thirty-seven year old Brent Poland were RCRs Sgt. Donald Lucas, 31; Pte. Kevin Kennedy, 20; Cpl. Aaron Williams, 23; and Pte. David Greenslade, 20. Cpl. Christopher Stannix, 24, a reservist from the Halifax based Princess Louise Fusiliers, was also killed. Four soldiers survived the attack, although one had serious injuries. The attack was the largest single-day combat death toll suffered by Canadian troops since the Korean War.

Back in Sarnia on that April 8 Easter Sunday, Don and Pat Poland were in their Bright’s Grove church listening to the Easter service when a tremendously dark and gloomy feeling suddenly descended upon Don, shaking him to the core, but then passing quickly. Shortly after, while they were driving home from the church, the same dark premonition of fear descended on Don again. Don was petrified that a black car would be waiting in the driveway to deliver terrible news. Making the final turn home, he breathed a mammoth sigh of relief when he discovered no such car was waiting in the driveway. Several hours later, after the Poland family finished their Easter dinner, a knock sounded on the Poland’s front door. At the door was a man wearing a kilt. Younger son Mark opened the door, where there stood a kilted soldier and a military chaplain. They were there to deliver the devastating news of Brent’s death, forever changing the life of the Poland family.

Corporal Brent Poland received the Citation: Sacrifice Medal (posthumously). Brent Poland’s repatriation ceremony was held at CFB Trenton on April 11, 2007. A full military funeral with honours was held on April 20, 2007 at a packed Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia attended by more than 1000 people, with younger brother Mark delivered a powerful eulogy. The funeral procession made its way beyond the city limits, down rural roads, and arriving at Brent’s final resting spot in a country cemetery among his forefathers not far from the Poland ancestral farm near Brigden. Thirty-seven year old Brent Poland is buried in Bear Creek Cemetery in Brigden, Lambton County, Ontario. On his headstone is inscribed the words, *Too dearly loved to ever be forgotten*. Brent Poland’s name is also inscribed on the Village of Camlachie’s Memorial.

Two personal effects were with Corporal Poland at the time of his death, two items that held great significance for Brent and others. Both were returned to his parents. Before Corporal Poland left for Afghanistan, he had become friends with a chaplain, with whom he shared a barrack. Brent had an understanding of religion and the two had many talks. Shortly before his departure, Brent’s mother, Pat, had given him a card on which was printed

Psalm 23 of the Holy Bible, one of his grandmother's favourite verses. When Brent's personal effects were returned, in the clear plastic window of his wallet sat the card containing the 23rd Psalm. Brent also had a soft spot for children and another item in his pocket when he died was a letter he had received from a classroom of children taught by one of his mother's friends. With it were the blood-stained rough notes of a letter he was preparing to send back to the students as soon as he returned to the main base at Kandahar. His father Don would transcribe the letter and forward it to the teacher and children.

Brent had been in contact with the children in the grade 4 class of Mrs. Leona Moore at Confederation Central School of the Lambton Kent Public School Board. The students enjoyed writing and receiving letters with Brent and were excited that he was taking the time to reply to their letters. They had many questions when his letters were read to them. When they learned of Brent's tragic death, many students stayed in at recess to make a card to send with Mrs. Moore to the funeral home. The following are the rough notes that Brent had with him when he lost his life. They would have been written a week or so before his death:

*To: Mrs. Moore's 4th Grade Class*

*- Thanks*

*- We ride in heavily armoured vehicles called LAV III*

*- We patrol our area of operation for suspected Taliban fighters, and go into villages and district centers to provide protection for our bosses who have meetings called Shuras.*

*- We generally provide a presence in our area of operations, to let the Taliban know we are here, and to restrict their freedom of movement so that they can not terrorize the local population. These Shuras are important to ensure the local villagers have a say in the reconstruction process.*

*- Yes there are landmines and the occasional ambush, but our training is world class, so that protects us from being in too much danger.*

*- We sleep in sleeping bags behind our vehicles wherever we stop for the night.*

*- My name is Corporal Brent Poland. A corporal is a rank in the army one step above a private.*

*- We help train the Afghan national police to do things like set up vehicle check points in order to search for weapons and explosives.*

*- The people are generally poor, but things are improving.*

*- Since we have been here there is a new road.*

*- A canal/irrigation project is underway to help the people in the area grow better crops.*

*- They are mostly farmers.*

Brent understood the importance of a good education. In memory of their son, Don and Pat Poland, with the help of the Royal Canadian Regiment, started up The RCR Education Fund for the Children of Fallen Soldiers. The Fund helps with the cost of post-secondary education for the children of RCR soldiers who lost their lives in Afghanistan, or who died in Canada as a result of the physical or mental injuries of war. In Brent's death, others will have the opportunity for a brighter future.

Corporal Brent Poland is remembered as a good, strong and loving man, a proud soldier and proud Canadian. According to a family member, "He told us before he left that he saw this tour as his chance to help in the effort to bring peace and stability for the people of Afghanistan. He was inspired by the thought that his efforts might help to ensure that little girls had the chance to go to school and women might be given an opportunity to thrive in an environment free of brutal oppression." The following is a quotation from a letter Brent wrote to his family, to be opened in the event of his death:

*I sincerely hope that my death resulted in saving the lives of my fellow brothers in arms. I feel it is my obligation to protect the young men in my unit, given that I have been so blessed, so that they may go on to lead fulfilled lives and experience as much as I have.*

SOURCES: B, D, E, K, L, N, 2D, 3D, p

### **POLE, Douglas Campbell (#J/35541)**

Douglas Pole was born on October 15, 1923, the son of Willard Harford Pole (born in Strathroy, Ontario) and Muriel Grace (nee Proctor, born in Lambton County, Ontario) Pole, of 208 Essex Street, Sarnia. He had an older brother Ross Norman (see below) and a younger brother Neil. Douglas was a member of Central United Church and of the Central Century Club, having played hockey, softball and basketball for the Club. He was a student of Sarnia

public schools and Sarnia Collegiate, active in a number of sports while there. He was a member of WOSSAA hockey and played basketball, rugby, and football while at Sarnia Collegiate. He was also a badminton star, having received a championship cup while playing at the local Armouries. After leaving high school, he was employed at the Imperial Oil Limited.

Douglas enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in August 1942. He received his training at Lachine and St Huberts, Quebec; Belleville; Oshawa; and the AOS at Malton. In mid-May and mid-June of 1943, Douglas and his brother Ross would spend two weekend leaves in Sarnia visiting with their parents Willard and Muriel Pole. He received his Navigator Wings and commission as Pilot Officer at Malton No. 1 Air Observer School on September 16, 1943. Two days following his graduation, Douglas would get married to Miss Ivy Mae Logan, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Logan of Sarnia Township on September 18, 1943 at St. George's Anglican Church. At the wedding ceremony, the bride was given in marriage by her brother, Bert Logan. The maid of honour was Miss Jacqueline Davison and Neil Pole, the brother of the groom, served as the best man. Following the ceremony, a reception was held at Dell's for fifty guests. Afterwards, the newlywed couple left for a wedding trip to points east.

Douglas left for overseas in October 1943. While he was overseas, his wife Ivy Mae Pole resided with her sister, Mrs. A.G. Knight, of 245 Stuart Street, Sarnia. In early November of 1943, Ivy Mae would receive a cable from her husband Douglas telling her of his safe arrival overseas. Douglas received his operational training in England and then became a member of RCAF #429 Bison squadron "Fortunae Nihil" (Nothing to chance). He was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer-Navigator while on operational duty in June of 1944. Also in June of 1944, Douglas would lose his brother, RCAF Flying Officer Ross Pole. In mid-June of 1944, parents Willard and Muriel Pole in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Ross Pole, was reported missing on June 13, after active operations over enemy territory*. No other details were given. Four months later, parents Willard and Muriel Pole would lose a second son, Douglas.

Between August 14 through September 21, 1944, Douglas Pole was in hospital with leg wounds he received on a flight when his bomber was hit by flak. He had only recently returned to active duty. One month after being released from hospital, on October 23, 1944, Douglas was a member of a crew aboard a Halifax aircraft MZ906 that failed to return from a night trip to Essen, Germany. In late October of 1944, parents Willard and Muriel Pole in Sarnia were advised by Squadron Leader Caufield of the St. Thomas R.C.A.F. station that their son, *Flying Officer Douglas Pole had been reported missing on October 23, presumably while on operations over enemy territory*. Douglas Pole would later officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Perishing with Douglas Pole were FS.s G.T. Hallam and L.J. Moore; F/O. N.C. Muir; P/O.s L.J. Innes and P.J. Mitchell; and Sgt. J.M. Wemyss (RAF). Twenty-one year old Douglas Pole has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 247. Douglas left behind Ivy Mae, his wife of just over one year. Willard and Muriel Pole lost their second son to war, having lost son Ross Pole of the RCAF four months earlier when his plane was shot down over France.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, S, 2C, 2D

### **POLE, Ross Norman (#J/28873)**

Ross Pole was born in Windsor, Ontario on September 24, 1920, the son of Willard Harford Pole (born in Strathroy, Ontario) and Muriel Grace (nee Proctor, born in Lambton County, Ontario) Pole, of 208 Essex Street, Sarnia. The Pole family moved to Sarnia when Ross was a young child. Ross had two younger brothers, Douglas Campbell (see above) and Neil. Ross was a member of both the Central United Church and of the Central Century Club and, after attending Sarnia's public schools, was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate. A couple of his achievements while at high school were being Field Day Champion and being the business manager of the High School magazine. Ross also attended the University of Western Ontario. Single at the time, Ross enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in February 1942. He graduated from UWO in May 1942 with an Honour Business Administration degree. Ross received his military training at Toronto, St. Catharines, Hagersville and the AOS at Crumlin. Ross received his Navigator wings and commission as Pilot Officer at Crumlin.

In mid-May and mid-June of 1943, Ross and his brother Douglas would spend two weekend leaves in Sarnia to visit their parents Willard and Muriel Pole. Ross would graduate in early August of 1943 from the Crumlin No. 1 Air Observers School, R.C.A.F., London, Ontario as an air navigator. Ross went overseas in September 1943,

receiving his operational training in England. He was assigned to be a member of RCAF #419 Moose Squadron "Moosa Aswayita" (Beware the moose), which comprised Lancaster bombers. Ross was also promoted to the rank of Flying Officer Navigator.

One week after the invasion of Europe, on June 13, 1944, Flying Officer-Navigator Ross Pole's Lancaster aircraft KB714 was shot down near Vourse Lette, France during a night raid against the marshalling yards at Cambrai, France, during the Battle of Normandy. This was Flying Officer Ross Pole's 5th operation. In mid-June of 1944, parents Willard and Muriel Pole in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Ross Pole, was reported missing on June 13, after active operations over enemy territory*. No other details were given. In mid-July of 1944, Flying Officer Ross Pole's name would appear on the Department of National Defence for Air casualty list as, *missing on active service after air operations overseas*. Ross Pole would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (France)*. Along with Ross Pole, also killed were Flying Officer's R.N. Wilson, C.R. McOrmond, D.J. McMullen, Pilot Officer's M.E. Gates, R.W. Francis, and Sgt. C.C. White. Twenty-three year old Ross Pole is buried in Meharicourt Communal Cemetery, Somme, France British Plot, Grave 38. Four months after Ross Pole's death, his parents Willard and Muriel Pole in Sarnia would receive news that they had lost another son, Flying Officer Douglas Pole of the RCAF, who was shot down over Germany.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, S, 2C, 2D

### **POWELL, Stephen Bruce (#3333) – Photograph page 392**

Stephen (Buster) Powell was born in Barrie, Ontario on January 23, 1922, the eldest son of Ernest John Powell (born in Waltham Abbey, Essex, England) and Cora Irene (nee Court, born in Woodstock, Ontario) Powell, of 433 Lydia Street, and later 462 Cromwell Street, Sarnia. The Powell family moved to Sarnia when Stephen was seven years old. Father Ernest was a local customs officer at the Blue Water Bridge who had served with the Canadian Forestry Corps in the Great War. Ernest was also on the board of directors of the Sarnia Branch No. 62, Canadian Legion. Stephen had one sister, Mary (born 1933), and three brothers: Allan John (born 1924); Robert Grant (born 1926); and Ernest James (born 1933, Mary's twin). Stephen was educated in Sarnia public schools and had completed a course in electricity at the Sarnia Collegiate. He was a member of the Servers' Club of St. George's Anglican Church, and he was active in much of the young people's work in the church. Stephen was originally a member of the 26th Lambton Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery, in Sarnia. Before the war started, in April of 1939, single at the time, Stephen joined the Royal Canadian Navy. He would later become a member of the crew of *HMCS Fraser* and later the *HMCS Margaree*, attaining the rank of Able-Bodied Seaman.

The *HMCS Fraser (H48)* was a C-class destroyer built for the Royal Navy launched in September 1931, originally named the *HMS Crescent*. In late 1936, it was sold to the Royal Canadian Navy and renamed the *HMCS Fraser*. Initially stationed on the Canadian west coast, with the outbreak of war, she was transferred to the Atlantic coast for convoy escort duties. On June 25, 1940, the *HMCS Fraser* was proceeding to Bordeaux, France to help in the rescue of an estimated 4000 refugees trapped in the area by German military forces. Stephen Powell was an Ordinary Seaman aboard the *Fraser*. Accompanying the *HMCS Fraser* was Canadian destroyer *HMCS Restigouche* and the British cruiser *HMS Calcutta*. On that date, at 10:30 pm, in rough seas and in poor visibility, the captain of the *Fraser* decided that the three ships should move closer together and ordered a turn to port to bring his ship behind *HMS Calcutta*. In doing so, the two ships collided, the bow of the heavier *Calcutta* sliced into the side of the lighter *Fraser*, cutting it into three pieces. Forty-five members of the *Fraser* crew and nineteen men on the *Calcutta* lost their lives. Many of the *Fraser* survivors were later transferred to duty aboard the *HMCS Margaree*, including Stephen Powell. In October 1940, only one month into her service as the *HMCS Margaree*, the ship would meet the same fate as the *Fraser*.

The *HMCS Margaree (H49)* was a D-class destroyer launched as the *HMS Diana* in June 1932, originally with the Royal Navy, where she spent most of her career as part of the Mediterranean Fleet. She was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy September 6, 1940 and renamed the *HMCS Margaree*, to serve as a River class destroyer. She was transferred to the RCN to replace the *HMCS Fraser*, the RCN C-class destroyer, which had been lost in a tragic accident.

Following the sinking of the *Fraser*, Stephen Powell took a course in anti-aircraft gunnery before he and a number of the *Fraser* survivors were detailed to the *Margaree*. They had a close call from death on one occasion

when the ship was bombed at a London dock, and a number of the crew killed. On October 17, 1940, the *HMCS Margaree* was escorting Convoy *OL8* bound for Canada. She was the sole escort for a small, fairly fast convoy of five ships heading for Halifax. On October 22, only two days at sea, while in the mid-Atlantic (450 miles northwest of Iceland), the *HMCS Margaree* was in a collision with a large freighter that she was escorting. Shortly after midnight, on a rough, squally night with poor visibility, as the *Margaree* veered to port, the freighter *MV Port Fairy* collided with her, sheering off the entire bow section of the *Margaree*. The *Margaree* bow sank instantly, taking 142 seamen to the bottom, 86 of them survivors of the *HMCS Fraser* collision just four months earlier. For Stephen Powell, this was the second sea disaster in which he had been involved.

No reason for the collision has ever been determined since all the officers who were in a position to know were in the bow. The thirty-four survivors were all aboard the aft section, which remained afloat until the men were rescued by the *Port Fairy* and dropped off at Bermuda. Ordinary Seaman Stephen Powell was one of the 142 who were lost in the tragedy. Although the official casualty list cited him as an Ordinary Seaman, he had received his Able Seaman papers while on the *Fraser*, but these records were lost with that ship. Stephen's parents Ernest and Cora in Sarnia were notified of the loss of their son by telegram from the minister of national defence for naval affairs, just prior to the release by the Canadian naval authorities of the public announcement of the sinking of the destroyer. A day later, they received a dispatch from Ottawa that drew attention to the fact that errors were possible in the naval list of survivors and the missing, owing to the difficulties of wireless communication at sea in wartime. The Powells hoped that their son had survived, but felt the chances were remote in view of the fact that only 31 survivors (at that time) were reported accounted for.

Stephen had been home the previous Christmas and, in two letters received by his parents days after learning of his death, Stephen had expressed the hope that he might get a trip home to Sarnia soon. It was indicated in despatches that many of the crew of the *Margaree* were looking forward to spending Christmas with their families. Able-Bodied Seaman Stephen Powell was the first casualty of the Second World War from Sarnia. A memorial service was held for the Stephen Bruce Powell one month after his death in St. George's Anglican Church, where he had been active in the organizations for the young people in the church. At the memorial service, Rev. F.G. Hardy said, "We will remember Stephen Bruce Powell because of his uprightness and splendid physical, mental and spiritual characteristics." After speaking of the fact that it is often the youngest and best who are taken from the world, Rev. Hardy quoted from "In Flanders Fields" and urged the congregation to hold the torch high and go out to establish God's Kingdom in society so that war might not happen again. Eighteen-year old Stephen Powell has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 4.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, P, T, U, X, 2A, 2C, 2D

#### **POWELL, Thomas Edward (#R/78675) – Photograph page 392**

Thomas Powell was born on April 21, 1918, the son of Edward Scott Powell (born in England) and Annie May (nee Dobbie, born in Halton, Ontario) Powell, of 218 Proctor Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Edward Powell was employed in the technical research department of Imperial Oil Limited for two years. After enlisting, his co-workers presented him with a wallet. Thomas, single at the time, enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He would receive his wings at the Moncton training school of the Royal Canadian Air Force in early September of 1941, where he stood seventh in the class of students.

Thomas became a member of RCAF #419 Moose squadron "Moosa Aswayita" (Beware the moose), attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class II-Pilot. One year after receiving his wings, on October 5, 1942, Thomas was part of a crew aboard a Wellington aircraft that was lost when severe icing conditions were encountered on the way to the target of Aachen, Germany. Weather conditions caused two other aircraft to go down and forced four aircraft to turn back. Perishing with Warrant Officer Class II-Pilot Thomas Powell were FS.s J.L. O'Grady, G.J. McElroy, and H. Broom; and P/O. F.L. Todd. In late October of 1942, father Edward Powell in Sarnia would receive information that his son Thomas was reported missing as the result of air operations. Months later in June of 1943, Thomas Powell would officially be listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-four year old Thomas Powell is buried in Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Netherlands, Coll grave 20.C.1-3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

*I AM THINKING TONIGHT OF THE PAST, DEAR SON.  
I PICTURE YOU IN MY MEMORY AS I SAW YOU LAST.*



**QUINN, James Edward (#R/90077) – Photograph page 393**

James Quinn was born in Sarnia General Hospital on December 6, 1921, the son of William Edward Quinn (born in Courtright, Ontario) and Marjorie Jean (nee Raeburn, born in Port Franks, Ontario) Quinn, of 364 Shepherd Street, Sarnia. James was part of a family of 10 children. His siblings included Dorothy Isabella (born 1913); Marjorie Jean (born 1916); David Gerald (born 1924); Maurice Allen (born 1929); and Mary Louise (born 1931), as well as three other sisters and one brother. James was a former student of a local public school and Sarnia Collegiate. He was at one time a carrier boy for the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* and had been employed at the Imperial Theatre for a year prior to his enlistment.

James Quinn was nineteen years old and single when he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in January of 1941. By the end of that month, he left Sarnia for the training base at Brandon, Manitoba. He continued his training in Calgary and received his badge in Paulson, Manitoba. In late November of 1941, he would spend a 10-day furlough with his parents and friends in Sarnia before celebrating his 20th birthday at an Eastern Canada base. James Quinn would become a member of #106 Squadron “Pro Libertate” (For freedom), with the rank of Warrant Officer Class II, Air Gunner.

James was stationed at Syerston, England. He was trained as a tail gunner in a Lancaster Bomber and flew 17 bombing missions. On January 13, 1943, his 17th mission, Warrant Officer II-Air Gunner James Quinn’s Lancaster aircraft W4261 was shot down over Dusseldorf, Germany on a bombing raid on Essen, Germany. Perishing with James Quinn were Warrant Officer’s M.A. Phair, R.C. Zavitz, and J. Aleo; and Pilot Officer D.H. Dewar. Two of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and presumed killed.

Not long after the crash, parents William and Marjorie Quinn in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. casualty officer informing them that their son, *WO James Edward Quinn was reported missing after air operations*. He had been reported missing a few days after British and Canadian air forces staged a devastating raid on Essen, Germany. Several days later, William and Marjorie would receive another telegram from the casualties officer of the R.C.A.F. in Ottawa with a message that the International Red Cross Society received information from German sources indicating that Flight Sergeant Quinn had been killed in the Essen raid. German information had stated that Flt. Sgt. Quinn was shot down over Essen, January 13 and was buried at Military Burial Field in North Dusseldorf, Germany, on January 18. The R.C.A.F. casualty officer said that further information would follow in a letter. After a time when no further information was received, William and Marjorie Quinn continued to live in hope that their son James was still alive, that he may have escaped and was confined as a prisoner of war in Germany. Later, William and Marjorie Quinn would receive a telegram informing them that their son James was, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*.

In a collection of letters written by James Quinn to his father, before the young airman was reported killed, James indicated that he took part in almost 30 raids over enemy territory and was slated for furlough to Canada soon. In letters home he described raids over Italy and Germany, including the 1,000-plane raid which blasted the historic city of Cologne.

Twenty-one year old James Quinn was buried in the Military Cemetery at Dusseldorf, and then exhumed and reburied in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Germany, Grave 8.G.13. In mid-November of 1944, parents William and Marjorie Quinn in Sarnia would receive word that their son James Edward was promoted from flight sergeant to warrant officer in the autumn of 1942. In March 1946, James Quinn was awarded posthumously the decoration, “Mention in Dispatches”. It was reported that, *The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of Mentions in Dispatches, in recognition of gallant and distinguished services*. Quinn Drive in Sarnia was named in his memory.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D, e

**RAMESBOTTOM, Edward (#A/2858)**

Edward Ramesbottom was born in Byng Inlet, Parry Sound, Ontario on March 25, 1888, the son of Jonathon Ramesbottom (born in Weston, Ontario) and Mary Jane (nee Pelow, born in Algoma, Ontario) Ramesbottom. Edward had eleven siblings. They included Robert (born 1875); John (born 1876); James (born 1878); Mary-Margaret (born 1881); Francis Percy (born 1888); Leah (born 1891); William Harvey (born 1892); Earl (born 1896); Lola Elizabeth (born 1898); Gertrude (born 1900) and Lance (born 1905). Edward at 23 years of age would lose his

father, Jonathan, to heart disease in March of 1911.

Twenty-nine year old Edward would marry on September 29, 1913 in Kenora, Ontario where he was living at the time. His wife was twenty-three year old Marion Hutchinson, born in Southport, England, but living in Ottawa, the daughter of Frank and Annie (nee Heslop) Hutchinson. The couple would end up residing at 150 Talfourd Street, Sarnia.

Edward and Marion would have a son together, John Edward, who was born in Buffalo, but would become a long-time resident of Sarnia. The Ramesbottom family would reside at 150 Talfourd street. Like his father, John Edward would also be employed for a time on Great Lakes ships. Son John Edward would years later join the Royal Canadian Navy, attaining the rank of Chief Stoker. In October of 1940, Petty Officer John Edward Ramesbottom was transferred from *HMCS St. Francis* to *HMS Eyebright*. So for a time, both father Edward and his son John Edward would be serving in the Royal Canadian Navy at the same time.

Prior to enlistment, Edward Ramesbottom was employed as a marine engineer on a Standard Oil tanker, and previous to that, he had been on the *SS Maplecourt*, which operated out of Sarnia for a time. The *SS Maplecourt* was well known in this city; it was owned by United Towing and Salvage Company Limited which had a branch in Sarnia. In May of 1940, the 3,388 ton steam merchant vessel left Sarnia for overseas service. In early February of 1941, on its way from Montreal to Preston, England, it was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine in the North Atlantic. Her entire crew of 37 were lost. Though none of the crew on board were from Sarnia, the attack on the *Maplecourt* made big news in Sarnia.

Edward Ramesbottom joined the Navy, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve, and he would be in the navy for 2 ½ years, at sea all that time. His last post was as Chief Engine Room Artificer, Third class, aboard the *HMCS Moonbeam*. The *Moonbeam* had formerly been the Department of Transport Hopper Barge No. 1. The Royal Canadian Navy acquired two Department of Transport hopper barges in December 1940, converting them to fuel oil carriers, commissioning them *HMCS Moonbeam* and *HMCS Sunbeam*. Based out of Halifax, they were to carry fuel oil for use on the east coast and at St. John's, Newfoundland. After the war in 1946, the *HMCS Moonbeam* would be sold, becoming the *Oakbranch*, and later in 1960, it became the *B.L.L. 24*.

On December 25, 1942, fifty-four year old Edward Ramesbottom died of natural causes in St. John's, Newfoundland. Only days later, his wife Marion Ramesbottom in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband Edward had died suddenly. No particulars were given of the circumstances of his death, but the message stated that a letter would follow. When the message was received, their son John Edward of the R.C.N. was home in Sarnia on convalescent leave as the result of an injured hand. Edward Ramesbottom is buried in Forest Road Anglican Cemetery, St. John's, Newfoundland, Plot 24 Section D, Grave 25. On Edward Ramesbottom's headstone are inscribed the words, *Sadly missed by wife and son. Rest in Peace.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, U, X, 2C, 2D

### **RAMSAY, Melvin Henry (#J/9904)**

Melvin Ramsay was born in Sarnia on April 1, 1914, the son of Percival Earl Ramsay (born in Wanstead, Ontario) and Jean Frances (nee Burr, born in Wanstead, Ontario) Ramsay, of 147 Kathleen Street, and later 294 Mitton Street, Sarnia. His parents, Percy and Jean, were married on September 14, 1919, in Wyoming, Ontario. Father Percy Ramsay's occupation was a C.N.R. locomotive fireman and when Melvin was three years old, his father was killed tragically in a railway collision east of Hamilton. Melvin had an older brother, Robert Drummond (see below), who was to become a major in the Canadian Army and who would lose his life while serving. He also had two sisters: Dorothy Jean (born 1915), who would become Mrs. Allan Douglas, of London, Ontario; and Marion Earline Ramsay (born 1918), who would become a teacher at Johnston Memorial School.

Melvin was a native of Sarnia, educated at Lochiel Street School and at Sarnia Collegiate. While at Sarnia Collegiate, he was president of the Debating Club shortly after its inception, which won the WOSSA Championship in 1933-34. When he graduated from high school in 1934, he was second in command of the Collegiate Cadet Corps. He later he became president of the Alexander MacKenzie Club, an organization of young liberals interested in politics. Prior to enlisting, Melvin was a promising young lawyer. He articulated as a student-at-law with the firm Pardee, Gurd, Fuller and Taylor, and afterward, he attended Osgoode Hall, Toronto, for three years where he graduated with Honours in law in 1939. While at Osgoode, he was also the president of the Gladstone Liberal Club.

Melvin was called to the bar on September 21, 1939. He then joined the staff of the same law firm and continued with it until he enlisted.

Melvin enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on February 18, 1940. He received training at various RCAF training centres including Toronto, Trenton, Dauphin, Manitoba, and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He was sent to No. 5 AOS at Winnipeg, Manitoba, and in January 1942 he won the A.W. Starrett Memorial Award for Proficiency in Navigation, and won his Observer Wings and commission as Pilot Officer. Afterward, he took an advanced navigation course at Charlottetown, P.E.I. and Dorval, Quebec. Being attached to the R.A.F. Ferry Command at Dorval, he made his first trip to England in July 1942. In August of 1942, he had been flying new bombers across the Atlantic and had met up with his brother Robert in England. On October 10, 1943, Melvin attained the rank of Flying Officer-Navigator, as a member of RCAF #45 Delivery Group. He flew to many parts of the world as a member of the RAF transport command for two years.

In early November of 1942, Melvin would marry Dorothy Lorraine Ramsay (nee Britton, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Britton), of London, Ontario, formerly of Sarnia. Melvin and his wife Dorothy would live in Montreal while Melvin was attached to the Ferry Command in that city. Melvin was able to visit his family and friends in Sarnia only months before his death. Also just prior to Melvin's death, his wife Dorothy had already joined her parents at their home in London, Ontario. She was there to celebrate Melvin's upcoming homecoming.

On December 18, 1943, he was making his final trip in a Mitchell aircraft before taking his Christmas leave. At the end of the flight, Flying Officer-Navigator Melvin Ramsay's Mitchell aircraft dove into marshy ground two miles north-west of the airfield at Reykjavik, Iceland. Several days later, mother Mrs. Jean Ramsay in Sarnia would receive an official telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Flying Officer Melvin H. Ramsay was reported missing while flying from Canada to England as a member of the R.A.F. ferry command.* One day later, Melvin's wife Dorothy Ramsay, residing in London, Ontario at the time, would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her husband, *Melvin Ramsay, has been officially reported killed, and that the bomber in which he was flying and the bodies of the crew, have been found where they crashed in Iceland on December 18.*

Perishing with Melvin Ramsay was Captain W.V. Walker of Ingersoll and another occupant. Melvin Ramsay would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (Iceland).* Melvin died three years to the day he enlisted in the air force and twenty-five years to the day after the death of his father Percy in a tragic accident. Twenty-nine year old Melvin Ramsay is buried in Reykjavik (Fossvogur) Cemetery, Iceland, Grave C48.6.

At the time of Melvin's death, his mother Jean was residing at 147 Kathleen Avenue, Sarnia. Eight months after Melvin's death, Mrs. Jean Ramsay would lose her second son, Major Robert Ramsay, who was killed while serving with the Canadian Army in France. In November of 1944, Mrs. Jean Ramsay offered a Sarnia Collegiate Institute scholarship in memory of her two sons who lost their lives in the war. The Sarnia Board of Education gratefully accepted the gift of \$50, to be an annual scholarship in memory Robert and Melvin Ramsay. Both young men had graduated from the Collegiate Institute and both had belonged to the Central United Church. Mrs. Ramsay expressed that she would like the annual gift to be awarded to the boy attaining the highest standing in any nine Sarnia Collegiate departmental exams.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, S, 2C, 2D

### **RAMSAY, Robert Drummond**

Robert Ramsay was born in Sarnia on March 20, 1912, the son of Percival Earl Ramsay (born in Wanstead, Ontario) and Jean Frances (nee Burr, born in Wanstead, Ontario) Ramsay, of 147 Kathleen Street, and later 294 Mitton Street, Sarnia. His parents, Percy and Jean, were married on September 14, 1919, in Wyoming, Ontario. Father Percy Ramsay's occupation was a C.N.R. locomotive fireman and when Robert was five years old, his father was killed tragically in a railway collision east of Hamilton. Robert had a younger brother Melvin Henry (see above), who was to become a flying officer-navigator in the Royal Canadian Air Force and who would lose his life while serving. He also had two sisters: Dorothy Jean (born 1915), who would become Mrs. Allan Douglas, of London, Ontario; and Marion Earline Ramsay (born 1918), who would become a teacher at Johnston Memorial School.

Robert Ramsay was educated in Sarnia at Lochiel Street School and at Sarnia Collegiate. He then worked at Imperial Oil Limited for four years. In 1934, he attended Queen's University at Kingston where he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree, graduating as a Mechanical Engineer in 1938. Robert took a position with the Canadian

General Electric Company in Peterborough and was employed there for two years.

Residing in Peterborough, Ontario and single at the time, Robert enlisted in the Canadian Army in April 1940. He became a lieutenant in the 4th Battery stationed at Petawawa. After training at Ottawa for a short time he went overseas in June 1940, becoming an adjutant to No. 1 Holding Unit. While on the staff of the 1st Canadian Army, he was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1942. In August of 1942, he was able to visit with his brother Melvin while in England. Robert "Bob" was sent back to England and there attended Camberley Military College. Standing highest among the Canadians, he received first class honours while at this college in September 1943 and was promoted to the rank of Major. He became Chief of Staff to the Commander of the Royal Canadian Artillery attd. H.Q. 2nd Canadian Division.

Robert arrived in France in early July of 1944. Not long after, on August 31, 1944, Robert Ramsay would lose his life during fighting in Rouen, France, in the late stages of the Battle of Normandy. In early September of 1944, mother Jean Ramsay in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Major Robert Ramsay was killed in action in France on August 31*. Beyond the fact that her son went to France early in July, Jean Ramsay had no further indication of where he might have met his death. Robert Ramsay would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*.

Major Robert Ramsey was awarded posthumously the decoration: Mention in Dispatches, as stated, *The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of Mentions in Dispatches in recognition of gallant and distinguished services*. Thirty-two year old Robert Ramsay is buried in Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, France, Grave 8.C.7. On Robert Ramsay's headstone are inscribed the words, *They shall receive a glorious kingdom*.

At the time of Robert's death, his mother Jean was residing at 147 Kathleen Avenue, Sarnia. Eight months prior to Robert's death, his mother Mrs. Jean Ramsay had lost her first son, RCAF Flying Officer Melvin Ramsay, who was killed in a flying accident in Iceland. In November of 1944, Mrs. Jean Ramsay offered a Sarnia Collegiate Institute scholarship in memory of her two sons who lost their lives in the war. The Sarnia Board of Education gratefully accepted the gift of \$50, to be an annual scholarship in memory Robert and Melvin Ramsay. Both young men had graduated from the Collegiate Institute and both had belonged to the Central United Church. Mrs. Ramsay expressed that she would like the annual gift to be awarded to the boy attaining the highest standing in any nine Sarnia Collegiate departmental exams.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

### **RICHARDS, Charles Valentine (#A/20124)**

Charles Valentine Richards was born on September 12, 1915, the son of William Richards, of 152 John Street, Sarnia. Charles was a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate. He was very active in the work of St. John's Anglican Church, Devine Street, being secretary of the Sunday school for some years and being an active member of the Dramatic Club. Charles was also an active member of the old Sarnia Drama League in its heyday before the war. Prior to the war, he was a member of the local engineers unit and was employed for several years at Imperial Oil as a laboratory assistant.

Charles Richards was a member of the Sarnia engineers unit for some years before the outbreak of war. Single at the time, Charles enlisted for active service in the Canadian Army on the first day of mobilization. After training in Canada, he went overseas in August of 1940 with the Canadian Army. He served in England until the fall of 1942, when he returned home and then served as an instructor at Chilliwack, British Columbia for some months. He returned to England in August 1943, as a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, 11th Field Company, and went to France with an advanced party immediately following D-Day in June 1944. After that time, he served in the European war theatre, having been with his unit in France, Holland, Belgium and Germany.

On March 18, 1945, Sergeant Charles Valentine Richards would lose his life while fighting in Germany, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. In late March of 1945, father William Richards in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing him that his son, *Sergt. Charles Valentine Richards, 11th Field Company R.C.E., has been killed in action*. No other information was provided. Almost two months after Charles Richards death, the war in Europe would end. Charles Richards would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Germany)*. In late March of 1945, a short memorial service for Charles Richards was held during the

*IN THE BITTER HAIL OF GUNFIRE HE FELL IN THIS PLACE,  
THINKING OF HIS MOTHER AND GOD.*

regular evening service at St. John's Church, Devine Street, Sarnia. Twenty-nine year old Charles Valentine Richards is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave V.D.11.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **RIDDOCH, George (#R/259938)**

George Riddoch was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland on August 19, 1924, the second son of Andrew Riddoch and Georgina (nee Harrison) Riddoch. Both parents, Andrew and Georgina, were born in Aberdeen, Scotland. The Riddoch family arrived in Canada on May 31, 1925, when George was less than one year old. They arrived from Glasgow, Scotland aboard the passenger ship *Letitia*, landing at a port in Quebec. Father Andrew listed his occupation as a farmer, and the family moved to 187 Cobden Street, Sarnia. Besides George, the Riddoch family consisted of four brothers--who at wartime were John, Gilbert Harrison (born 1931), and Robert all residing in Sarnia and Andrew (born 1899) in Simcoe--along with two sisters: Elsie (became Mrs. Chalmers) of Sarnia and Jessie, who became a Corporal with the RCAF in Toronto. George received his education in the Sarnia schools and prior to enlisting, worked at Kirk's Service Station on the corner of Russell and Wellington Streets.

Single at the time, George enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on August 16, 1943 in London, Ontario, just days before his 19th birthday. He would graduate as a Sergeant-Air Gunner at Mont Joli, Quebec on February 24, 1944. Nine months after enlisting, he would go overseas in May 1944, as a member of RCAF #1659 Heavy Conversion Unit, attaining the rank of Sergeant-Air Gunner. Only five months after arriving overseas, on October 22, 1944, George Riddoch was part of a crew aboard a Halifax Mark V Bomber (LL505) that was on a night navigation exercise from Topcliffe in Yorkshire, England. The bomber ran into thick cloud, lost its bearings and crashed into a hillside of Carris Hill, burning and disintegrating on impact near Haverigg, Cumberland, England. Carris Hill was near RAF Station Millom, Cumberland, Scotland.

In late October 1944, parents Andrew and Georgina Riddoch in Sarnia would receive a telegram from the casualty officer at Ottawa informing them that their son, *Sergeant George Riddoch, had been killed on active service on October 22*. No other details were given. Parents Andrew and Georgina presumed that their son was killed in an accident. In a letter which they had received the previous week from their son, George told them of flying in a Halifax bomber and intimated that he had not completed his training.

In early November of 1944, parents Andrew and Georgina Riddoch in Sarnia would receive the particulars of the flying accident in Britain which cost the life of their son George. In a letter written by Air Vice Marshall J.A. Sully, he confirmed, with regret, that the Sarnia boy had been killed on active service. He revealed that George Riddoch was a member of the crew in an R.C.A.F. plane which crashed into a hillside near Millon, Cumberland county, England, during flying operations. The R.C.A.F. Officer stated,

*I realize that this news has been a great shock to you and I offer you my deepest sympathy. May the same spirit which prompted your son to offer his life give you courage. You may be assured that any further information received will be communicated to you immediately.*

In the same week they received the above letter from Marshall Sully, the Riddoch parents also received a letter from their son George, dated October 20, and posted the next day, only 24 hours before he flew on the fatal mission. In it, George referred to mail from home, and spoke of plans for Christmas and difficulties he was experiencing in finding suitable presents for his relatives. He closed with the observation that it was about ten minutes to 10 p.m. and time for him to be heading for bed and a final line, "Oh, I lead a good life now. So-long for now."

George Riddoch would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (England)*. Perishing with George Riddoch, also killed were F/O.s R.N. Whitley and J.A. Johnston; P/O. F.A. Bell; Sgt.s C.G. Whittingstall, H.E. Pyche, and D.F. Titt; and one of the crew, not Canadian. A permanent memorial to the crew is set up at the crash site, where eight crew members died. George Riddoch's funeral was held on October 28, 1944 at the R.A.F. Regional Cemetery in Cheshire, England. At the same time, a private service was held at the home of his parents on Cobden Street, Sarnia, for relatives and close friends. Rev. James Milroy of Rogers Memorial Presbyterian Church, Toronto and the Rev. Charles E. Ficher of Corunna conducted the service. George Riddoch's citations include: Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp, War Medal 1939-1945. Twenty

year-old George Riddoch is buried in Chester (Blacon) Cemetery, Cheshire, United Kingdom, Section A, Grave 1028.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **RIGBY, Robert Charles (#V/41295)**

Robert Rigby was born in St. Andrew's, New Brunswick on April 3, 1915, the son of Robert D. Rigby and Charlotte Elvada (nee Worrell) Rigby. Both his parents, Robert D. and Charlotte, were born in New Brunswick. The family would later move to Sarnia, where father Robert Senior was employed by Anglin-Norcross Ontario Limited. Sometime in 1942, Robert's mother Charlotte passed away. Robert Charles Rigby, single at the time, and recording his occupation as a hardware salesman, enlisted in Toronto on July 2, 1942 with the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. He would serve with the RCNV as Ordinary Telegraphist aboard the Canadian destroyer *HMCS St. Croix*.

The Canadian destroyer *HMCS St. Croix (181)* operated in the North Atlantic. Aboard the same ship from the Sarnia-Lambton area were Coder Joseph Griffiths Bell of Sarnia and Stoker Second class William Norman Roder of Arkona. The *St. Croix* was one of the "four-stacker" destroyers acquired by Great Britain from the United States Navy in September 1940, in exchange for sites for air and naval bases on British territory in the Atlantic area (she was formerly the *U.S.S. McCook*). The *St. Croix* and six other destroyers transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy at the time were manned immediately by Canadian crews and performed invaluable service on Atlantic convoy duty. Of note, one of those transferred destroyers was the *St. Clair*. The *HMCS St. Croix* had distinguished herself in the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic, by patrolling for German submarines, by being credited with two U-boat kills and by picking up many survivors of German U-boat attacks on Allied ships. On September 20, 1943, the *St. Croix* was to be the first of the destroyers to be lost. Not long prior to the sinking of the *St. Croix*, Robert was home in Sarnia on leave to visit his father and friends.

In mid-September of 1943, the Allies had a plan to merge two convoys (ONS-18 and ON-202), a combined assemblage of 63 merchant ships, in mid-ocean. A newly formed Canadian support group was on its way to reinforce the slower ONS-18 group, located to the south of Iceland. The Canadian escort group included the British frigate *Itchen*, corvettes *Chambly*, *Morden* and *Sackville*, along with the destroyers *St. Francis* and *St. Croix*. As the convoys closed their gap, the escorts were picking up U-boat signals. Undoubtedly, the U-boats were gathering in large numbers and the wolf pack was maneuvering into position for a night attack. They were about to measure the success of their newest "secret weapon", the Gnat torpedo, an acoustic torpedo that homed in on the propellers of its prey.

On the night of September 20, 1943, the *St. Croix* had detached herself from the support group to investigate an aircraft sighting. At 9:51 pm, the German U-boat *U-305* struck the *HMCS St. Croix* with two Gnat torpedoes near her propellers. The ship listed immediately and uncontrollably. To *Itchen*, a few miles away, she sent the cryptic message, "*Am leaving the office.*" It was the last word from *St. Croix*. Seconds later, a third electrically directed torpedo, the final blow, hit the stern of the *St. Croix*. There was a tremendous explosion, flames shot into the air, and within three minutes, the *St. Croix* was gone.

Two RN ships from the escort force rushed to the area, to see what had taken place and what could be done. The frigate *HMS Itchen* signaled; "*St. Croix torpedoed and blown up. Forecastle still afloat. Survivors in rafts and boats. Torpedoes fired at me. Doing full speed in vicinity. Will not attempt to P.U. survivors until Polyanthus arrives.*" But the RN corvette *Polyanthus* was herself torpedoed by *U-952* just after midnight. *Itchen* then had to become involved in attempting to locate the attacking U-boat. Later, in the foggy daylight of September 21, the *Itchen* was eventually able to pick up one *Polyanthus* survivor and 81 *St. Croix* survivors, but only after they had been in the very cold water for thirteen hours. Most of those lost had perished in the sea after abandoning the ship.

The few hours of rescue came to an ironic and bitter end two days later. On September 23, 1943 at approximately 2:00 am the German U-boat *U-666*, using a Gnat torpedo, struck the *HMS Itchen*. The *Itchen* exploded with an ear-splitting roar, then vanished into the sea. This time, there were only three survivors, two from the *Itchen* and one from the *St. Croix*, Stoker W.A. Fisher of Black Diamond, Alberta. In total, 147 lives were lost from the *St. Croix*, including Ordinary Telegraphist Robert Rigby.

It was not until October 1, 1943 that the Honourable Angus L. MacDonald, the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services officially announced the sinking of the destroyer *St. Croix*. No details of the sinking were released, other than the list of names of 147 men who lost their lives, which included Stoker Second class William

Norman Roder of Arkona, Sarnians Coder Joseph Griffiths Bell (included in this Project), and Ordinary Telegraphist Robert Charles Rigby.

The sinking of the *St. Croix* was the heaviest single loss suffered by the Royal Canadian Navy in the war. Twenty-eight year old Robert Charles Rigby has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 10.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, N, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

**ROBERTS, Maurice James (#A/28520)**

Maurice Roberts was born in Toronto, Ontario on June 16, 1920, the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Roberts, of 176 ½ Front Street, Sarnia. Single at the time of his enlistment, and recording his occupation as grocery clerk, Maurice joined the Canadian Army. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery 3 Anti-Tank Regiment, with the rank of Bombardier. On May 13, 1944, Maurice would lose his life in Romsey, Hampshire, England. Maurice Roberts would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, accident, crushed by a motor carrier vehicle when it left the highway and rolled down an embankment. Cause of death was loss of blood and shock from internal injuries (England)*. Twenty-three year old Maurice Roberts is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 49.B.3.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

**ROGERS, William John (#J/10753)**

William Rogers was born on November 1, 1918 in Galt, Ontario, the son of Anson Percival Rogers (born in Waterloo, Ontario) and Ethel (nee St.Clair) Rogers, of Coaticook, Quebec. William had one sister, Helen Margaret, born in Galt, Ontario in 1914. Unfortunately, William would lose his sister in September 1926 when she died at the age of 12. Before enlisting in the military, William obtained his Bachelor of Science degree at Bishop University, Lennoxville, Quebec, and a Master of Arts degree at the University of Toronto. He was then with the Technical and Research Department of Imperial Oil Limited Refinery, Sarnia.

William enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in July 1941. He trained at the School of Reconnaissance, Squires Gate, England, attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Pilot. On January 22, 1944, William was a part of a crew aboard RCAF Anson aircraft #EG321 that crashed at Warton, Lancashire, England. Along with Flying Officer-Pilot William Rogers, two airmen, not Canadians were also killed. Bad weather was believed to be the cause of the crash. Twenty-five year old William Rogers is buried in Chester (Blacon) Cemetery, Cheshire, United Kingdom, Section A, Grave 946.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, L, M, O, 2C, 2D

**ROSS, Douglas Alexander (#R/176649)**

Douglas Ross was born on December 9, 1914, in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Ross. Douglas joined the Royal Canadian Air Force, becoming a member of RCAF #218 Gold Coast squadron "In Time", attaining the rank of Sergeant-Air Gunner. In mid-June of 1943, Douglas would spend a short time on leave visiting his parents on Emma Street in Sarnia. A little over two months later, Douglas would lose his life overseas. On August 28, 1943, Douglas was a member of a crew aboard Stirling aircraft EF448 that went missing during night operations against Nuremburg, Germany. Along with Sergeant -Air Gunner Douglas Ross, also killed was FS. Daniel J. Mullen and three of the crew, not Canadians. Two of the crew, not Canadians, were taken Prisoners Of War. Twenty-eight year old Douglas Ross is buried in Rheinberg War Cemetery, Germany, Coll. grave 9.G.21-25.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, 2C

**ROSS, John Douglas Carlisle (#J/41679)**

John Douglas Ross was born on September 1, 1923, the son of John James Ross and Martha Anne (nee Maxwell) Ross, of 252 Emma Street, Sarnia. Both parents, John James and Martha Anne, were originally from England. John had a sister, Jean, who would also serve, joining the forces in July of 1942 as a member of Canadian Women's Army Corps. She would go overseas on the same transport as her brother. John Douglas was single at the time he enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in February of 1943. He went overseas one year later in February 1944, and received promotion to the rank of flying officer in October of 1944. He would become a member of RCAF #426 Thunderbird squadron "On Wings of Fire", attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Navigator.

On April 25, 1945, John Douglas Ross was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft NP820 that was over the sea when it was in a mid-air collision with a #408 squadron aircraft. They were about one hour from the target of Wangerooge, Germany. Perishing with Flying Officer-Navigator John Douglas Ross were P/O.s Stanley J. Teskey (of Sarnia), J.C. Tuplin, D.R. Curzon and E.W. Hicks; Sgt. R. Roberts (RAF); and one other RAF member of the crew. This was the last operation of the war for the #426 Squadron. The collision was seen by F/L. Allan Ross of #408 Squadron. Two weeks after John Ross' death, the war in Europe would end. John Douglas Ross would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Twenty-one year old John Douglas Ross has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 279.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **RUSSELL, Ernest Frederick (#A/57044)**

Ernest "Ernie" Russell was born on September 12, 1919, the son of James Ernest Russell (born in Providence, Rhode Island) and Annie May (nee Benstead, born in Deep St. Nicholas, England) Russell, of 240 Essex Street, Sarnia. Ernest had seven sisters and two brothers. His sisters included Marion Marguerite (born 1907); Grace Adeline (born 1909); Agness Jean (born 1910); Lillian Loreen (born 1913); Helen (born 1915); and Anna (born 1920). At the time of Ernest's death, many of his sisters were married and residing in Sarnia, and were now named: Mrs. Joseph Simmons, Mrs. Ivan Wise, Mrs. Frederick Gray, Mrs. Maurice Edginton, Mrs. Orville Whitsitt, Miss Anna Russell, and Mrs. Robert Doyon who lived in Collingwood. His brothers were Joseph William (born 1906) and James (born October 1917).

Brother James Russell enlisted in Sarnia in September of 1939, three days after the outbreak of war with the 26th Battery. James would marry Kathleen Russell (nee Pascoe, of Camlachie) who would serve as a WREN stationed at Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. James would go overseas in September of 1940. At the time of Ernest's death, James was a Sergeant in the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Artillery, 26th Battery in France. He was wounded once and also served in Germany. He would return to Sarnia on furlough in May of 1945 after five years of overseas service.

Raised and educated in Sarnia, Ernest attended Central United Church and after leaving school, he went to Kirkland Lake where he worked for two years in the plumbing trade. Ernest was well known in local rugby and bowling league circles in Sarnia, as he played City League rugby and was one of the best bowlers that the city had ever produced. Prior to enlisting, he was assistant manager of the National Bowling Alley and was employed by Electric Auto-Lite Limited, as a machine operator. Single at the time, Ernest enlisted in the Canadian Army in London, Ontario in June 1941. He became a member of the 62nd Light Anti-Aircraft Battery. Ernest went overseas in July of 1942 and trained in England for close to two years. While training in England, he won the tabloid sports championship medal in 1943. Ernest would arrive in France in June of 1944.

Only three months after arriving in France and just five days before his birthday, on September 7, 1944, Gunner Ernest Russell, as part of the 8th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, would lose his life during fighting, on the border of France and Holland. In mid-September of 1944 parents James and Annie Russell in Sarnia would receive a telegram informing them that their son, *Gunner Ernest Frederick Russell was reported killed in action in France on September 7*. On that same day, they would receive another telegram informing them that their son, *Sgt. James Russell was wounded August 23 while in France with the artillery unit*.

Ernest Russell would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (France)*. Their twenty-four year old son Ernest Russell is buried Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, Pas de Calais, France, Grave 4.A.11. On Ernest Russell's headstone are inscribed the words, *Asleep in Jesus*.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

### **SCHILDKNECHT, Arnold Charles**

Arnold Schildknecht was born around 1915, the son of Mrs. Grace Martell of Port Franks, Ontario. His grandfather was Charles J.H. Smith, and his Uncle Hubert H. and Aunt Agnes M. all lived in Port Franks. His brother was Henry Schildknecht, who during the war, served aboard the *SS Calgarian*. Arnold's half-brother was James Martell. Arnold attended Sarnia Collegiate from 1927-1930. At wartime, recording his occupation as a labourer and residence as Port Franks, he joined the Canadian Merchant Navy. He would later serve aboard the *SS Indier*



(Belgium) as Able Seaman. The ship was a steam transport carrier of 5409 tonnes completed in August 1918 as British War Redcap for Shipping Controller. In 1919, it was transferred to a company based out of Antwerp, Belgium, and renamed the *SS Indier*, a WWI B-class standard cargo ship.

In April of 1941, the *SS Indier* was en route from Philadelphia, New York, Halifax to Glasgow, with a cargo of 6300 tons of steel and general cargo, part of convoy SC-26. In the mid-Atlantic, south-southwest of Iceland, on April 3, 1941, at 5:08 am, German U-boat *U-73* hit the British steam cargo ship *SS Westpool* in the convoy with one torpedo. One minute later, the U-boat missed a presumed armed merchant carrier with another torpedo. The *SS Westpool* sank in less than one minute. Thirty-five of a crew of forty-five aboard the *Westpool* were lost. At 5:12 am, *U-73* fired a third torpedo, which struck the *Indier* under the bridge, causing the ship to sink within one minute over the bow. Forty-two of the *Indier* crew were lost. Four survivors were picked up and landed at Liverpool. Arnold Schildknecht was one of the crew of the *Indier* lost at sea. Twenty-six year old Arnold Schildknecht has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 19. Arnold Schildknecht's name is also inscribed on the Thedford cenotaph in the Village of Thedford.

SOURCES: C, D, E, G, L, N, P, 2C, 2D

### **SHANKS, James Roger (#J/14860)**

James (Jimmy) Shanks was born on February 9, 1918, the son of James Harrison Shanks and Christina T. Shanks, of 125 Cameron Street, Sarnia. He had one sister, Betty Gene. His father J. Harrison Shanks was in the contracting business and, prominent in sports activities, was president of the Midget-Juvenile Baseball League. James Shanks was educated in Sarnia and was active in baseball, hockey and basketball. James played quarterback for the Sarnia Collegiate football team the year it won the WOSSAA championship. James Shanks was an outstanding quarterback and halfback for the Sarnia Imperial Football Club in the late 1930s, and an all-Canadian selectee in pre-war competition. He was also coach of the Sarnia Junior O.B.A. team that won a provincial baseball title, and he was the catcher for Sarnia's senior M.O. baseball team. One year, he coached teams of Scollard Hall, North Bay, to a Northern Ontario football championship and a dominion interscholastic hockey title. Active in so many local sports, James Shanks was described as, "A hard, clean player, he was the kind of chap athletes liked to compete with or against. Always gentlemanly and clean in sports endeavors, he nevertheless was an aggressive player with the true fighting heart of a great athlete."

Prior to enlistment, James was employed with the Research Department laboratory at the Sarnia Imperial Oil Limited Refinery. James Shanks enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force on November 26, 1940. He then spent some time at the Manning Pool and was later transferred to St. Thomas. From there, James went to the Eglington Hunt Club training camp and then was assigned to the Goderich airfield. He would receive his wings as a pilot at Camp Borden on August 20, 1941. His parents attended the ceremonies and saw the presentation of the coveted wings to their son. During training, James starred as a baseball player with the Camp Borden Fliers team who won the district honors from the Trenton Air Base Nine. Pilot Officer-Pilot James Shanks became an instructor at RCAF Station, Rockcliffe, Ontario for several months.

On September 13, 1942, James Shanks was one of four RCAF men who lost their lives when two training planes collided in mid-air, five miles west of Richmond, Ontario. His parents would receive the news of their son's death the next day in Sarnia. James Shanks was in the slower Oxford aircraft #BG297, which collided with a speedy Harvard trainer aircraft #3106. Perishing with Pilot Office-Pilot James Shanks in the Oxford aircraft were Sgt. S.V. Patterson and LAC. F. Rash. Pilot Officer C.E. Cuisson of Quebec managed to parachute to safety. Killed in the Harvard was LAC Walter K. Dean. In the investigation later, officials asserted that had Pilot Officer James Shanks not elected to "stick with the ship", in the hope of landing it and thereby saving the life of a student flier, he might have saved his own life by parachuting.

Squadron leader Doug Macklin arrived in Sarnia to assist the family in making the funeral arrangements. He said, "James was to have been recommended for a commission. He was exceptionally popular and a splendid instructor. It was the first accident of the kind my men have had." James was accorded full military honors at his funeral held from a packed St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Sarnia and a graveside service attended by an estimated crowd of 1,000 people. Among those in attendance were several members of the Imperial football teams of other years. The ceremony included a 26-piece band, a firing party of 14, an escort and attending party of 50. At the church service, Reverend Dr. Macgillivray expressed his sympathy to the parents and relatives and said that the death

of Warrant Officer Shanks, "would strengthen our resolve to see this thing through to victory." He added, "Jimmy Shanks was one of the finest lads I ever knew. He lived a clean life and played hard, yet fair and never violated the rules of sportsmanship. He was straightforward, modest and highly esteemed by all who knew him. Although young in years, had attained a fine Christian manhood." The air force blue casket draped with the Union Jack was carried to the gravesite escorted by six R.C.A.F. warrant officers who marched beside it. Three volleys were fired at the graveside, the band playing snatches of a hymn between each volley. After bayonets had been fixed, the "Last Post" was sounded. Twenty-four year old James Shanks is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, in Sarnia, Ontario, Section E. Lot 131. In late October 1942, parents James and Christina Shanks in Sarnia would receive from the R.C.A.F. the wings that had been taken from the uniform of their late son Jimmy Shanks. On James Shanks' headstone are inscribed the words, *Rest in peace*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, 2C, 2D

### **SHEA, Edward Thomas (#A/17019)**

Edward Shea was born in Toronto on November 28, 1898, the son of Thomas Patrick Shea (O'Shea, born in Kilarney, Ireland) and Mary (nee Hines, born in Ireland) Shea, of 54 Palmerston Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. The Shea family included Edward's three sisters. Edward was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish and prior to World War 1, he recorded his trade as a brass finisher. On April 1, 1916, single at the time, Edward enlisted with the 216th Battalion and served during World War I.

On October 15, 1940, while residing at 314 Bright Street, Sarnia, Edward would marry Lucy Anne Carmel Watters, of Ottawa, the daughter of Patrick Henry Watters and Johanna (nee Murdoch) Watters. The wedding took place at St. Joseph Church in Ottawa, Ontario. They would reside at 205 Charlotte Street, Ottawa. Edward and Lucy Anne Shea would have one son and one daughter together. During World War II, Edward joined the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Army Pay Corps, with the rank of Private. On August 31, 1947, two years after V-J Day, Edward Shea would lose his life, the cause of death listed as coronary thrombosis. Forty-eight year old Edward Shea, a veteran of two World Wars, is buried in Ottawa (Notre Dame) Roman Catholic Cemetery, Ottawa, Canada, Soldiers plot 4. Grave 9.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

### **SMITH, Alexander Gordon (#J/3118)**

Alexander Smith was born in British Columbia on September 20, 1914, the son of Alexander Smith Senior and Jean (nee Giffen) Smith, of 277 Kathleen Avenue, Sarnia. His parents, Alexander and Jean, were both originally from Scotland. Alexander attended Sarnia Collegiate School where he was a member of the school orchestra in which he played violin. He was also a member of the Cadet First Aid Team in 1931. After graduating from Sarnia Collegiate, he completed a course in agricultural science at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. Single at the time, Alexander enlisted in May of 1939 in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He obtained his wings as an observer at the R.C.A.F. school at Jarvis, Ontario in October of 1940. He would remain at Jarvis for a post-presentation course of four weeks. In early December of 1940, he was able to spend a few days at his home in Sarnia on his way from Rivers, Manitoba to Ottawa where he would continue his training. He would go overseas in December of 1940.

Alex Smith would become a member of RCAF #72 Operational Training Unit, attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Observer. Approximately one year after arriving overseas, on December 17, 1941 Pilot Officer-Observer Alexander Smith would lose his life when his Blenheim aircraft Z7628 crashed at Red Sea Hills, Egypt. Approximately one week later, his parents Alexander Sr. and Jean Smith in Sarnia would receive a cable informing them that their son, *Alexander Smith has been reported as missing overseas*. In July of 1942, they would receive the news that their son Alexander Gordon Smith was now officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-seven year old Alexander Smith has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Alamein War Memorial, Column 245, Egypt.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **SMITH, Mitchell (#J/18222)**

Mitchell Smith was born May 2, 1921, the son of Roy Smith (born in Russia) and Bessie (nee Dillon, born in England) Smith, of 512 Wellington Street, later 322 Durand Street, Sarnia. Mitchell was single when he enlisted, on December 26, 1940, residing at 2006 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario. He joined the Royal Canadian

Air Force, graduating as a sergeant-wireless air gunner in October of 1941. By the end of October 1941, he had left for an Eastern air command post. He would become a member of RCAF #432 Leaside Squadron "Saevitir Ad Lucem" (Ferociously towards the light), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer.

On August 13, 1943, Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer Mitchell Smith was part of a crew aboard Wellington aircraft HE348 that failed to return from night operations. Perishing with Pilot Officer Mitchell Smith were Pilot Officer S. Noble; FS. K.R. Bourne; and Sgt.s J.W. Neal (RAF), and D. Ruston (RAF). Mitchell Smith would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-one year old Mitchell Smith has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 178.

Mitchell Smith and thirteen other local men had their names engraved on a plaque honouring fourteen Jewish members of the armed services from Sarnia. The plaque was unveiled in the Ahavas Isaac Synagogue, Davis Street, Sarnia on March 30, 1945. The men, all from Sarnia, honoured on the plaque were M. Berger, S. Bernard, R. Heller, I. Haber, M. Kirk, Dr. I. Mann, A. Rosen, G. Shabsove, M. Skosov, Mitchell Smith, Murray Smith, L. Swartz, I.B. Zierler, Isaac Zierler. Three of the men--Mitchell Smith, Max Berger and Isaac Buck Zierler--made the supreme sacrifice. Mitchell Smith is also honoured in the memorial book "Canadian Jews in World War II".

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **STEVENS, Ross Edward**

Ross ("Buddy") Stevens was born in Petrolia on March 21, 1927, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Stevens, of 407 London Road, Sarnia. The Stevens family would move to Sarnia around 1936. His grandmother was Mrs. Edward Shannon of Petrolia. He had one sister who, at the time of his death, was Mrs. S. Round of Sarnia. Ross attended Central School in Petrolia and Johnston Memorial School in Sarnia. Ross joined the Canadian Merchant Navy on his 16th birthday, becoming a member of the crew of the Imperial Oil tanker *SS Sunset Park*, with the rank of Oiler. He later obtained the rank of 4th Engineer. The *Sunset Park* was built by Foundation Maritime Limited in Pictou, Nova Scotia, completed November 24, 1944, a modified Scandinavian-class cargo ship of 2894 tonnes. After the war, it would become *Siderurgica Cinco* and was scrapped in 1965.

Ross Stevens had been home on furlough the Christmas before his death in December of 1944. Three months later, in March of 1945, he was critically injured in a storm while at sea on board the Imperial Oil tanker *SS Sunset Park*. On March 20, 1945, Merchant Marine Ross Stevens would lose his life in St. Michael's Hospital in Bridgetown, Barbados, British West Indies. He died one day before his eighteenth birthday. On March 21st 1945, parents Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Stevens in Sarnia would receive word that their son, Ross Stevens, who would have turned 18 that day, had died in the Barbados, British West Indies while serving with the Imperial Oil marine department. In late April of 1945, the Rev. J.F. Anderson of St. Paul's United Church, Sarnia conducted a memorial service in memory of Ross Edward Stevens. Eighteen-year old Ross Stevens is buried in the Barbados and Ross' name is also inscribed on the Petrolia cenotaph in the Town of Petrolia.

SOURCES: A, B, D, E, N, Q, X, Y, k

### **STOKES, Edward Samuel**

Edward Samuel "Sammy" Stokes was born in Petrolia on July 26, 1921, the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Gladstone Stokes (born in Petrolia, Ontario) and Jennie Louise (nee Pollard) Stokes, of 294 Wellington Street, Sarnia. Edward had one sister. Edward's father Lieut-Col Samuel Stokes served with distinction during the Great War and was decorated with the Volunteer Officers' Decoration and the Military Cross. Serving with the 18th Canadian Battalion, W.O. Regiment, Samuel Gladstone Stokes was awarded the Military Cross, *For conspicuous gallantry and initiative on 10th of November 1918. He went forward as scout officer through the enemy's line, entered the village which was occupied by the enemy, locating their positions and strength and brought back information which enabled the battalion to attack and capture the village with slight casualties*. Samuel Gladstone Stokes also gave his services during World War II as an officer commanding the 11th Field Company, local reserve army Royal Canadian Engineers unit.

Edward Stokes was educated at Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. While in high school, he played WOSSAA rugby, hockey and baseball and was also on the Sarnia Collegiate rifle team. Edward was a member of the Central Century Club and, while there, played basketball, hockey and softball for the club teams. After high school,

he proceeded to prepare himself for a military career by entering the Royal Military College in Kingston, in August 1939. During his military training at Kingston, he held the rank of corporal. Edward was captain of the basketball team in his second year and also managed the Royal Military College rugby team.

In mid-May of 1941, Edward Samuel Stokes graduated from the Royal Military College in Kingston with a commission in the Royal Canadian Dragoons at the age of 19. A total of 32 cadets graduated from the College that day, the ceremony attended by the Governor-General, the Earl of Athlone, and Princess Alice. Edward Samuel joined his unit of the Royal Canadian Dragoons at Camp Borden in June of 1941 to receive some instructional work there. He went overseas in November 1941 and was an instructor at No. 1 C.A.C. reinforcement unit. Edward Stokes arrived in Italy as a member of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, R.C.A.C. "C" Squadron, 1st Armoured Car Regiment in October 1943. Edward served in Sicily and through the Italian campaign, attaining the rank of Lieutenant.

In June 1944, he was wounded when he was blown up by a German mine during action in Italy. His regiment, the Royal Dragoons, was participating in a crossing of the Melfa River. In a letter he had written home to his parents three days later, he said that he had escaped with slight cuts over one eye. He also described how he had visited Rome on June 14, 1944. He spoke with regret of the death of "Mickey" McBride, one of his classmates at the Royal Military College, Kingston, who had succumbed to wounds. He mentioned listening with considerable amusement to a German woman radio announcer, whom the Canadians in Italy have dubbed "Axis Sally." She invited the first Allied soldier reaching Berlin to call on her, but said that he would never live to accept. Edward Stokes also sent a handkerchief home as a gift to his youngest sister, Nancy. Edward's mother, Jennie Louise Stokes, was grateful not only for his frequent letters home, but for snapshots which show her son with his best pals in their winter quarters in "sunny" Italy, surrounded by snow which probably reminded them of Canada.

In July of 1944, Lieutenant Edward "Sammy" Stokes of Sarnia was mentioned in a report sent by Bill Boss, a Canadian correspondent reporting from one sector of the Italian front. His report states,

*With the Canadian Corps in Italy*

*Operations of a squadron of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, commanded by Major Bill Veitch, Montreal, were in two phases of the Italian campaign after they were committed to the pursuit battle which followed the break-through of the Adolf Hitler line. The first phase saw them chase the Germans from Pontecorvo where they entered the battle, to the crossing of the Melfa river. Later, the squadron was asked to find a suitable ford across the river, one which might be developed as a divisional axis of advance. Lt. Peter Crerar, Ottawa, leader of the regiment's Engineer Troop, was given the task.*

*While troops commanded by Lt. Sammy Stokes, Sarnia, Ontario and Lt. Dick Rigby, St. Catharines, Ont., placed themselves in position to give covering fire, Crerar and his section camouflaged themselves for the job. They crawled 1,000 yards on hands and knees through a mined area before reaching a spot from which to make a detailed reconnaissance. They were engaged with small-arms fire, but they completed the task. On the way out the group was mortared and suffered casualties.*

On September 3, 1944, Edward Samuel Stokes would lose his life while fighting during the Italian Campaign near Rimini on the northern Adriatic coast of Italy. Approximately one week later, parents Samuel and Jennie Stokes in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Lieut. Edward Samuel Stokes was officially reported killed in action*. The dispatch gave no other details on where or how he met his death. Edward Samuel Stokes would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. He was recommended for the Military Cross at the Melfa River action and he was awarded the decoration Mention in Despatches posthumously. It stated, *The King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of Mentions in Despatches, in recognition of gallant and distinguished services*. Twenty-three year old Edward Sammy Stokes is buried in Gradara War Cemetery, Italy, Grave I, H, 57. On Edward Stokes headstone are inscribed the words, *Royal Military College. Royal Canadian Dragoons. Triumph, Duty, Valor*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2B, 2C, 2D

**STONE, Geoffrey William** (#R/205656) – Photograph page 394

Geoffrey Stone was born on April 10, 1925, the son of George William Stone and Ellen Enfield (nee Butler) Stone, of 165 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. His parents, George and Enfield, were both born in England. When Geoffrey was younger, his father George abandoned the family, leaving his mother Ellen to raise and to support the

children. Geoffrey had one brother and three sisters, who at the time of Geoffrey's death were Mrs. R. Barnes, of 500 George Street, Sarnia; Mrs. J. Kerwin; and Miss Beverley Stone (Hache) at home in Sarnia. Brother George Ronald who was employed on the Polymer Corporation construction prior to enlisting in October of 1942, would also serve, becoming a Guardsman with the Canadian Infantry. In late-August of 1944, Ellen would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Guardsman George Ronald Stone, was wounded on August 14, on active service in France*. The message also stated that further details as to the nature and the extent of the wounds would be forwarded as soon as they were ascertained. Under three months later, Ellen would receive another telegram from Ottawa, this one with information on her other son, Geoffrey William Stone. When she received that telegram, son George Ronald was still in a British hospital recovering from his wounds.

Geoffrey William Stone was very active in athletics, and he loved to play hockey. He was an excellent student, graduating from Sarnia Collegiate, and was a member of the air cadets. When Geoffrey graduated from Sarnia Collegiate, he immediately wanted to enlist in the RCAF; however, he was not the legal age to do so. His mother supported and respected his decision, so he lied about his age so that he could enlist. He got his wish and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force enlisting in November of 1942 at No. 9 Recruiting Centre in London, Ontario. In late September of 1943, while stationed at No. 6 E.F.T.S., Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Geoffrey would return to Sarnia on a short 3-day leave to visit his family and friends. When Geoffrey returned to Sarnia, he accompanied the body of Sarnian LAC Leonard Raymond Meere, who had been killed in a flying accident at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan (included in this Project). In January of 1944, after graduating as an air gunner at Macdonald, Manitoba, Geoffrey would return to Sarnia on furlough to visit his family and friends. Geoffrey Stone would leave for overseas in late March 1944, arriving on April 1st of 1944, when he was just nineteen years old. While overseas in Holland, he met a special lady, and they planned to be married after he returned; however, this was not to happen.

Geoffrey became a member of an RCAF crew flying a Halifax aircraft HX356. The flying crew of Sgt. Geoffrey Stone, along with P/O Clarence Britton, F/Sgt. Gerald Patterson, F/O William Cook, F/Sgt. Bill Freeman and F/O Andrew Sharp had received an award as "Best Crew" against 13 other crews, during their training course that concluded in July 1944. Geoffrey and Clarence Britton (of Windsor), who was three years older than Geoffrey and had been in the RCAF since May 1942, became best friends while serving together. Clarence's mother had hoped that once the war was over, the boys would come to Windsor for a visit. Geoffrey became a member of RCAF #158 Squadron "Strength In Unity", attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant - Air Gunner. He had been promoted to the rank of flight sergeant shortly before his death, but his letters home to his mother had not revealed to her whether he was serving in a bomber or a fighter squadron.

On October 28, 1944, Geoffrey was promoted to the rank of Flight Sergeant, but in his letters home to his family, he had not revealed whether he was serving in a bomber or a fighter. Geoffrey Stone along with the rest of his crew were posted to RAF Squadron #158 on November 3, 1944. Five days later, on November 8, 1944, at 8:17 pm, their Halifax Mark III Bomber HX356, bearing the name and noseart "Goofy's Gift" lifted off from Lissett, East Yorkshire, U.K.. The crew was on a night bombing training flight, heading for the local bombing ranges, probably their last training flight before regular operational bombing duties. Two to three minutes after take-off, after climbing slowly to 400 feet, the aircraft went into a shallow dive and crashed, two miles west of the runway, killing all six on board instantaneously by the force of the impact. Perishing with Flight Sergeant-Air Gunner Geoffrey Stone were his best friend P/O. Clarence W. Britton; F/S.s W.M. Freeman and G.W.H. Patterson; F/O.s Andrew Sharp (of Point Edward, Ontario), and W.W. Cook; and one RAF member of the crew. Geoffrey Stone, who had been overseas for only seven months, was initially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (England)*.

On the morning of November 13, 1944, Ellen Enfield Stone in Sarnia would receive a letter from her son Geoffrey. Only a few hours later, she would receive the following telegram from the director of records at Ottawa informing her that her son, *Flight Sergeant Geoffrey William Stone, has been killed in action overseas while serving with the R.C.A.F.* The message also promised that further particulars would be forwarded as they become available. Not long after, she would receive another telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualties Officer:

*Mrs. George Stone,*

*Deeply regret to advise that your son R two nought five six five six sergeant Geoffrey William Stone was killed on active service overseas November eighth stop his funeral takes place at 10.30 am November thirteenth at Regional cemetery Harrogate Yorkshire England stop please accept my profound sympathy stop letter follows.*

*RCAF Casualties Officer*

Nineteen year-old Geoffrey Stone, and the rest of the Halifax bomber crew are buried at Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire, United Kingdom. Geoffrey Stone is buried in Section H. Row B. Grave 14. In mid-November of 1944, a memorial service to honour Flight Sergeant Geoffrey Stone was held during a morning service in St. George's Church, Sarnia.

On February 13, 1945, Geoffrey's mother received another letter from the RCAF Casualty Officer, which read as follows:

*Dear Mrs. Stone,*

*I have been directed to inform you that your son, Geoffrey William Stone, has been promoted to the rank of Flight Sergeant with effect from October 28th, 1944. May I again express my deepest sympathy to you and the members of your family in the loss of your son whose qualities and ability have thus been recognized.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **STRONACH, James Gatherum (#J/5665)**

James Stronach was born in Scotland on December 21, 1918, the son of Henry Bullion Stronach and Margaret (nee Gatherum) Stronach, of 198 Bright Street, Sarnia. His parents, Henry and Margaret, were both born in Scotland. James' father, Henry, was employed in the Electrical Department at the Sarnia Imperial Refinery. James attended Sarnia Collegiate School and for some years he was a carrier for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, James was employed with the Technical and Research Department at the Sarnia Imperial Refinery. Single at the time, James enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on May 15, 1940.

James would arrive in Western Canada for training in September of 1940. While in training, he was stationed in Brandon, Manitoba; Rivers, Manitoba; Regina, Saskatchewan; Vancouver, British Columbia and Calgary, Alberta. In late May of 1941, James would receive his wings at Calgary, Alberta, with the rank of Sergeant-Pilot. In early June of 1941, James would spend a two week leave at home in Sarnia, before transferring to an operational school in Eastern Canada. He would spend three months as a pilot on coastal command at Prince Edward Island. In October of 1941, James would go overseas as a sergeant-pilot.

In June of 1942, while in England, James was promoted from sergeant-pilot to Pilot Officer. In August of 1942, his parents Henry and Margaret Stronach in Sarnia would receive a cablegram informing them that their son, Pilot Officer James Stronach, had been promoted again, this time to the rank of Flying Officer in the R.C.A.F. While overseas, on various short leaves he was able to visit relatives in Scotland. James Stronach would become a member of RCAF #415 Swordfish Squadron "Ad Metam" (To the mark). In February of 1943, Henry and Margaret Stronach in Sarnia would receive the news that their son James had been promoted to Squadron Leader, one of the youngest squadron leaders with the R.C.A.F. While overseas, aside from his official duties, he gave much of his time to executive work in the management of air force sports.

On June 14, 1943, Squadron Leader-Pilot James Stronach was part of a crew aboard RCAF Hampden aircraft X2961 that failed to return from operations over the Bay of Biscay, during presumed enemy action. Not long after, parents Henry and Margaret Stronach in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Royal Canadian Air Force headquarters at Ottawa advising them that their son, *Squadron Leader James Stronach was reported missing after air operations on June 14*. Over six months later, in January of 1944, parents Henry and Margaret Stronach in Sarnia would receive official notification from Ottawa stating that their son, *Squadron Leader James Stronach is now reported as missing, presumed dead*. Perishing with Squadron Leader James Stronach were Warrant Officer W.A. Trask; Flying Officer G.K. Crummy; and Pilot Officer A.B. Clegg. James Stronach would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Bay of Biscay)*. Twenty-five year old James Stronach has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 172.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, 2C, 2D

### **SUTHERLAND, Leslie Gordon (#R/99732)**

Leslie "Les" Sutherland was born in London, Ontario on November 26, 1918, the son of Donald Gordon Sutherland (of Wallaceburg) and Maud Louise Sutherland (nee: Lossing, born in Watford, Ontario), and the foster-son of Arthur S. Turnbull, of Corunna, Ontario. Leslie had one sister, Maura Jean, born in 1908. After Leslie's father Donald, a steamfitter by trade, died, his mother Maud married Arthur Turnbull, and they resided in Corunna.

Educated at Corunna Public School and Sarnia Collegiate, Leslie enjoyed playing football, hockey, baseball, and golf. He was a very good swimmer and received a Certificate in Life Saving from the Humane Society. His hobbies also included hunting, stamp collecting and woodcraft. Les was a member of the Central Century Club. After graduating in June 1939, he worked as a deckhand with Sarnia Steam Ship Company for one full season. He was then unemployed for three months before becoming a pipefitter with Sarnia Imperial Oil Refinery. He joined the 2nd 11 Royal Canadian Engineers (Reserve), Sarnia and had military training, as a Sapper from August 15, 1940 until May 12, 1941.

Leslie, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on May 15, 1941, in London Ontario. At his interview, the officer reporting on Leslie recorded that he was; "*Clean, courteous, intelligent looking, rather shy, well mannered. Pleasing personality. Necessary qualifications for pilot. Well recommended. Splendid pilot material.*" After enlisting, Leslie received training and was posted in various locations, such as Toronto, Trenton, Windsor, the Service Flying School at Aylmer and Halifax. He graduated as a Sergeant Pilot on February 27, 1942.

After arriving overseas, Leslie received his O.T.U. in England and became a bomber pilot. He became a member of RCAF #426 Thunderbird squadron "On Wings of Fire", attaining the rank Warrant Officer Class II – Pilot, piloting a Wellington bomber. In May 1943, he had almost completed a tour of operations, but tragedy struck and prevented Leslie from becoming an instructor and receiving his commission. On May 24, 1943, Leslie Sutherland was part of a crew aboard Wellington aircraft HE281 that went missing after successfully bombing Dortmund, Germany. The crashed plane was located at Haaksbergen, Holland.

Not long after, his mother Mrs. A.S. Turnbull of Corunna would receive official notification that her son, *Sergeant Leslie Gordon Sutherland was reported missing after air operations overseas.* Five weeks after receiving that notification, she had heard no further news of her son. Later, she would learn that her son had been pronounced dead on May 25, 1943. Perishing with Leslie Sutherland were WO.s K.H. Masterson and L.A. Rivest; and Sgt.s W. Dunkerley (RAF) and S. Jepson (RAF). In October of 1943, Leslie Sutherland would officially be listed on the R.C.A.F. casualty list as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas.* Twenty-four year old Leslie Sutherland is buried in Haaksbergen General Cemetery, Netherlands, Plot 4, Row 2, Grave 11. Leslie Sutherland's name is also inscribed on two memorial plaques in Corunna; one in the entrance foyer of Branch 447 of the Royal Canadian Legion, and one on a brass alter in Christ Anglican Church in Corunna.

SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, O, R, S, 2C, 2D

#### **TESKEY, Stanley James (#J/95517) – Photograph page 395**

Stanley Teskey was born on December 15, 1925, the son of Charles Joseph Teskey (born in Sarnia) and Mary Elizabeth (nee Peers, born in Wallaceburg) Teskey, of 334 North Russell Street, Sarnia. Stanley had two brothers: Douglas Charles (born 1922) and Gordon Wilfred (born 1932). Gordon was born at Sarnia General Hospital on March 8, 1932, but unfortunately, he was a stillborn birth. The family was residing at 274 Bright Street, Sarnia at the time.

His brother Douglas graduated in June of 1943 from the No. 1 Service Flying Training School at Camp Borden. Douglas would marry Frances Mary (nee Warwick) in July of 1943 and arrive overseas later that same month. Douglas would be posted to an R.A.F. bombing squadron, where he participated in raids on Leipzig, Ludwigshaven, Anheim, Cologne, Essen and other Nazi industrial centres. Of these, he thought the "toughest" target was Leipzig, where the gunners of the plane he piloted shot down one German fighter and damaged another. It was a tribute to his ability to "stickhandle" with a heavy bomber that neither the plane nor any member of its crew was hit while Douglas was at the controls. While overseas, Douglas was twice promoted, from pilot officer to flying officer, and again to the rank of flight lieutenant. At the time of Stanley's death in April of 1945, Douglas was a Flight Lieutenant, serving in England. In May of 1945, Douglas, a veteran of 30 bombing raids over Germany, would return home to Sarnia on leave to be with his parents and his wife Frances.

Stanley Teskey was a member of the Sarnia Air Cadets prior to enlisting in 1943. Single at the time, Stanley enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He would graduate as a Sergeant Air-gunner at the No. 9 Bombing and Gunnery School at Mont Joli, Quebec on June 1, 1944. He would become a member of RCAF #426 Thunderbird Squadron "On Wings of Fire", attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Air Gunner. One month after graduating, in July of

1944, Stanley Teskey would go overseas. In mid-December of 1944, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* reported that Stanley Teskey was celebrating his 19th birthday in England, while his brother Douglas had celebrated his second wartime birthday overseas on November 4th. It also reported that the brothers had recently spent three leaves together in England.

On April 25, 1945 Stanley Teskey was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft NP820 that was involved in a mid-air collision. Pilot Officer-Air Gunner Stanley Teskey would lose his life when the Halifax aircraft was over the sea and in a mid-air collision with a #408 Squadron aircraft. They were about one hour from their target of Wangerooe, Germany. Perishing with Pilot Officer Stanley Teskey in the Halifax were Pilot Officer's J.C. Tuplin, D.R. Curzon, and E.W. Hicks; Flying Officer J.D.C. Ross (of Sarnia); Sgt. R. Roberts (RAF); and one other member of the crew. The collision was seen by F/L. Allan Ross D.F.C., D.F.M. of #408 Squadron. In late April of 1945, parents Charles and Mary Elizabeth Teskey in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flight Sergeant Stanley James Teskey, has been reported missing on air operations overseas on April 25*. Approximately two weeks after Stanley Teskey's death, VE Day was declared, ending the war in Europe. Stanley Teskey would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Nineteen year-old Stanley Teskey has no known grave. He is memorialized on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 281.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **THAIN, Clare Kenneth (#J/17937)**

Clare Thain was born on June 18, 1920, the middle son of John Thain (born in Wales, England) and Isabel (nee Miller, born in Ireland) Thain, of 200 Bright Street, Sarnia. Clare had two brothers: Jack (see below) and Donald B., and all three brothers had been newspaper carriers for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia for a time. All three brothers were to serve during the war, and all three were members of the RCAF. At the time of Clare's death, oldest brother Jack Thain, a Flying Officer- Navigator/Bomb Aimer, had already been reported missing over the Bay of Biscay since early June of 1943. It was believed that Jack had been on an anti-submarine operation at the time. Clare's younger brother, Flight Sergeant Donald Thain, had enlisted in the R.C.A.F. on August 2, 1943 and trained at Toronto; Winnipeg; and Paulson, Manitoba where he received his wings in June of 1944. Donald's graduation was a bittersweet moment for parents John and Isabel Thain. They were proud of Donald's success, yet their other two sons, also R.C.A.F. flying officers, were already casualties of war at the time. Donald would be stationed at Patricia, Vancouver Island for a time and would return to Sarnia in September 1946, after serving in the RCAF in Newfoundland. He was also involved in anti-submarine warfare.

Prior to enlisting, Clare Thain had attended Sarnia Collegiate. Later he was employed at the National Club. He attended St. John's Anglican Church. Single at the time, Clare enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in June of 1941. He then graduated from the Jarvis Bombing and Gunnery School. He went overseas in May 1942 and would serve in England, Africa and Italy before being transferred to India, with the R.A.F. Indian Command. In June of 1942, while in Scotland, Clare unexpectedly met his brother. Clare had just arrived at an unnamed railway station terminal with a detachment of R.C.A.F. men en route to the south of England when outside the coach window, he saw standing on the station platform his brother Jack. Jack was waiting on the platform for another train and Clare was fortunate enough to hail Jack from the train window. The two brothers were able to meet up for a happy reunion during a 10-minute stop.

In August of 1943, parents John and Isabel Thain in Sarnia would receive a cable informing him that their son Sgt. Clare Thain had been promoted to pilot officer. In March of 1944, John and Isabel Thain were informed that Clare had been given the promotion to flying officer from pilot officer. Clare Thain would become a member of RCAF #194 Squadron "Surrigere colligere" (To rise and to pick up), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner. On May 6, 1944, Clare Thain, in his Dakota aircraft FZ599, was on an operation dropping paratroopers behind the Japanese lines in India. He was the only casualty when his aircraft went down during the operation. In mid-May of 1944, parents John and Isabel Thain in Sarnia would receive an official announcement informing them that their son, *Flying Officer Clare Thain has been reported missing in action since May 5*. The last word his family had from him was from India and it was presumed he was flying in Burma. At the time, parents John and Isabel were still dealing with the news of their other son Jack Thain, who was reported missing in early June of 1943 over the Bay of Biscay, had since been reported presumed dead. Their other son, LAC Donald Thain was



stationed at Paulson, Manitoba at the time. Clare Thain would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (India)*. Back in Sarnia, Clare's father, John, did not receive official word of his son's death until April 1947. Twenty-three year old Clare Thain has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Singapore War Memorial, Malaya, Column 443.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **THAIN, Jack Alexander (#J/8431)**

Jack Thain was born September 20, 1918 the eldest son of John Thain (born in Wales, England) and Isabel (nee Miller, born in Ireland) Thain, of 200 Bright Street, Sarnia. Jack had two brothers: Clare (see above) and Donald B., and all three brothers had been newspaper carriers for the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia for a time. All three brothers were to serve during the war, and all three were members of the RCAF. At the time of Jack's death, middle brother Clare Thain, a Flying Officer- Wireless Operator/Air Gunner was serving in Europe. Clare was later to lose his life, on an operation dropping paratroopers behind enemy lines in India. Jack's youngest brother was Flight Sergeant Donald Thain who had enlisted in the R.C.A.F. on August 2, 1943 and trained at Toronto, Winnipeg and Paulson, Manitoba where he received his wings in June of 1944. Donald's graduation was a bittersweet moment for parents John and Isabel Thain; they were proud of the success of their son Donald, yet their other two sons, also R.C.A.F. flying officers, were already casualties of war at the time. Donald would be stationed at Patricia, Vancouver Island for a time and would return to Sarnia in September 1946, after serving in the RCAF in Newfoundland. Like Jack, he was also involved in anti-submarine warfare.

Jack Thain enlisted in Sarnia in 1940. Jack married Miss Rhoda Leona Westlake, the eldest daughter of Mrs. W.J. Westlake and the late Mr. Westlake of Wyoming, Ontario on May 17, 1941. The wedding was held at the home of the bride's mother in Wyoming. The bride was given in marriage by her uncle, Mr. A. Parsons. Serving as bridesmaid was Miss Wilma Westlake, the sister of the bride, and serving as best man was brother Clare Thain. Following the ceremony, a wedding dinner was held at the Wyoming Hotel for twenty-five guests. After the reception, the newlywed couple left for points east on a wedding trip. On their return, the couple resided at 136 North Front Street, Sarnia. When Jack went overseas as a member of the RCAF, his wife Rhoda Leona Thain would reside with her mother, Mrs. W.J. Westlake in Wyoming.

Prior to enlisting, Jack was employed at the United Cigar Stores at Lochiel and Christina Streets in Sarnia. Jack enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, going overseas in December of 1941 with the rank of Pilot Officer. In June of 1942, while overseas, Jack unexpectedly met his brother Clare. Jack was standing on an unnamed station terminal in Scotland waiting for a train. While waiting on the station platform, Jack was hailed from a troop train window by his brother Clare. Clare had just arrived at the Scotland station en route to the south of England with a detachment of R.C.A.F. men. The two brothers were able to meet up for a happy reunion during a 10-minute stop. Later that month, Jack was in the *Sarnia Observer* news for his part in a Nazi raid. As part of the "Demon" squadron of the R.C.A.F., Pilot Officer Jack Thain and his fellow crew members on coastal command bombed a medium-sized enemy vessel in the face of "heavy opposition", bringing their Hudson bomber home unscathed.

In the latter part of 1942, Jack's family in Sarnia was informed that Jack, a graduate of Jarvis training school, had been promoted to Flying Officer while overseas. Jack would become a member of RCAF #58 Squadron "Alis Nocturnis" (On the wings of the night), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Navigator/Bomb Aimer. On June 1, 1943, Jack Thain was part of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft BB257 that failed to return from operations. The plane was reported missing over the Bay of Biscay, while on an anti-submarine operation at the time. A few days later, Jack's parents in Sarnia and wife Leona in Wyoming would receive the news that, *Flying Officer Jack Thain has been officially reported missing since June 2 during air operations overseas*. Perishing with Flying Officer Jack Thain were Pilot Officer J.R. Bickerton and Warrant Officer L.E. Daw. Four of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed. Jack Thain would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. For parents John and Isabel Thain in Sarnia, they would lose another son, R.C.A.F. Flying Officer Clare Thain, less than one year later. Twenty-four year old Jack Thain has no known grave. Jack Thain's name is inscribed on the Runnymede War Memorial, Surrey, United Kingdom, Panel 175.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

*"OUR SOLDIER SLEEPS, HIS GOOD SWORD RUSTS; HIS SOUL IS WITH THE SAINTS, WE TRUST."*

DAD

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### **THOMPSON, Arthur Cameron (#J/85408)**

Arthur Cameron Thompson was born July 22, 1921, the middle son of Howard Bell Thompson and Margaret M. (McDonald) Thompson, of 292 North MacKenzie Street, Sarnia. Arthur's father, Howard, was on the staff of Sarnia Refinery Engineering Department. Arthur had two brothers: Howard Fraser (see below), who would also serve in the RCAF, and the youngest brother Robert. Arthur Cameron married Edwina Joyce Toms, of Cornwall, England sometime in 1942 and the young couple would have a son whom they named Richard Fraser. Arthur Cameron was the first Thompson boy to enlist, signing up with the Royal Canadian Air Force in May of 1940. He underwent training in Toronto, Edmonton, Mossbank, Saskatchewan and Rivers, Manitoba. He would receive his wings in December of 1940, when he was promoted to the rank of Flight-Sergeant, and was then transferred to a school in Rivers, Manitoba. His brother Howard Fraser would earn his wings only a few days after Arthur Cameron received his. Initially Arthur would be stationed at the ground school in Toronto, at the former Eglinton Hunt Club. In March of 1941, his parents would receive a cablegram from their son Arthur, informing them that he had arrived safely in England. At some point in time while overseas, Arthur married an English girl.

Arthur Cameron would become a member of RCAF #431 Iroquois Squadron "The Hatiten Ronteriiios" (Warriors of the air), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer. On January 29, 1944, while a member of a crew aboard Halifax aircraft LL181, Pilot Officer-Bomb Aimer Arthur Thompson's aircraft was shot down east of Zinndorf, Germany, near the target Berlin, Germany. It was the third day of a heavy aerial offensive on Germany. Several days later, parents Howard and Margaret Thompson in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Sgt. Arthur Cameron Thompson has been reported missing following an Allied raid over Berlin*. For Howard and Margaret Thompson, Arthur was the second son they had lost to war. About one year earlier, on New Year's Day 1943, they had received news that their eldest son, Howard Fraser Thompson of the RCAF, had been killed during air operations overseas. Another set of Sarnia parents, John and Mary Ellen McKeown, would receive the same information on the same day about their son, Victor Herbert McKeown, who was also listed as missing in the same bombing raid over Berlin (included in this project). Arthur Cameron's wife Edwina Joyce and nine-month old son Richard Fraser were in England at the time of Arthur's death.

In late May of 1944, Howard and Margaret Thompson in Sarnia, would be advised by R.C.A.F. headquarters at Ottawa that their son, *Flight Sergeant Arthur Cameron Thompson, had been promoted to pilot officer as of January 25, 1944*. This was the first word from Ottawa about their son since he had been reported missing on January 28, 1944. In early January of 1945, one year after his aircraft was shot down, an R.C.A.F. casualty list was released listing Pilot Officer Arthur Cameron Thompson as, *now for official purposes presumed dead, after previously being reported missing*. Perishing with Pilot Officer Arthur Cameron Thompson were Flying Officer Roy MacLean, Pilot Officer W.R. Hewetson, and Sgt. N.A. Bell. Three others of the crew, not Canadians, were reported missing and believed killed.

Arthur Cameron would leave behind his parents Howard and Margaret Thompson in Sarnia, his "British bride" of less than two years, Edwina Joyce, and their son, Richard Fraser. In late May of 1945, Edwina Joyce Thompson and two-year old son Richard Fraser would arrive in Sarnia to spend some time with Howard and Margaret Thompson. The *Sarnia Observer* described Edwina Thompson as a slim, blue-eyed rather shy and extremely attractive young English girl. Edwina spoke highly of the reception given her by the Red Cross, V.A.D. nurses and other organizations on her arrival in Canada. She and her son had made the cross-Atlantic crossing aboard the liner *Brittany (Brittanic)*, in the company of 600 other brides and 400 children. Edwina was the daughter of Commander E.E. Toms, Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm of Cornwall, England. Edwina had one sister who was preparing to return to New Zealand with her serviceman husband; another who was engaged to an Australian, and a third who was to go to India with her husband on British government business. For a time during the war, Edwina and husband Arthur Cameron had resided in Portsmouth, where he was stationed, during a period when the city was under heavy and constant air raid attack.

Edwina described training schools for Canadian war brides that were set up in London and other large metropolitan areas, but were not available in the smaller centres; however, invitations to attend were sent to prospective candidates in outlying areas. Although she was "instructed" by her husband Arthur about Canada, she found it different from what she expected. Shop windows full of clothes and shoes, the abundance of food and the luxury of bananas and ice cream were difficult to comprehend after the sparse fare of England. She described the diet as adequate, though plain and uninteresting. The fuel shortage of the last winter as rather grim, but they managed

somehow. Edwina Thompson said that she was quite prepared to like Canada and things Canadian, and was looking forward with pleasure to becoming acquainted with her Sarnia relatives.

Twenty-two year old Arthur Cameron Thompson is buried in the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery, Germany, Coll. Grave 8.G.33-37. On Arthur Thompson's headstone are inscribed the words, *Never have so few given so much for so many, to the utmost, to the end.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2B, 2C

### **THOMPSON, Howard Fraser (#R/68407)**

Howard Fraser Thompson was born December 16, 1918, the eldest son of Howard Bell Thompson and Margaret M. (nee McDonald) Thompson of 292 North MacKenzie Street, Sarnia. Howard Fraser went by his middle name, Fraser. Fraser's father Howard, was on the staff of Sarnia Refinery Engineering Department. Fraser had two brothers: Arthur Thompson (see above), who would also lose his life while serving with the RCAF, and the youngest brother, Robert, who was age 13 at the time of Fraser's death. Fraser was a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and a graduate of Sarnia Collegiate. He later attended Pickering College in Newmarket and then spent one year at the University of Western Ontario. Prior to enlisting, Fraser was with the Inspection Laboratory of Sarnia Imperial Refinery.

Single at the time, Fraser enlisted in London, Ontario with the Royal Canadian Air Force on July 5, 1940. He attended air force training stations at Brandon and Rivers, Manitoba and Regina, Saskatchewan. In December of 1940, he passed his examinations as a pilot and then went to Initial Training School at Lethbridge, Alberta. His brother, Arthur Cameron, had earned his wings only a few days prior to Howard receiving his. Sergeant-Observer Howard Fraser would be awarded his wings as a member of the R.C.A.F. in early September of 1941, along with two other Sarnians, Sergeant-Pilot Wesley K. McDermid and Sergeant-Pilot Robert A. McCallum (included in this project). Fraser had started out to be a pilot, but later transferred to an observer's course. After graduating, he was transferred to an Eastern Command and then went overseas in October 1941. He was a member of RCAF #40 Squadron "Hostem A Coelo Expellere" (To drive the enemy from the sky), attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant-Navigator. After further training and serving in Britain for some time, he was posted to the Middle East Ferry Company early in June of 1942. His parents in Sarnia had received two cables from Fraser not long before he was lost in action. In the first cable dated June 10, 1942, he informed them of his safe arrival by air in Gibraltar. The second cable dated June 22, 1942 informed them that he had been sent to the head quarters of the Middle East Command.

On June 27, 1942, at 4:05 a.m., his RCAF station was to receive the last word from Fraser Thompson's Wellington aircraft after bombing operations. Flight sergeant-Navigator Howard Thompson was part of a crew that crashed just south-east of the Siwa Road near the railway line, at El Alamein, Egypt. Perishing with Flight sergeant-navigator Fraser Thompson were FS.s S. Gregory and O.M. Killeen; one RNZAF, and one RAF member of the crew.

Fraser Thompson was reported *Missing in operational duties* on June 27, 1942 by military officials. More than a week later, Fraser's parents would receive a cable from the chief of air staff, Ottawa informing them that their eldest son had been, *reported missing following a flight, presumably in Libya*. On New Year's Day, January of 1943, Howard and Margaret Thompson would receive a telegram from the R.C.A.F. Casualties Officer in Ottawa. The telegram read: *Deeply regret to inform you further advice has been received from the Royal Canadian Air Force Casualties officer overseas that your son Flight-Sergeant Howard Fraser Thompson, previously reported missing on active service on June 27, 1942, is now reported to have lost his life, his body having been recovered. Accept my profound sympathy. Letter following.* Fraser Thompson would later be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas*. Twenty-three year old Howard Fraser Thompson was buried near the Hohalfa Railway Station, exhumed and reburied in the Halaya Sollum War Cemetery, Egypt, Coll. Grave 15. B. 2-3.

Fraser's younger brother, Flight-Sergeant Arthur Cameron Thompson, had seen almost three years of service in the RCAF at the time of Fraser's death. About one year after Fraser's death, his brother Arthur of the RCAF would also lose his life. Parents Howard and Margaret Thompson in Sarnia would lose two of their three sons in the war.

On the Sarnia cenotaph, his name is inscribed as F.F. Thompson.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, O, 2C, 2D

**TOOLE, John Richard (KOREA) (#B801850) – Photograph page 395**

John Toole was born in Point Edward on March 30, 1929, the son of Charles Elgin Toole (born in Sarnia) and Ellen Sadie (nee Foster, born in Hamilton) Toole of Hamilton, formerly Point Edward, Ontario. John had two brothers--James Norman (born 1936); and Allan Charles--and two sisters: Elizabeth Jean and Linda May. John Toole attended Point Edward Public School. At the age of twelve, he moved to Hamilton with his parents. He attended high school there for two years, after which he worked in the Steel Company of Canada until his enlistment. John enlisted in the Canadian Army on August 22, 1950 in Toronto, trained in Calgary, becoming a member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry R.C.I.C. – D Company and attaining the rank of Corporal. He would leave for Korea, via Japan, in December of 1950.

On October 11, 1951, after only a few weeks in the front line action, John Toole would lose his life during fighting on Hill 187 in South Korea. He had gone out on a patrol that night to guard a group of volunteers laying a communication line. He failed to get a signal to retire with the rest of the patrol and was left behind. Communist soldiers moved into the area and his Sten gun was heard firing until 3 a.m. followed by silence.

In mid-October of 1951, Sarnia citizens would read in the *Sarnia Observer* that Corporal John Richard (Dicky) Toole, former Point Edward youth, was reported "missing in Korea". His Sarnia relatives included Mr. and Mrs. John M. Toole, grandparents on East Street; Mrs. John Foster, grandmother; Mrs. Thomas Prudence, Mrs. George Harris, Mrs. Harry Ireland and Mrs. Gordon Burgess, all aunts; and Orville Toole, an uncle.

On July 27, 1953, the day the armistice was signed, ending the Korean War, the Canadian Army issued a list of 45 personnel reported as missing in action or as prisoner-of-war. The air force reported one missing Canadian. Included on the Canadian Army's published "missing in action" list was Corporal John Richard Toole, Hamilton, Ontario. There was hope, although slim that, in some cases, soldiers in the missing category might prove to have been captured. Hope dwindled with reports from the Communists that they would return 14 Canadians they were holding as prisoners-of-war.

The task of exchanging prisoners began in early August of 1953 when the North Koreans released 400 Allied POWs, including Cpl. Joseph Pelletier of nearby Chatham, Ontario. Relatives of John Toole in Sarnia anxiously awaited word of his whereabouts. For 22 months, no word was heard from him. His name had been given out as a prisoner but the U.N. had never been able to confirm the fact. Parents and relatives had received no letters from him, and the first definite word heard was the mention of his name in connection with a Red propaganda broadcast from North Korea. Early reports were that he had been captured and shot in the back. Initially reported as captured in October 11, 1951, it was not until March 5, 1952, that it was reported that he was a prisoner. In August of 1953, his mother Mrs. Ellen (Nellie) Toole in Hamilton said, "Our thoughts were with him all the time. Somehow, I knew he would come back. His buddies on the patrol felt that he would have almost certainly been taken prisoner under the circumstances". Corporal John Toole would later be officially listed as, *killed in action, October 11, 1951*.

John Toole was awarded several well-deserved citations: Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for Korea, Korea Medal, and the United Nations Service Medal Korea. Twenty-two year old John Toole has no known grave. He is commemorated on the Commonwealth Memorial in Busan, South Korea, Plot 21, Row 8, Grave 1346. The memorial is located in the United Nations Cemetery in Tanggok, a suburb of Busan. The stone memorial with bronze petals was erected to commemorate commonwealth soldiers who died and whose burial places are unknown. Twenty-one Canadians are listed on the bronze plaques, including John Toole of Point Edward, Ontario. He also has a memorial plaque on the Korea Veteran's National Wall of Remembrance in Meadowvale Cemetery, in Brampton, Ontario. This memorial has plaques for each of the 516 Canadian service men that died while serving with the Canadian Forces in the United Nations.  
SOURCES: D, E, H, L, N, 2D

**TOTTEN, Walter Frederick (#A/57816)**

Walter Totten was born on January 24, 1920, the son of Isaac Totten and Charlottie Totten, of 499 George Street, Sarnia. Walter's father, Isaac, was employed in the Process Department at Plant No. 2, with the Sarnia Imperial Refinery. Walter's three brothers were Clarence, Clifford and Edward. At the time of Walter's death, all three brothers were involved in the war: Clarence was a Private with the Canadian Army in British Columbia; Clifford was a seaman/gunner with the Canadian Navy; and Edward was a gunner with the Canadian Army who was

in a hospital in London, Ontario recovering from frostbite that he had received while on duty in the Arctic. Prior to his enlisting, Walter was employed at Sarnia Imperial Refinery.

Single at the time, Walter enlisted in the Canadian Army on June 4, 1941, becoming a member of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (M.G.) R.C.I.C.. Walter would serve overseas for over three years prior to his death. Walter would arrive in France two days after the D-Day landings in June of 1944. Walter was wounded later and had a brief sojourn in an English hospital for slight wounds sustained.

Walter Totten had only recently rejoined his unit, when on October 18, 1944, he was wounded in action again, in Antwerp, Belgium, during the Battle of the Scheldt. Private Walter Totten would lose his life four days later, on October 22, 1944, after succumbing to his injuries. Five days after their son's death, on October 27, 1944, parents Isaac and Charlottie Totten in Sarnia would receive information from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Pte. Walter Frederick Totten, was injured in action in France on October 18*. The message informed them that their son Walter had suffered a compound fracture of the tibia when wounded in action on October 18, 1944. One week later, parents Isaac and Charlotte Totten would receive a telegram from the director of records at Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Walter Frederick Totten, had succumbed to his injuries on October 22*. Walter Totten would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of injuries, in the field (Belgium)*.

In early February of 1945, parents Isaac and Charlottie Totten in Sarnia would receive a letter from Major R.G. Armstrong, the commanding officer of their son Walter's unit, D company, Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa. The letter read:

*On behalf of your son's friends in this company I write you this letter. We hope that you will not grieve too much for him but rather be proud that you have had such a man as your son. To say that we are proud of him is an understatement for he was an inspiration to the rest of us. His gallantry and devotion to duty did not go unnoticed. We assure you that he will not be forgotten by those who fought beside him for so long, and it remains to us who are left to carry on his splendid work. Again may I express my regrets.*

*R.G. Armstrong, Major*

Isaac and Charlotte Totten would also receive a letter from Hon. Capt. (Rev.) Gordon Walker who officiated at their son Walter's funeral in the military cemetery in Eecloo, Belgium. Twenty-four year old Walter Totten is buried in Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Belgium, Grave V.A.12. On Walter Totten's headstone are inscribed the words, *God's Kingdom the hope of the world*.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, O, 2C, 2D

### **VAIL, Donald (#R/99576)**

Donald Vail was born in Watford, Ontario on January 6, 1907, the son of Charles Wesley Vail (born in Delaware, Ontario) and Winnifred Lavina (nee Jones) Vail, of 532 Devine Street, Sarnia. Donald had three brothers: Cecil Victor (born 1890); Wilfred Barrie (born 1899); and Allan Douglas (born 1908). Donald attended University of Western Ontario and was later the principal of the public school at Wyoming, Ontario for five years, prior to moving to Sarnia. While at the University of Western, he played hockey, as well as with the Strathroy team, and baseball in Sarnia. Donald's father, Charles, a former C.N.R. agent, passed away in December of 1935. Donald married Vera Doreen Miller of Watford, Ontario and the couple were blessed with two daughters, Patsy and Nancy, and a son, Paul. In the latter part of 1938, Donald joined the London Life Insurance Company, in Sarnia, where he was an industrial representative salesman.

It was at this time that Donald enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force (one year prior to his death). Donald attained the rank of Corporal, a member of the RCAF #15 Operational Training Unit, in a Wellington aircraft, becoming a radio technician/air frame mechanic. On July 9, 1942, the pilot of the Wellington aircraft that he was aboard overshot the landing and attempted a take-off to go around again. The aircraft failed to gain sufficient height and stalled when the pilot tried to turn away from some trees. The Wellington aircraft crashed in a field adjacent to the aerodrome at Harwell, England. Perishing with Corporal Donald Vail were LAC. G.S. Miller and three RAF airmen. Just days after the crash, his wife Vera in Watford would receive the cablegram informing her that her husband Donald Vail was listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas*. Upon his death, Donald Vail left behind his wife Vera Doreen Vail and their two daughters, Patsy (age 8), Nancy (age 6), and son Paul (age 3) in Watford.

*WHEN FATE TOOK YOU FROM US...WE LOVED HIM DEARLY. THERE IS NO JOY LEFT,  
NOTHING REMAINS TO US NOW.*

Thirty-five year old Donald Vail is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 32.G.4. On Donald Vail's headstone are inscribed the words, *He is not dead while his memory lives in the hearts of those who loved him.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**VOKES, Myles Keith (#A/99627)**

Myles Vokes was born on August 23, 1922, the son of William Vokes (born in Peel County) and Alice May (nee Mason) Vokes of 137 John Street, Sarnia. Myles had one sister, Martha (born 1913) and one brother, Mason (born 1914). At the age of three, Myles would lose his mother Alice May, who died in 1925. He joined the Canadian Army, becoming a member of the Corps of Military Staff Clerks, with the rank of Corporal. On January 9, 1942, Myles Vokes lost his life in London, Ontario in a motorcycle accident involving a collision between an automobile and a motorcycle with side-car attached.

Petrolia soldier Gnr. Robert Burns, 18, was driving the motorcycle and in the side car were Pte. Frederick Heatherly, 18, of London and Cpl. Myles Vokes. Burns and Heatherly were employed as dispatch riders, stationed at No. 1 District Depot, Wolsely Barracks. The tragic mishap happened at the corner of Piccadilly and Colborne Streets. The motorcycle attempted to pass the automobile at the intersection and struck the front bumper of the car. Out of control, the motorcycle careened into a curb and the impact hurled Vokes 20 feet through the air onto the roadway. When police and an ambulance arrived, Vokes was lying face down on the road; both Burns and Heatherly were lying conscious beside their machine. They were all taken to Trafalgar Hospital, where Myles Vokes was dead upon arrival.

Nineteen year-old Myles Vokes is buried in Sarnia (Lakeview) Cemetery, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada, Sec. E. Lot 154. On Myles Vokes' headstone are inscribed the words, *At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember him.*

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, 2C, 2D

**WADE, John Robert (#A/105041)**

John Wade was born on May 4, 1923, the son of John William Wade and Evelyn Maude Wade, of R.R. #1, 6th concession, Sarnia Township. John had one brother and four sisters who at the time of John's death were Fred, at home in Sarnia, and four sisters: Mrs. John Waghorne, in Edmonton; Mrs. R. Ferguson and Mrs. D. May, at home; and Mrs. J. Soper, in Sarnia. John grew up in Sarnia township and was employed by the Electric Auto-Lite plant as a press operator prior to enlisting.

Single at the time, John enlisted in the Canadian Army in a tank unit, becoming a member of the Lanark and Renfrew Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C., attaining the rank of Private. He received most of his training at Camp Borden. He continued training in England after going overseas on June 2, 1943. He would go to Italy with the Lanark-Renfrew unit in May of 1944, serving with an armoured regiment on the Italian Front.

On October 11, 1944, John Wade was wounded in action in Italy. Parents John William and Evelyn Wade in Sarnia, were notified that he was wounded in November. John Wade was able to recover from these wounds and had just returned to his unit in Italy on the last day of 1944. Four days later, on January 4, 1945, Private John Wade suffered more serious wounds during fighting in the Italian Campaign. These more serious wounds resulted in John's death. In mid-January of 1945, parents John William and Evelyn Wade in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Lance Corporal J.R. Wade, has died January 4 of wounds received in action in Italy.* John Wade would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, died of wounds received in action, in the field (Italy).*

In early February of 1945, London Road West United Church in Sarnia held a ceremony for two members of the church who had lost their lives recently in the war with a Sunday afternoon memorial service. Rev. P.S. Banes presided over a ceremony honouring Lance Corporal Robert John Wade, who lost his life January 4, 1945 in Italy; and Private Horace Humble, who lost his life December 10, 1944 in Italy (included in this project). Twenty-one year old John Wade is buried in Argenta Gap War Cemetery, Italy, Grave IV, G, 10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

*SOFTLY HE WHISPERS, "SMILE, MY DEAR ONES, NOTHING CAN OUR LOVE DESTROY."  
NINNY AND MOTHER*

**WALKER, Wilford Russell (#A/108651)**

Wilford Walker was born on August 18, 1916, the son of Franklin Russell Walker and Stella Brewer Walker, of 349 South Mitton Street, Sarnia. Prior to enlisting, Wilford was employed as a guard (constable) in the security office of the Polymer Corporation plant in Sarnia. He had a half-brother, Russell Walker who, at the time of Wilford's death, was serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force, as a Leading Aircraftman, having been in England since June 1944. Wilford Walker would marry Beatrice May Weiss of Sarnia, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Guy Weiss, who lived just outside the city in the vicinity of Perch Creek. Wilford and Beatrice May Walker would reside at 257 Brock Street, Sarnia and they would have two children together, Frankie and Shirley.

Wilford enlisted in the Canadian Army, becoming a member of Lincoln and Welland Regiment, R.C.I.C. and attaining the rank of Private. He would go overseas in September 1944, and he arrived in the European battle zone on approximately November 1, 1944. Less than three months later, on January 28, 1945, Private Wilford Walker would lose his life while fighting in Holland, during the Liberation of the Netherlands. In early February of 1945, Beatrice May Walker in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa that merely stated that her husband, *Gunner Wilford Walker has been reported killed in action*. No other information was provided. At the time, his family only knew that he had been serving in Belgium and Holland.

A week prior to Wilford's death, wife Beatrice May Walker underwent an appendectomy in Sarnia General Hospital and was still a patient there when the telegram arrived at her home to inform her of her husband's death. Upon leaving the hospital, Beatrice May returned to the couple's Brock Street address, with their two children, Frankie (age 4) and Shirley (age 2), and her sister, Mrs. Gatecliff. Wilford Walker would later officially be listed as, *Killed in action, in the field (Holland)*. Twenty-eight year old Wilford Walker is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave XV.H.5.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D

**WATSON, Elliot Courtney (#J/48690)**

Elliot Watson was born in Belfast, North Ireland on April 23, 1924, the eldest son of James Elliot Watson and Mary Elizabeth (nee Courtney) Watson, of 115 Proctor Street, Sarnia. Both parents, James and Mary, were born in Ireland. Two year-old Elliot and his mother Mary Elizabeth arrived in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on May 3, 1926, aboard the passenger ship *Montcalm* which had left Belfast, Northern Ireland. They were able to reunite with husband/father James Elliot, who was residing at 284 King Street, Hamilton, Ontario. The family would later move to Sarnia. Elliot had one sister, Marilyn, and one brother, Gerald T., who would also serve in the war as a Sergeant with the R.C.A.F. In May of 1944, brother Gerald would spend his furlough in Sarnia with his parents before returning to Three Rivers, Quebec.

Single at the time, Elliot Watson enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on his 18th birthday in April 1942. He trained at Hagersville, Winnipeg and graduated in May 1943 as a wireless air-gunner at Mossbank, Saskatchewan air force station. After graduating, Elliot would arrive in late May of 1943 to spend a furlough with his friends and family in Sarnia. Elliot would leave for overseas in September of 1943, sending a message to his parents in Sarnia of his safe arrival once there. He would be attached to air force units in Iceland, England and Scotland. He became a member of RCAF #162 Bomber Reconnaissance squadron "Sectabimur Usque Per Ima" (One time, one purpose), attaining the rank of Pilot Officer-Wireless Operator/Air Gunner. Five weeks prior to his death, Elliot would spend a leave in Sarnia with his parents, family and friends. His brother Gerald, who was completing a furlough and was returning overseas, was able to spend a few hours with his brother Elliot between trains.

On July 29, 1944, Elliot was with his crew aboard Canso aircraft #11062 on an anti-sub patrol. The Canso aircraft was flying in bad weather when it flew into a hill and crashed on Foula Island, north-west of Scotland. Perishing with Pilot Officer-WAG Elliot Watson were F/O.s W.H. Lloyd, A. Hildebrand, and G.G. Bradshaw; P/O. J.E. Bowler; FS. R.W.E. Townsend; and WO. R.D. Harvey. FS. J.H. Knight survived. Elliot Watson would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident (anti-sub patrol), overseas (Iceland)*. Twenty year old Elliot Watson is buried in Lerwick New Cemetery, Shetland, United Kingdom, Terrace 7B. Grave 20.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

**WILCOX, Russell Harold (#V/16140)**

Russell Wilcox was born in Fort William, Ontario on March 16, 1920, the son of Doris Agnes Bole, of Fort

William, Ontario. Russell, single at the time, and recording his occupation as farmer, enlisted in the Canadian Navy. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve, serving aboard the *HMCS Spikenard* and attaining the rank of Stoker. The *HMCS Spikenard (K 198)* was a corvette of the Flower Class, commissioned by the Royal Canadian Navy in December of 1940. In early February of 1942, the *Spikenard* was part of convoy SC-67, sailing for the British Isles, part of an RCN escort to make the first “Newfie-to-Derry” run that would continue for the next four years (St. John’s, Newfoundland and Londonderry, Northern Ireland).

About 9:30 pm on the night of February 10, 1942, the *Spikenard* was about 465 nautical miles west of Malin Head Ireland, following a zigzag pattern ahead of the convoy in rough seas. Two torpedoes fired by German U-boat *U-136* struck the port side in the bow near the bridge. Almost simultaneously, a torpedo smashed into the nearby tanker *Heina*. A nearby corvette, *Dauphin*, saw one explosion and moved toward the position where the *Heina* was on fire. It took two hours to rescue the *Heina* survivors from the oily water.

Aboard the *Spikenard*, fire had broken out, destroying the bridge, the wireless room and one of her lifeboats. Flames then spread to fuel drums aft of the mast, and fire raced up the superstructure and down into the belly of the ship. Men on the mess decks had to fight their way to the forecastle through a curtain of flames. Many of them, groping forward, stumbled into the gaping hole blasted in the deck plates. After a second explosion, with the ship’s whistle set off by the blast, blowing constantly with an eerie shriek, waves engulfed the vessel. The *Spikenard* sank within five minutes. The other escorts in the group had been caught up chasing contacts and had not known the *Spikenard* was gone until she had not answered repeated radio calls. By dawn, there was no sign of the missing *Spikenard*. The commander, four officers and fifty-two of the crew were lost.

Incredibly, eight survivors were picked up clinging from a raft by *HMS Gentian* about 19 hours after the sinking. The eight survivors, many suffering burns, had picked up two other survivors after the second explosion, but both were so badly injured that they died shortly after being taken aboard. Russell Wilcox was one of the crew members who was lost in the sinking of the *HMCS Spikenard*. Also on board and lost was Alfred Smedley Kettle, who is also listed on the Sarnia cenotaph. Russell Wilcox’s death certificate simply states for official cause of death, *Loss of H.M.C.S. Spikenard, at sea*. Twenty-one year old Russell Wilcox has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Halifax Memorial, Nova Scotia, Canada, Panel 9.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, P, T, U, X, Z, 2A, 2C, 2D

### **WILLIAMS, Floyd George (#A/69366)**

Floyd Williams was born on March 9, 1922, the son of Captain Arthur D. Williams and Letitia Williams, of 165 North Vidal Street, Sarnia. Floyd had one sister, Dorothy (later to become Mrs. Robert Koehler of Petrolia) and four brothers: Ernest (later in Philadelphia); Earl (would become a Reverend in Brantford); Randall and Frederick. His brother Fred would also enlist in the army, and at the time of Floyd’s death, Fred was serving overseas. Prior to the war, Floyd Williams was a well-known, all-round athlete in Sarnia, having played lacrosse, hockey, baseball, tennis and other sports. Prior to enlisting he was employed as a store clerk in the Sarnia Sport Shop on Christina Street.

Nineteen year-old Floyd would lose his father, Arthur Williams, who died on May 26, 1941. Floyd’s father Arthur Williams, was born in Sarnia and was a painting contractor for 30 years here. He served in the U.S. Forces in the Spanish-American War and also in the Phillipines and Cuba. A sergeant in the 27th St.Clair Borderers, he enlisted in 1914 in the 34th battalion C.E.F. He trained the Sarnia section of the battalion and was later transferred to the 36th battalion in Guelph. He arrived in England and transferred to the 17th Reserve battalion. In France, he served with the Machine Gun Brigade and was invalided in 1916. When Arthur died, his wife Letitia and their sons Floyd, Fred and Randall were still living at home at 167 North Brock Street.

In mid-August of 1942, Floyd’s brother, Frederick Williams, would marry Miss Jean Anna Kemsley, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Kemsley of Sarnia. The wedding took place in the White Street Gospel Mission, in Sarnia, the first wedding solemnized there. Floyd Williams would serve as best man for his brother, Bombardier Frederick Williams of the 48th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Petawawa.

On April 22, 1944, Floyd Williams would marry Norine Aerial Demeray, the daughter of Mrs. Alice Demeray. Floyd’s father, unfortunately, had passed away prior to the wedding. The wedding ceremony was held at the Parker Street United Church and was performed by the bridegroom’s brother Rev. Earl Williams of Port



Colborne, who was assisted by Rev. J.N. Gould. The bride entered the church on the arm of her brother, LAC Leslie Demeray. Her maid of honour was Miss Eileen Walker, while Doris Walker acted as bridesmaid and Diane Martin, niece of the bride, was junior bridesmaid. Floyd's best man was Bob Koelher, brother-in-law of the groom, while Bill White and Neil McArthur were the ushers. Following the ceremony, a reception was held in the church basement for approximately 50 guests. Afterwards, the young couple left on a short honeymoon, before Sgt. Floyd Williams returned to his duties on the west coast. The couple's home address was 167 North Brock Street, Sarnia.

Prior to going overseas, Floyd was part of the 48th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery of Sarnia in the summer of 1944, where he held the rank of sergeant. He reverted to private and was transferred to the infantry to go overseas. Floyd and his brother Fred went overseas together. In early December of 1944, Letitia Williams in Sarnia would receive a telegram from her sons Floyd and Fred, informing her that they had both arrived safely in France with a Canadian army unit. Floyd became a member of the Canadian Army Irish Regiment of Canada, R.C.I.C..

Floyd Williams was awarded the Medal of Honour for his heroic actions, performed only months before he was killed himself. In a letter from Pte. W.E. LeRoy to Floyd's wife, Norine, he described how Floyd Williams risked his own life to rescue a wounded comrade in his unit. Pte. W.E. LeRoy and Floyd Williams had become close friends during their two months together with the Irish Regiment while fighting in Italy. On this particular occasion, their section of men were moving from a house under German shell and mortar fire to another house 175 yards away, when Pte. LeRoy was wounded in the stomach and arm.

*"I didn't pass out, but I couldn't get up," Pte LeRoy's letter said. "Floyd and the others were okay as they were still going for the house. I think I had just about given up all hope of getting anywhere when I saw Floyd turn his head and look back. I guess he realized I was hit because the next second he was coming across that open field. I tried to holler to him to get the hell into the house, but my voice was no more than a whisper. Even if I could have yelled it, I doubt if he'd have heard me; the mortars and shells exploding all around made too much noise. When he reached me I told him to scam but it was no use talking. He got me on my feet and by half-carrying me we got back across the field to the house. I'll never know how but we did. I was laid on a mattress and Floyd helped to put on the shell dressings. That was the last time I saw Floyd, as they moved on and I was taken out to hospital. I don't think I need tell you how I felt when they told me Floyd didn't come back. And I'll never forget how he looked coming back across that field to get me. People like him never really die, Mrs. Williams. Perhaps they live only in the memory of those who knew them, but they live".*

On January 2, 1945, Private Floyd Williams would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. In mid-January of 1945, the widowed Letitia Williams in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Pte. Floyd Williams, has been killed in action in Italy*. At the time of Floyd's death, his wife Norine Williams was residing with her mother, Mrs. Alice Demary at 226 Napier Street, Sarnia. Floyd Williams would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-two year old Floyd Williams is buried in Villanova Canadian War Cemetery, Italy, Grave II, A, 2.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, R, 2C, 2D

### **WILLIAMS, Harley James (#A/110154)**

Harley Williams was born on the Sarnia Reserve on April 13, 1925, the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Williams of the Sarnia Reserve. His father, James Williams, was a member of the Native Council. Born on the Sarnia Reserve, Harley was one of a family of three boys and three girls. Harley's birth mother had died in 1930, and his father James had re-married. Prior to the war, Harley worked for the Pigott and Kellogg construction companies as a labourer before enlisting in the Canadian Army in 1943. He had trained at London, Chatham, Camp Ipperwash and Debert, Nova Scotia.

Harley Williams went overseas in December 1944, as a member of the Essex Scottish Regiment, R.C.I.C. with the rank of Private. On March 8, 1945, Private Harley Williams would lose his life while fighting on the Western Front, during the Battle of the Rhineland. In late March of 1945, parents Mr. and Mrs. James Williams of the Sarnia Reserve would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Private Harley James Williams, has been killed in action on the Western Front*. Exactly two months after Harley Williams' death, the War in Europe would end.

Harley Williams would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed in action, in the field*

(Germany). Harley was the first Native Canadian from the Sarnia Reserve to pay the supreme sacrifice in the Second World War. Nineteen year-old Harley Williams is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands, Grave III.G.9. There is also a memorial plaque to honour him on one of the entrance pillars of the Chippewas of Sarnia Cemetery, which reads, "In memory of Harley Williams, April 13, 1925-March 8, 1945, who was killed in action during World War II." Harley Williams' name is also inscribed on the Aamjiwnaang First Nations cenotaph in Sarnia. The central column of the Aamjiwnaang cenotaph is inscribed, "To our glorious veterans who have served our nation and its' allies for peace and freedom – Lest We Forget." One of the side columns is inscribed, "World War II – In memory of the young men and women who loyally served throughout the world 1939-1945 – Harley Williams".

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, N, 2C, 2D, 4D

### **WILLIAMS, William Patrick Logie (A/50442)**

William Patrick Logie Williams was born in Sarnia on March 17, 1920, the son of Charles H. Williams and Zillah Williams, of East Talfourd Street, Sarnia. Father Charles Williams was a veteran of World War I, with the rank of sergeant. William (Pat) had two brothers, Clarence and Edward Albert. Brother Edward would also serve during the war, becoming a Corporal with the Canadian Army in England. William also had three sisters: Mrs. James Logan of Port Huron; and Mrs. Alfred Hutchinson and Mrs. James Hamilton both of Sarnia. William was educated in Sarnia and, prior to enlisting, was employed at the Sarnia elevator, as a labourer.

William ("Pat") enlisted in the Canadian Army in October 1940, undergoing training with the Kent Regiment. On March 8, 1941, Pat married Maxine Thelma McGill of London, Ontario, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. McGill of 311 George Street, Sarnia in the manse of Paterson Memorial Church. At the ceremony, Miss Edna Allen of Sarnia served as bridesmaid and Private Donald Cranmer of the Kent Regiment R.C.I. of London served as the best man. After the ceremony, a reception and dinner was held at the home of the bride's parents on George Street. The young couple took up residence in London where Private Williams was stationed.

After training at various centres, in late November of 1941, Corporal Pat Williams would arrive in England with a detachment of soldiers from Western Ontario. Sometime in 1942, Patrick took a Commando course while overseas. Later, he returned to Canada and was an instructor at an army camp in British Columbia. In April 1943, Patrick left for overseas again. His wife, Maxine, would receive word of her husband's safe arrival overseas in late May. In June of 1943, while overseas, William "Pat" learned that his father Charles, a Great War veteran, had passed away.

Patrick arrived in Italy, a corporal with the Royal Canadian Regiment in September 1943. On December 19, 1943, while fighting in the Italian Campaign, Patrick Williams was wounded by shrapnel and was hospitalized for three weeks. After that, he was given a brief furlough, and then went back into action according to information in letters he sent home. On May 17, 1944, Patrick Williams would lose his life during fighting in Italy. In late May, mother Zillah Williams in Sarnia would receive information from the casualty officer at Ottawa that her son, *Lance Corporal William Patrick Logie Williams was reported as overseas casualty, killed in action on May 17, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-four year old William Patrick Logie Williams is buried in Cassino War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V.A.10.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, 2C, 2D

### **WILSON, John Everette Stanley (#B/144418)**

John Wilson was born in Barwick, Ontario on July 7, 1921, the youngest son of Edward Wilson (born in Beechburg, Ontario) and Rose Biddeson (nee Standish, born in Liverpool, England) Wilson. John had two brothers: Edward Standish (born 1905) and Walter William (born 1914) along with four sisters: Grace Mabel Priscilla (born 1904); Dorothy May (born 1908); Mary Ellen Nellie (born 1910) and Ruby Pearl Irene (born 1912, died only 3 months later). On July 3, 1941 in Fort Frances, Ontario, John would marry Ellen Ottilia Wilson, of Athabaska, Alberta. The couple would have a son together and later reside at 500 Confederation Street, Sarnia.

John, recording his occupation as a truck driver, enlisted in the Canadian Army. He became a member of the 48th Highlanders of Canada R.C.I.C., with the rank of Private. On December 21, 1944, John Wilson would lose his life while fighting in Italy, during the Italian Campaign. John would later be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty*,

*killed in action, in the field (Italy)*. Twenty-three year old John Wilson is buried in Ravenna War Cemetery, Italy, Grave V.G.12. On John Wilson's headstone are inscribed the words, *For ever remembered by wife and son*.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, L, 2C, 2D

### **WILSON, Richard Norman (#CDN/664)**

Richard "Dick" Wilson was born on December 21, 1920, the son of Norman J. Wilson and Vera H. Wilson, of 135 Penrose Street, Sarnia. Richard was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish. He attended Sarnia public schools and Sarnia Collegiate. In high school, he played junior and senior WOSSAA Rugby, and one year, he was on the Editorial Staff for the Collegiate Magazine. Dick was very interested in music and was a piano player in a local orchestra. He was a member of the Central United Church and Century Club, and played softball for the club. After graduating from Sarnia Collegiate, he worked two years at Imperial Oil Limited, before going to University. While at Western University, he played on the football team and, in February 1943, single at the time, he left the University to join the O.T.C. at Brockville as a cadet.

On graduating in May 1943, Richard was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Artillery. He was transferred to Brandon, Manitoba, at Camp Shilo, and after receiving another pip, he instructed at Brandon until April 1944. He volunteered his service and was loaned by the Canadian Army to the British Army, and upon returning to Brockville, he took his full Lieutenancy in the Infantry. On June 8, 1944, Dick left for overseas and landed in Scotland. He was stationed at Barsed Castle in England for six or seven weeks, where he took an Advanced Armoured Infantry Course and was in charge of a tank.

After landing in France, Richard Wilson was attached to the Queen's Royal Regiment, (West Surrey) 1st/7th Division. A member of the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps, he served in Belgium and Holland and took part in fighting around Arnheim, where Allied Paratroopers had been trapped. In mid-September of 1944, the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* printed portions of two letters that Richard Wilson had written home to his mother Vera telling of some of his experiences.

The first letter received reads in part:

*We left camp in England and marched about 2 ½ miles to the station, with something like 60 pounds on our backs. It's a bit tiring at first, but you get numb and don't notice it. A band played for us at the depot and as we pulled out they played, 'In the Mood'. The quarters on the ship were excellent and the meals wonderful. The next day we saw Normandy. At first all you could see were hundreds of ships and barrage balloons which really says a lot for our superiority when you realize the Allies can leave that much shipping riding at anchor unmolested. We went from the ship to landing craft and then marched another seven or eight miles to the first position. The British Tommies are small and some were just about whipped. In this section of the country there was not much in ruins. It was all in good shape and the army has made new roads.*

In his second letter, he described a section of the country 70 miles inland. One morning, he got 20 Germans for a work party from a local prison camp:

*They were a scruffy looking lot, most of them about 15 years old. They seemed very happy though. The Germans left this area just six days ago. On our way in we passed towns where there was absolutely nothing standing except the odd bit of jagged wall lurching into the air. The remainder was nothing but brick and rubble. You have to see this to know what I mean by rubble-it is sort of dust. I saw a few rather peculiar things such as a bombed house with nothing in it but a silly looking yellow chandelier, undamaged, hanging precariously from a split timber.*

*Among the roads and in the fields, are blown-up tanks and armored cars and vehicles of every type. Occasionally I saw a German grave and the Iron Cross on its marker. The roads are clear of mines, but in most cases they guarantee no safety anywhere more than three feet either side of the road. Many fields are pock-marked with huge bomb craters and I often saw many abandoned positions where Jerry had dug in. Along the roads there is an incessant stream of traffic. Besides army traffic, there are hundreds of French families returning to their homes, although I fear most of them won't find any. They have two-wheel cars loaded high with every domestic article. Two or three horses pull these carts, and others are behind cows and goats. Baby prams and bicycles are also used for transportation.*

It was in Holland on October 2, 1944, during the Liberation of the Netherlands, while serving with the Queen's Royal Regiment as a CANLOAN Officer, that Richard "Dick" Wilson would lose his life. In mid-October

of 1944, parents Norman and Vera Wilson in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Lieutenant R.N. Wilson, was reported missing on October 5*. No other details were given. His parents suspected that whatever happened to their son likely occurred in Belgium, as they had received a recent letter from him telling of some of his experiences in Belgium. In late July of 1945, more than two months after VE-Day, Richard Wilson's name was mentioned in a newspaper story on the 7th Armoured Division (Desert Rats), and was described as "missing presumed dead". Norman and Vera Wilson had not received any notification of their son's death at that point but received the news later that their son, Richard Norman Wilson was officially listed as, *For official purposes, presumed killed in action, in the field (Western Europe)*. Twenty-three year old Lieutenant Richard Wilson has no known grave. His name inscribed on the Groesbeek Memorial, Netherlands, Panel 10.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, S, 2C, 2D

**WISE, Frederick Ervine (#R/78865)**

Frederick ("Freddie") Wise was born on June 4, 1916, the son of Adam Wise and Margaret May (nee Cridland) Wise, of 415 Nelson Street, Sarnia. Frederick had two sisters, Ethel and Jennie, and two brothers, Frank and Norman. His brother Norman also enlisted in August of 1942 and became a Trooper with the Canadian Army serving in Italy. Frederick was an employee of the *Canadian Observer* in Sarnia, working in the circulation department, for a number of years prior to his enlistment. At wartime, single at the time, Frederick enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force. In October of 1941, Sergeant-Pilot Fred Wise visited his parents in Sarnia following his graduation exercises held at Dauphin, Manitoba, where he had just received his wings as a qualified aviator in the Royal Canadian Air Force. One month later, in late November of 1941, Fred Wise, along with fellow Sarnian James L. Wright (see below), who he had also attended the same training centres with, arrived overseas in England. Both Fred Wise and James Wright would be reunited again with the R.C.A.F. in the Middle East.

In September of 1942, a letter from Fred Wise would arrive at the *Sarnia Observer*, his former employee, describing his life in the Middle East. The following is a portion of that letter:

*August 21, 1942*

*On Sunday I was in Alexandria and had a dip in the Mediterranean, but this salty water isn't good for swimming when one is used to Lake Huron. I have been here three weeks, and feel fairly settled after travelling nearly all over Egypt. So far I have made five trips, mostly patrols over Alamein. It was only last Sunday that I saw my first Jerry hits.*

*Today we had a rather important job and came out of it with flying colors. On this particular we were top cover for a Hurricane bomber squadron, and watched the boys pull off and "drop their eggs." On the way home over Alamein we were attacked by four Messerschmidts. They came down on us like a bat out of hell. We fixed them again, and in the dog fight which followed one of the beggars got in front of me for a second, so yours truly got a good burst in. However I'm afraid I missed, though by mighty little. It was good to get home again, but I'm ready to go back at them anytime.*

Fred Wise would become a member of RCAF #238 squadron "Ad Finem" (To the end), attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant-Pilot. One year after arriving overseas, on November 4, 1942, Flight sergeant-Pilot Frederick Wise's Hurricane aircraft failed to return from a trip to Alala, in North Africa. In late November of 1942, parents Adam and Margaret Wise in Sarnia would receive the news that their son Frederick was reported missing, that he had not returned from an operational flight in the Middle East several weeks ago. About the same time, his mother Margaret in Sarnia would receive unofficial word that her son Frederick had recently been promoted to flight sergeant. In early December of 1942, the staff of the *Canadian (Sarnia) Observer* received Christmas greetings via telegraph from Frederick Wise. Frederick had been a former member of the *Observer* circulation department. The greeting had been sent from the Middle East, dated October 31, 1942, only a few days before he was reported missing. In late December of 1942, the Royal Canadian Air Force casualty list still listed Frederick Wise as, *missing after air operations in North Africa*. In July of 1943, Frederick Wise was officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas*. Twenty-six year old Frederick Wise has no known grave. His name is inscribed on the Alamein War Memorial, Egypt, Column 264.  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

LET HIS SOUL BE AT EVERLASTING PEACE.  
HE SERVED HIS COUNTRY AND FULFILLED HIS DUTY.

**WRIGHT, James Lenoury (#J/19602) – Photograph page 396**

James Wright, who always referred to himself as Jim, was born on August 19, 1916 in Sarnia. Jim's father, Thomas William Wright was born in Isle of Guernsey, England and his mother was Margaret (nee Wisby) Wright, was born in Harston, Cambridgeshire, England. Jim's father, Thomas, had a previous marriage to Harriet Wisby (Margaret's younger sister) in February 1905, and they would have three children together: Herbert Wisby Wright (born 1906); Ellis John Wright (born 1910); and Florence Wright (born 1912). Thomas would lose his wife Harriet, who died in February 1912 of tuberculosis, and a few days later, their infant daughter Florence would die of meningitis. Two years later in March 1914, the widower Thomas Wright married Margaret Wisby, his sister-in-law who had immigrated to Forest, Ontario from Harston, Cambridgeshire, England around 1905. Margaret Wisby also had a previous marriage, to Charles Kershaw in June 1910, and they would have one child together, Mary Kershaw. Charles Kershaw died in August 1911, about the time that their child Mary was born.

Thomas Wright married Margaret (nee Wisby) Wright on March 5, 1914 in Forest but they lived at 240 Bright Street, Sarnia. Thomas and Margaret Wright would have three children together: Clifford Wright (born 1914), and twins Edith Selena and James (Jim) Wright, born on August 19, 1916, in Sarnia. James (Jim) was given the middle name Le Noury, which was his grandmother's maiden name (Julia Le Noury of Mount Durand, Guernsey).

Jim's father, Thomas Wright, living at 128 Penrose Street, Sarnia in February of 1916, and recording his occupation as a grocer, enlisted to fight in World War I. He was to serve with the Canadian Railway Troops, 11th Battalion, attaining the rank of Acting Lance Corporal. A little over two years later, Thomas Wright would lose his life while serving in World War I. Thomas Wright died on November 9, 1918 at No. 56 Casualty Clearing Station. The cause of death was the result of the Spanish flu (influenza and broncho-pneumonia). Many years later, his former wives Harriet Wisby (died in Forest 1912) and Margaret Wisby (died in Sarnia 1964) were both buried in Beechwood Cemetery in Forest. An empty spot lies between them, for their husband Thomas Wright. The space will always be there, as Thomas was buried in France with his fallen brothers in arms. Thirty-seven year old Thomas Wright is buried in Grevillers British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, Grave XVII.E.8. Thomas William Wright's name is also inscribed on the Sarnia cenotaph in the World War I section. Thomas and James Wright were the only father and son combination from Sarnia to both lose their lives while serving Canada in two different World Wars.

So Margaret Wright raised Jim all on her own, along with his other five siblings: Herbert, Ellis, Mary Kershaw, Clifford and Jim's twin Edith, all at 240 Bright Street, Sarnia. Jim was educated at Russell Street, George Street, and Lochiel Street Schools and then at Sarnia Collegiate, where he specialized in drafting and two years commercial. Jim loved sports, participating in swimming, hockey, football, softball and tennis, and he had a keen interest in photography. After high school, Jim worked as a bookkeeper at Head Laundry Limited for one year, and then as an inspector, and finally as an office clerk at Electric Auto-Lite Limited for 3 years until 1940.

Single at the time, Jim Wright enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in London, Ontario on July 20, 1940. He became a member of the RCAF #41 Operational Training Unit. His training sites included Picton, Dunnville, Toronto and Dauphin. He would receive his wings in October of 1941 at No. 10 S.F.T.S., Dauphin, Manitoba. During his training, Jim flew in a variety of planes, mostly Hurricanes, but also Spitfires, Hudsons, Dakotas, and Marauders. A little more than a year after enlisting, in November of 1941, John Wright would arrive overseas in England. James Wright would arrive overseas along with fellow Sarnian Fred E. Wise (see above), who he had also attended the same training centres with. Both James Wright and Fred Wise would be reunited again with the R.C.A.F. in the Middle East.

In April of 1944, the *Sarnia Observer* featured a story on Mrs. Margaret Wright's three children who were serving at the time. Her daughter, Flying Officer Mary Kershaw of the R.C.A.F. (W.D.), attended public school and Sarnia Collegiate Institute. She trained at Strathroy General Hospital and was four years at the Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital in Petrolia. Prior to enlisting, she nursed for 1 ½ years at the Sanitorium in Weston. She enlisted in the R.C.A.F. 16 months prior to the newspaper story. Stationed at Trenton during that time, Mary had recently been appointed to the Radio Station Hospital in Clinton where she was in charge of the 25-bed hospital. Margaret's son, Clifford W. Wright, had enlisted in January of 1944 in the United States Navy. He had been employed with Mueller Brass Company of Port Huron. Clifford was stationed at Scott Field, Farragut, Idaho, from where he graduated in February of 1944. Following a 21-day leave in Sarnia, Petty Officer Clifford Wright of the United States Navy was transferred to Santiago, California. Her son James L. Wright was also featured in the story. At the time,

Pilot Officer James Wright of the R.C.A.F. had been overseas for two years and had been stationed for some time in the Middle East where he received his commission.

Overseas for three years, Jim was on aircraft delivery, flying planes to North Africa, Egypt, the Middle East and to India. This included flying aircraft from the West African coast to the Middle East during the Tunisian campaign, as well as piloting planes to Iran and transports and fighters to India. In August of 1942, James would celebrate his 26th birthday somewhere in the Middle East. In November of 1942, while stationed in Africa, he was hospitalized for close to two weeks, after contracting malaria. One year later, in November of 1943, he received his commission and was promoted to Flight Officer. In late August of 1944, Jim made what was to be his last trip to Sarnia, a 30-day leave to visit his mother Margaret, twin sister Edith and the rest of his family. Jim had completed his duties in Africa, the Middle East and other areas and had been sent back to Canada with the privilege of taking his discharge if he so elected. He had more than 800 flying hours to his credit; however, he chose to continue in the service.

While in Sarnia, when asked what things had impressed him on his return to Canada, Jim stated, "There certainly is no serious shortage of food in Canada. It is wonderful to be able to go into a restaurant and order a steak, and to see a menu with so many choices on it. In England there are no menus now such as there are here, while in Africa, on the ferry command, food was often pretty grim." On choosing not to take his discharge, he expressed his eagerness to return to the battlefield. "The leave is fine, but I'm not used to having nothing to do, and hope to be sent back overseas again." He expressed that this time, he wanted to use his training as a fighter pilot to get into the thick of things.

In describing the "grim" accommodations and food to which he became accustomed, he stated that in some of the R.A.F. stations along the ferry routes, native cooks were used with R.A.F. personnel supervising. "We frequently used a native set-up with mud and straw huts, and wooden frames with ropes for mattresses.... The R.A.F. considered it more important to bring in war material first and accommodations later if there was time. The Americans, on the other hand, brought in their equipment first, including prefabricated huts, real beds, complete refrigeration, and so on." He was unimpressed with Cairo and Alexandria; in fact, Jim was quite disgusted with the lack of proper sanitation he found, even in new Cairo. He said that the old city was dirty and full of disease spread by flies. Nor was he impressed with the Egyptians he found in his travels there, claiming to have lost many articles through pickpocket activities. He described Alexandria as cooler than Cairo in the summer, with a breeze from the Mediterranean Sea. The heat on the West African coast was oppressive with a high humidity, while it was 125 degrees in Iran falling to 100 degrees at night."

After his leave in Sarnia he reported to Ottawa for posting, he started taking a course on Spitfires equipped both as fighters and for photographic work. In September of 1944, shortly after his leave in Sarnia, the mother of another Sarnia R.C.A.F. officer would show Jim's mother Margaret a letter that her son had written to her. The officer praised Jim Wright's splendid record. The letter said that FO. Jim Wright had earned his month's leave at home by taking part in a particularly hazardous undertaking with two colleagues. It also revealed that Jim, despite three attacks of malaria, had made 46 flights in single-engined fighter planes from the west coast of Africa to Burma and Russia and had spent 10 days in the desert after being forced down by engine trouble.

On March 15, 1945, while flying low in his Spitfire BM636, his plane went out of control, crashing into a field at Paper Mill Lane, Oakenholt, Flintshire, Wales. A local farmer who witnessed the crash, rushed over and pulled Jim Wright out of the plane, but Jim was already dead. Approximately one week later, mother Margaret Wright in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing her that her son, *Pilot Officer James Wright was killed recently on active service with the R.C.A.F. overseas*. No further particulars were given in the official message. James Lenoury Wright would later be officially listed as, *Killed in flying accident, overseas (Wales)*.

Shortly after news of James Wright's death, Rev. F.G. Hardy of St. George's Church, Sarnia, spoke in sympathetic terms at a morning service at the church. The rector said that in peace times, before his enlistment, James had taken an active part in the young people's work and older members of the Boy Scouts would remember his activities and his talent for leadership. Rev. Hardy added that it was a sad duty to make the announcement of the supreme sacrifice of this young boy. The chaplain in England that presided over James Wright's funeral would write to his family:

*Blacon Cemetery, just outside the ancient walled city of Chester, is a beautiful spot. The heavy mist that has hung over the countryside has lifted, but the sky was clouded over during the funeral; overhead, two aircraft hovered around as though in tribute to your son.*

Twenty-eight year old Flying Officer-Pilot Jim Wright is buried in Chester (Blacon) Cemetery, Cheshire, United Kingdom, Section A, Grave 97. Jim Wright's well-deserved awards included: the Africa Star with 42-43 bar; a Defence Medal; a War Service Medal; and a Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with bar. On Jim Wright's headstone are inscribed the words, *Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life Rev.2.10.*  
SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, R, 2C, 2D, j

### **WRIGHT, John David**

John "Jack" David Wright was born in Petrolia on March 29, 1912, the son of David Wright (occupation Liveryman) and Florence Helen (nee Crozier) Wright of 320 Davis Street, Sarnia. John lived in Trinidad, British West Indies, for six years, where he received part of his early schooling. His father was an oil-drilling superintendent in Trinidad. The family came back to Sarnia in 1924, where David was employed with a local automobile sales group. John completed his public school education in the city and then attended Sarnia Collegiate where he was a member of the high school rifle team. He was also a member of Central United Church. Following his Sarnia Collegiate graduation, he entered the Imperial Oil Limited and studied chemistry. He was nearing the conclusion of a course at the Lawrence Institute of Technology, Detroit, when war broke out. He was within a year of securing his Bachelor of Science degree when he left his duties with the chemical staff of the Imperial Oil Limited and enlisted in a locally-organized field company for overseas duty. Tragically, John would lose both of his parents in a six-month period; his mother Florence in December 1934, and his father David in June 1935.

When John enlisted, he was single, recording his occupation as an engineer and his residence as 409 Devine Street, Sarnia. He had always been interested in military matters. John served originally as a Private in the Lambton Regiment (Reserve) and worked his way up the ranks, receiving his commission as first lieutenant with the Royal Canadian Engineers in March 1939. He joined the Canadian Army on September 2, 1939 and trained at Sarnia, London and Petawawa. He obtained his first lieutenancy in May of 1940, and spent his last furlough in Sarnia in July of 1940. John went overseas during August 1940 with the 11th Field Company, Royal Canadian Engineers, with the rank of Lieutenant.

On a Saturday night, March 8, 1941, Lieutenant John David Wright lost his life while in London, England, during a German bombing raid, a nightly occurrence at that time. John Wright was at the Café de Paris restaurant with a group of Canadian friends, including Nursing Sisters Thelma Stewart and Helen Stevens, and Lieutenant Jack C. Clunie, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Clunie of 218 Davis Street, Sarnia. On that tragic night, both Sarnians would display acts of heroism. As John Wright and his Canadian Nursing sister partner were dancing along with the throng inside the cabaret to "Oh Johnny," a high-explosive bomb crashed through the thin-roofed restaurant onto the dance floor. John Wright died while shielding the nurse with whom he was dancing. That nurse, twenty-three year old Miss Thelma Stewart of Toronto, suffered a hand injury and required hospitalization, but she survived the explosion.

For Jack Clunie, he and a few of the others, not liking that song, were sitting out at a balcony table when the bomb struck. Amid the ensuing chaos, Jack Clunie and his partner, Nursing Sister Helen M. Stevens of Dunnville, Ontario administered first aid and helped to extricate the dead and injured. They moved about the debris pouring champagne on the wounds of the injured as an antiseptic, bound gaping wounds with tablecloths and clothing and put broken limbs in makeshift splints. Following are the comments of Nursing sister Helen Stevens: "*The crash sounded like a bunch of firecrackers and stunned me for a few minutes. The whole place filled with smoke fumes. I thought at first it was gas. Lieutenant Wright shielded Miss Stewart as soon as he heard the bomb screaming. He died protecting the Canadian nurse.*" For twenty-three year old Miss Helen Stevens, not a nurse, but a physiotherapist at a Canadian Military hospital, who disregarded her own injuries to tend to others, she said she had no thought of doing anything heroic: "*I did what any Canadian nurse would be proud to do.*" As Jack Clunie moved through the glimmering light, seeking injured under the debris, he found John Wright's body. According to Helen Stevens, "*Jack and those who helped were as cool as a Canadian spring breeze. They worked with might and main. It seemed to give me courage too.*" Jack Clunie would be "mentioned in dispatches" for his work in the rescue operations.

For Nursing Sister Helen Stevens, who lost several of her friends in the bombing, she was given official recognition by the Canadian army. Hailed by the press as a "Canadian heroine in London," the military recorded her

distinguished conduct with these words: *Miss Stevens, who was dining in the restaurant at the time, was slightly injured and considerably shaken by the explosions. However, she unhesitatingly proceeded to render first aid to the injured amidst the scene of confusion and continued to do so for nearly an hour and a half. She was the last woman to leave the building and then only after other services had the situation in hand. Her conduct throughout merited the highest praise and is fully in accordance with the best traditions of the service.* Miss Helen Stevens was the second Canadian woman to be mentioned in military orders.

A total of eighty-five people were killed in the bomb explosion of the Café de Paris. In the days following, the London, England newspapers gave accounts and pictures of the bombing. The papers gave great credit to the valour of Lieutenant John Wright in giving his life in an effort to shield from injury Nursing Sister Thelma Stewart. Credit was also given to Lieutenant Jack Clunie and Nursing Sister Helen Stevens, who attended the wounded.

John Wright and three others (Captain Philip Seagram of Toronto, Corporal G.W. Quinn of Pembroke and Sergeant R.A. Bradshaw of Ottawa) were killed in the cabaret explosion, and many others were wounded. Captain Philip Seagram, who was killed in the tragedy, was well known to a number of Sarnians. He was a member of Lieutenant-General MacNaughton's headquarters staff and a particular friend of Lieutenant M.J. Chilton and Mrs. Chilton of Sarnia. John Wright would be officially listed as, *Overseas casualty, killed due to war operations (enemy action), Charing Cross Hospital, London, England.* At the time of his death, John's sister, Mrs. Howard A. Vince, was residing at 409 Devine Street, Sarnia. His aunt, Mrs. Margaret Crozier, also lived with Mrs. Vince. The commanding officer of the local garrison, Lieutenant-Colonel S.G. Stokes of the 2-11th Field Company, (Reserve) Royal Canadian Engineers organized a local memorial service for Lieutenant Wright, "because of the heroic aspects of his death."

In early April of 1941, John Wright's relatives in Sarnia would receive a letter from Lieutenant Arthur Hueston of a Western Ontario regiment, who had witnessed the large military funeral accorded John Wright in England. His flag-draped casket was borne on a gun carriage hauled by a military truck. There was a church service that was attended by virtually all the officers and men from Sarnia who were in the area. Among those were Lieutenants Jack Clunie, Howard Stuart, Colin Hunter, Jack Williams, Walter Claxton, Tom Richardson, Bill Craig, Charles Kennedy, Tom Doherty, Bill Ewener and Ken Hunter; Captains Frank Payne, Charles Wrenshall, Charles Kindersley; and Major Eric Harris. The cemetery for Canadian war dead contained graves marked by the conventional simple white crosses at that time. Twenty-eight year old Lieutenant John Wright is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 30.C.1.

SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, N, O, S, 2C, 2D

### **YORKE, John Haswell (#R/90160)**

John Yorke was born in London, Ontario on August 10, 1921, the youngest son of Robert Dagmar Yorke and Margaret Amanda (nee Haswell) Yorke, of Sombra. Father Robert Yorke was a veteran of World War I with three years' service overseas. The family resided in Alvinston for several years before moving to Sombra in 1928. John had one brother, Oscar Dagmay, who was one year older. Oscar Yorke would also serve during the war, as a sergeant with the Canadian Dental Corps in Italy. When John was five years old, he and his older brother would visit England with their mother Margaret, who was originally from Wales. They returned to Canada in April 1927, arriving in New York, New York from London, England aboard the passenger ship *Minnekahda*. John received his education in Sombra's school and at Sarnia Collegiate.

Single at the time, John enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on February 7, 1941. He trained at Brandon, Manitoba, and St. Jean's, Quebec, later attending the Guelph wireless school, where he received his sparks on May 10, 1942. He also attended No. 3 B. and G. School at McDonald, Manitoba, and graduated there on June 6, 1942. He became a member of RCAF #233 squadron "Fortis et Fidelis" (Strong and faithful), attaining the rank of Warrant Officer Class I and Wireless Operator/Air Gunner.

John arrived overseas March 10, 1943 and was posted to Gibraltar, where he saw service in the Mediterranean area. He went to the Azores with the first planes to be assigned to duty there after Portugal gave rights to bases there for the Allies. Only nine months after arriving overseas, on December 13, 1943, John Yorke and his crew were aboard their Hudson aircraft that was returning from an anti-sub patrol. On that day, their Hudson aircraft flew into high ground in very low clouds five miles west of RAF Station, Lagens, The Azores. Perishing with John



Yorke were WO. W.E.R. Machan; and FS.s G.F. Handel (RAF), and A.H. Severn (RAF). John Yorke would be officially listed as, *Killed during air operations, overseas (Azores)*. Twenty-two year old John Yorke is buried at Lajes War Cemetery, Azores Region, Portugal, Row A, Grave 9.

In mid-January of 1944, a memorial service for John Yorke was held at the United Church in Sombra. The church was filled to capacity as well as the adjoining Sunday school room. The service was conducted by Rev. J.B. Batten of the Anglican Church, assisted by Rev. J.R. Peters, pastor of the church. The service opened with the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers" during which the school mates of the young airman marched into the church. A former pastor, Rev. R.E. Southcott of Rodney who knew the young airman personally also paid tribute to him, which was followed by the playing of Reveille and the Last Post. John Yorke was Sombra's first casualty of the war. SOURCES: C, D, E, F, G, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

### **ZIERLER, Isaac Buck (#J/40890)**

Isaac "Bucky" Zierler was born in Sarnia on March 20, 1922, the son of Abraham Zierler and Leah (nee Rathman) Zierler, of 233 Davis Street, Sarnia. His parents, Abraham and Leah, were both born in Poland. Isaac attended public elementary school and Sarnia Collegiate in Sarnia. He went on to the University of Toronto and was awarded his Bachelor of Commerce degree in June of 1943. At university, he was athletic director at the University College and rex of Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity. He won the Reverend Cody Award for his athletic achievements, and the Jewish Gold Key Award of the Jewish Inter-Fraternity Council for his "scholarship, leadership, character and games" and for being an outstanding scholar and athlete among the fraternity men on campus. Before enlisting the service, he was a member of the Canadian Officers Training Corps at the University of Toronto in the department of military studies.

Upon graduating, Isaac, single at the time, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on March 1, 1943. He attended the Toronto manning pool and trained at Victoriaville, receiving his navigator's wings and commission as a Pilot Officer at Crumlin on January 28, 1944. Isaac Zierler proceeded overseas in April 1944, and received further training in England. In mid-May of 1944, Isaac would send his mother Leah a Mother's Day greeting from overseas. Isaac Zierler would become a member of RCAF #433 Porcupine squadron "Qui S'y Frotte S'y Pique" (Who opposes it gets hurt), attaining the rank of Flying Officer-Navigator.

In early March of 1945, while serving in England, Isaac Zierler would send his mother Leah a bouquet of flowers. One month later, on April 10, 1945, Isaac was a member of a crew aboard Lancaster aircraft PB903 that was on a bombing mission over Germany. On that night, their Lancaster was hit by predicted flak approaching their target over Leipzig, Germany. The starboard engine caught fire but was immediately feathered and the fire put out. The aircraft was seen to lose height to starboard when an explosion occurred which flipped the aircraft over. It then spiralled into the ground and the bomb load exploded.

In mid-April of 1945, parents Abraham and Leah Zierler in Sarnia would receive a telegram from Ottawa informing them that their son, *Flying Officer I.B. Zierler, is reported missing in action on April 10*. Isaac Zierler was reported missing in action less than one month before the end of the war in Europe. Perishing with Isaac Zierler were P/O.s F.G. Seeley, J.M. Hirak, and D.W. Roberts; F/O.s W.G. McLeod and R.J. Grisdale; and Sgt. W.A. Thurston (RAF). Isaac Zierler would later be officially listed as, *Previously reported missing after air operations, now for official purposes, presumed dead, overseas (Germany)*. Twenty-three year old Isaac Buck Zierler is buried in Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery, Germany, Grave 8.F.9.

Isaac Buck Zierler and thirteen other local men had their names engraved on a plaque honouring fourteen Jewish members of the armed services from Sarnia. The plaque was unveiled in the Ahavas Isaac Synagogue, Davis Street, Sarnia on March 30, 1945. The men, all from Sarnia, honoured on the plaque were M. Berger, S. Bernard, R. Heller, I. Haber, M. Kirk, Dr. I. Mann, A. Rosen, G. Shabsove, M. Skosov, Mitchell Smith, Murray Smith, L. Swartz, I.B. Zierler, Isaac Zierler. Three of the men--Isaac Buck Zierler, Max Berger and Mitchell Smith--made the supreme sacrifice. Isaac Buck Zierler is also honoured in the memorial book "Canadian Jews in World War II". SOURCES: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, L, M, N, 2C, 2D

*DEATH CULLED HIM FAR FROM HIS NATIVE LAND, FAR FROM HIS FRIENDS.  
PASSERBY, PRAY FOR HIM.*

# CITY OF SARNIA WAR MEMORIALS

There are two War Memorial Monuments in Sarnia's Veterans Park  
(Wellington St., South and East of Sarnia Public Library)

## BOER WAR MEMORIAL

ERECTED BY THE SCHOOL CHILDREN AND CITIZENS OF LAMBTON COUNTY  
PAARDEBERG, DRIEFONTIEN, JOHANNESBURG, DIAMOND HILL,  
BELFAST, DEWEGENDRIFT, LYNDENBURG  
SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1901

NAMES ON THIS MEMORIAL ARE THOSE MEN FROM  
LAMBTON COUNTY WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE BOER WAR

COLTER, C.F.  
HARLEY, J.  
MACKENZIE, H.  
NEVILLE, H.M.  
PARDEE, J. B.  
VAN TUYL, T.

CRONE, D.J.  
HUME, A.H.  
MCMILLAN, D.C.  
NEVILLE, H.S.  
REYNOLDS, R.

GORMAN, SERGT. F.  
JOHNSTON, K.G.  
NEAR, B.  
NEVILLE, J.F.  
SCOTT, C.R.

## SARNIA CENOTAPH – VETERAN'S PARK

ERECTED BY THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF SARNIA  
UNVEILED BY MAYOR GEORGE CRAWFORD ARMISTICE DAY NOV. 11TH, 1921  
RE-DEDICATED BY REV. G.G. STONE  
UNVEILED BY LT-COL. J.H. COLEMAN M.B.E. ED. NOV. 11TH, 1955  
TO KEEP FOREVER LIVING THE FREEDOM FOR WHICH THEY DIED  
THIS SYMBOL HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO THE FALLEN

### WORLD WAR I SECTION (1914-1918)

ACKERMAN, R.H.  
ALLAN, J.H.  
BATEY, R.A.  
BELL, A.W.  
BENTLEY, Dr. D.B.  
BOLTON, M.  
CARSON, R.J.  
CHESTER, F.J.  
COWAN, S.  
CROUCHER, J.  
DOXTATOR, F.  
EDWARDS, F.W.  
FITZGERALD, A.L.  
GORE, G.  
HANNA, N.W.

ADAMS, A.R.  
ANSBRO, G.P.  
BEAUMONT, G.  
BENDALL, W.G.H.  
BENWARD, N.  
BREARLY, N.  
CAUSLEY, E.F.  
CORRICK, A.  
CRAWFORD, R.B.  
DAVIES, S.R.  
EBERLY, A.E.  
ELLIOTT, J.M.  
FORD, P.J.  
GUERTIN, P.E.  
HARRIS, G.H.

ALLAN, A.J.  
BARNES, C.H.  
BELL, A.  
BENNETT, J.W.  
BISSETT, C.  
BURY, H.G.  
CHAPMAN, W.H.  
COULTER, W.J.  
CRAWFORD, R.P.  
DICKINSON, G.  
EDDY, W.P.  
FAIR, R.  
GILES, G.T.  
HALL, G.  
HAZEN, G.D.

HOWARTH, J.L.  
IRESON, A.  
JOHNSTON, G.C.  
KETCH, A.H.W.  
LUMLEY, R.H.  
MCDONALD, A.  
MCMULLEN, L.C.  
NASH, H.  
NORWOOD, J.H.  
POWELL, T.  
ROBINSON, F.J.  
SALISBURY, J.  
SKINNER, W.B.  
SOPER, R.W.  
SUMMERS, M.J.  
TOWERS, N.E.  
WATSON, E.P.  
WHEATLEY, G.  
WILSON, C.B.

HOWE, C.  
JANES, G.J.  
JONES, A.  
KNIGHT, C.E.  
MAJOR, C.R.  
MCGIBBON, H.  
MCMUTRIE, J.A.  
NICHOL, D.L.  
PIERRIE, J.M.  
REID, G.  
RODBER, A.  
SCOTT, W.  
SMITH, H.  
STEELE, J.  
THOMSON, D.A.E.  
WADE, R.  
WEATHERILL, C.  
WILKINSON, W.  
WISEMAN, A.

ILIFFE, R.  
JOHNSTON, F.  
KERR, D.  
KNOWLES, N.  
MANNING, H.  
MCINTOSH, A.  
MONTGOMERY, D.C.  
NOEL, U.J.  
POTTER, A.E.  
REYNOLDS, W.H.  
ROGERS, A.  
SIMMONS, M.J.  
SMUCK, D.R.  
STOTT, H.  
TIMPSON, E.A.  
WALLIS, H.  
WESTON, A.  
WILLIAMS, F.J.  
WRIGHT, T.W.

## WORLD WAR II SECTION (1939-1945)

### NAVY

ANDERSON, W.J.  
BROWN, P.A.  
KETTLE, A.S.  
LUCAS, W.E.  
POWELL, S.B.  
WILCOX, R.

ANDREW, W.C.  
GRAINGER, R.J.  
LEGARRIE, H.  
MARTINDALE, R.O.  
RAMESBOTTOM, E.

BELL, J.C.  
HORLEY, W.C.  
LOVE, J.F.  
PAITHOUSKI, M.  
STEVENS, R.E.

### ARMY

AUBIN, J.L.  
BELL, I.G.  
BIRKINSHAW, F.  
CARLTON, W.F.  
CORE, G.D.  
DIONNE, R.W.  
ELLIS, N.G.  
FERGUSON, L.  
GRAHAM, W.R.  
HAMILTON, T.  
JARVO, F.A.  
JONES, G.  
KROHN, C.H.  
LONEY, G.V.  
McCLURE, J.K.  
METCALFE, W.S.

BANKS, J.K.  
BERGER, M.  
BUCHNER, W.H.  
CLARKE, J.C.  
DAWDY, C.B.  
DIONNE, R.C.  
ESSER, G.  
FISHER, J.G.  
GREEN, H.C.  
HEBNER, C.V.  
JENSEN, J.C.  
KELLY, G.R.  
LARSON, P.A.  
LYCHOWICH, J.L.  
McLAUGHLIN, P.D.  
MILLS, T.G.

BARCLAY, J.  
BERRY, C.E.  
BURR, K.L.  
CONWAY, A.E.  
DICK, D.  
DUROCHER, W.A.  
EVERINGHAM, A.C.  
FISHER, M.K.  
GREEN, R.R.  
HUMBLE, H.G.  
JOLLY, R.E.  
KIRK, L.G.  
LEGARE, R.  
McCLURE, D.L.  
McRAE, H.  
MONTEITH, C.C.

NORTHCOTT, J.H.  
RICHARDS, C.V.  
STOKES, E.S.  
VOKES, M.K.  
WILLIAMS, F.G.  
WILSON, J.E.S.

OTTAWAY, E.E.  
ROBERTS, M.J.  
SHEA, E.T.  
WADE, J.R.  
WILLIAMS, H.J.  
WILSON, R.N.

RAMSAY, R.D.  
RUSSELL, E.F.  
TOTTEN, W.F.  
WALKER, W.R.  
WILLIAMS, W.P.L.  
WRIGHT, J.D.

#### AIR FORCE

AIKEN, D.  
BORCHARDT, H.H.  
BURKE, D.W.  
CARR, S.A.  
DAWS, F.J.  
DUNCAN, J.W.  
FARNER, H.O.  
FOWLIE, J.M.  
GANDER, A.F.  
GRAHAM, L.T.  
HARRIS, J.M.  
KNIGHT, W.L.  
LECKIE, J.L.  
LOWRY, J.  
McFAYDEN, G.C.  
MELLON, R.J.  
MISENER, E.P.  
NASH, G.A.  
PARSONS, A.E.  
POWELL, T.E.  
RIDDOCH, G.  
SMITH, A.G.  
STRONACH, J.G.  
THAIN, J.A.  
VAIL, D.  
WRIGHT, J.L.

ANDREW, G.V.  
BRAKEMAN, C.J.  
CAMERON, W.D.L.  
CLARK, W.B.  
DOWDING, J.F.  
ELLIOT, T.H.  
FORDYCE, G.W.  
GALLAWAY, L.G.  
GORING, C.A.  
HAGGERTY, H.F.  
JOHNSON, J.S.  
KNOWLES, G.W.  
LEE, T.E.  
MacGREGOR, D.C.  
McKEOWN, V.H.  
MENDIZABAL, R.  
MORRIS, H.P.  
O'CONNOR, J.M.B.  
POLE, D.C.  
QUINN, J.E.  
ROSS, J.D.C.  
SMITH, M.  
TESKEY, S.J.  
THOMPSON, A.C.  
WATSON, E.C.  
ZIERLER, I.

BARR, W.J.  
BROWN, G.W.  
CAMPBELL, A.J.  
CRAWLEY, D.  
DRINKWATER, J.W.  
EVERS, O.C.  
FOSTER, C.ST.C.  
GAMMON, R.T.  
GORING, F.C.  
HALLAM, J.N.  
KEE, R.J.  
LANG, W.E.  
LOCHHEAD, R.  
McCALLUM, A.R.  
MEERE, L.R.  
MILLER, D.D.  
MYLES, E.R.  
OLIVER, W.J.  
POLE, R.N.  
RAMSAY, M.H.  
SHANKS, J.R.  
STONE, G.W.  
THAIN, C.K.  
THOMPSON, F.F.  
WISE, F.E.

#### KOREAN WAR SECTION (1950-1953)

PTE. PAT O'CONNOR

PTE. E.J.M. KNIGHT

#### OTHER THEATRES OF CONFLICT

CPL. BRENT POLAND – AFGHANISTAN 2007

# ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 62

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE

(\*THIS PLAQUE IS LOCATED ON OUTSIDE WEST WALL OF SARNIA LEGION BRANCH 62.  
THIS PLAQUE WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL SARNIA CENOTAPH  
UNVEILED IN NOVEMBER 1921)

SARNIA  
EVER HOLDS IN HONOUR  
IT'S RESIDENTS WHO SO NOBLY SERVED  
IN THE GREAT WAR  
1914 - 1918

AIKEN, N.R.	ALLAN, W.	ALLDRED, T.J.	ALLEN, E.C.
ALLINGHAM, C.A.	ALLINGHAM, J.C.	ALLINGHAM, L.F.	ANDERSON, B.H.
ANDERSON, C.	ANDREW, C.A.C.	APPLEBY, F.C.	ARCHER, G.
ARMSTRONG, D.M.	ASH, R.J.	AXTELL, G.	BAIKIE, S.W.
BAIRD, H.L.	BAKER, A.	BAKER, J.	BAKER, T.A.
BALDWIN, H.L.	BALLS, W.C.	BARNES, C.A.	BARNES, H.C.
BARNES, R.C.	BARNEY, C.	BARNINGHAM, W.T.	BARRETT, J.D.
BARRIE, J.	BASS, A.	BATHE, H.	BATTLE, J.C.S.
BAYDUCK, P.	BEADON, A.	BEADLE, F.A.	BEASLEY, C.F.
BEATTY, G.	BEER, D.P.	BELL, A.	BELL, A.W.
BELL, C.F.	BELL, J.A. DR.	BENDALL, S.	BENDALL, T.
BENDALL, W.C.H.	BENDING, A.	BENDING, C.R.	BENNETT, F.
BENNETT, J.	BENNETT, T.	BENTLEY, A.W., M.C.	BENTLEY, C.
BENTLEY, D.W.	BENTLEY, J.	BENTLEY, J.S., M.M.	BENTLEY, R.R.
BENTLEY, W.J., DR.	BERNARD, M.	BERESFORD, H.F.	BERREY, J.
BIGLER, C.	BIRKINSHAW, W.	BISHOP, M.L.	BISSETT, WM.
BLACKBURN, G.	BLACKLOCK, A.	BLAKE, C.	BLAKE, C., JR.
BLAKE, C.W.	BLOOMFIELD, H.S.	BODDY, G.T.	BOHANAN, T.A.
BOHANAN, J.J.	BOODY, W.J.	BORG, C.	BORTHWICK, C.E.
BOSWELL, J.W.	BOULTON, A.R.	BOULTON, L.E.	BOWER, J.E.L.
BOYD, R.G.	BOYD, W.J.	BOYNES, G.A.	BRADLEY, T.P., DR.
BRADT, F.A.	BRAMLEY, H.	BREAKEY, J.S.	BRENT, G.E.
BRENT, W.A.	BRIGDEN, S.	BRIMS, W.J.	BRITNEY, B.H.
BROOKE, J.	BROWN, E.	BROWN, G.E.	BROWN, J.G.
BROWN, J.L.	BROWN, L.C.	BROWN, N.	BROWN, W.F.
BROWNING, J.H.	BRUNLEP, C.M.	BRYANT, C.	BUCHANAN, F.
BUCHANAN, C.J.	BURKE, C.H.	BURKINSHAW, W.	BURLEY, S.H.
BURNS, W.	BUXTON, W.	CAIRNS, R.	CALLUM, G.
CALLUM, J.D.	CALLAGHAN, J.	CAMERON, A.	CAMERON, A.P.
CAMERON, G.D.	CAMERON, H.J.	CAMPBELL, A.	CAMPBELL, A.G.
CAMPBELL, E.A.	CAMPBELL, H.E.	CAMPBELL, L.A.	CAMPBELL, W.M.
CARLTON, F.G.	CARROLL, R.	CARSON, A.W.	CARSON, M.B.(NURSE)
CARTER, A.J.	CARTER, J.W.A.	CHADWICK, A.	CHALMERS, J.A.
CHAMBERS, A.F.	CHAPELLE, G.	CHAPELLE, H.J.	CHARRINGTON, H.J.
CHEYNE, W.	CHIVERS, C.J.	CHIVERS, J.A.	CHIVERS, J.W.
CHRISTIE, E.	CHRISTNER, A.	CHURCHER, A.	CLARK, B.
CLARK, R.J.	CLARK, W.R.	CLARKE, E.T.	CLAXTON, G.
CLELAND, F.W.	CLEMENCE, S.W.	CLEMENTS, J.	CLEMSON, J.J.
COGGER, A.E.	COLE, M.	COLE, R.G.	COLLINS, F.E.
COLLINS, H.T.	COLLINSON, G.	COLLUM, G.P.	COLTER, H.D.
COLVILLE, J.F.	CONLIN, F.P.M.	CONLIN, J.S.	CONLIN, T.E.
CONNELLY, G.H.	CONSIDINE, G.J.	CONSTABLE, L.	COOK, G.A.
COOK, M.J.	COOK, S.	COOPER, G.	COOPER, G.J.
COREY, P.M.	CORIN, W.T.	CORNISH, A.J.	COPELAND, W.C.
COSSEY, R.N.	COTCH, C.	COWAN, H.	COX, A.
COX, C.E.	CRANNEY, O.	CRAWFORD, A.W., M.M.	CRAWFORD, G.
CRAWFORD, H.S.	CRAWFORD, J.S.	CRAWFORD, R.P.	CRICK, E.G.

CROCKARD, A.T.	CROCKETT, J.	CROCKETT, L.	CRONIN, T.P.
CROSBY, G.S.	CROUCHMAN, O.G.	CROXFORD, W.G.H.	CULLEY, F.C.
CUNNINGHAM, J.	CUNNINGHAM, J.W.	CURRIE, E.	CURRIE, N.
CURTIN, E.H.	CURTIS, A.S.	CUSACH, B.S.	CUSCHIERI, C.
DALE, R.W.	DALE, S.	DARBYSHIRE, J.E.	DARBYSHIRE, L.H.
DATE, E.C.	DATE, L.	DAVIDSON, T.	DAVIES, J.
DAWSON, F.P.	DAWSON, G.D.	DEEGAN, W.J.	DEGURSE, A.A.
DENCH, G.B.	DENNIS, O.E.	DENNIS, P.E.	DIAMOND, E.
DIAMOND, J.A.	DICKINS, H.	DIONNE, C.A.	DIONNE, C.L.
DIONNE, M.V.	DIONNE, R.W.	DODDS, L.J.	DONOHUE, M.J.
DOUGHTY, C.	DOXTATOR, F.	DRINKWATER, E.W.	DROPE, A.
DUFFIELD, S.J.	DUFRENNE, D.	DUFRESNE, E.T.	DUNCAN, J.T.
DUNCAN, M.S.	DUKE, J.	DURAND, E.	DYELE, R.H.
DYMOND, S.J.	EBERLY, A.E.	EDGAR, W.	EDWARDS, G.
EDWARDS, W.E.	EISENBACH, J.E.	ELLEANOR, H.	ELLEANOR, S.
ELLIOTT, A.C.	ELLIOTT, E.E.	ELLIOTT, J.	ELLIOTT, J.M.
ELLIS, A.C.	ELLIS, E.	ELLIS, G.	ELLIS, G.F.
ELLIS, I.M. (NURSE)	ELLIS, J.	ELLIS, J.F.	ELLIS, W.J.
ELRICK, W.	EMERICK, W.F.	EVANS, J.T.	EVERINGHAM, E.
EWENER, W.G.	FAIRSERVICE, J.	FAWCETT, C.G.	FAWCETT, H.
FAWCETT, L.	FAWCETT, W.	FAWCETT, W.L.	FERGUSON, E.
FERGUSON, G.	FERGUSON, G.W.	FERGUSON, J.	FERRIS, F.G.
FINAN, D.W.	FINAN, G.A.	FINCH, R.	FINLAY, R.G.
FITZGERALD, A.L.	FLACK, B.S.	FLEMING, H.	FLETCHER, M.B.
FORBES, A.	FORBES, G.	FORD, W.J.	FOREMAN, J.H.
FOREMAN, T.A.	FOREMAN, W.	FOREMAN, W.G.	FORGIE, G.W.
FORRON, G.A.	FORRON, R.C.	FORSHEE, H.E.	FOSTER, F.
FOSTER, J.F.	FOX, E.	FOX, F.J.	FOY, E.
FRALICK, G.W.	FRASER, A.	FRASER, C.H.	FRAYNE, A.H.
FREELAND, C.I.	FRENCH, A.C.	FRENCH, E.G.	FULCHER, E.W.
GALLOWAY, A.J.	GALLOWAY, H.	GALLOWAY, L.	GAMACHE, E.W.
GAMMON, T.	GAMMON, W.T.	GAPP, S.T.	GARDINER, J.R.
GARK, R.J.	GARNUM, L.C.	GARRISON, R.	GARROD, A.
GARSON, J.I.	GARVEY, G.G.	GARVIN, W.	GEARY, C.
GEDDES, J.K.	GELDARD, E.	GILBERT, G.W.	GILBERT, W.G.
GILBERT, W.T.	GILCHRIST, W.	GILES, G.T.	GILMORE, W.L.
GILROY, E.	GILSON, A.	GOODALL, A.	GOODISON, J.M.C.
GORDON, C.H.	GORDON, J.	GORMAN, F.	GOSLING, J.
GLAAB, N.	GLAAB, P.	GLASS, A.	GLASS, J.W.
GLEASON, M.E.	GLEASON, P.J.	GLEASON, T.	GOWANS, L.B.
GOWIE, J.L.	GRAHAM, R.J.	GRANAT, M.	GRANT, M.
GRAY, A.	GRAY, G.S.	GRAY, J.	GRAY, R.
GRAY, W.	GRAYSON, H.V.	GREEN, D.	GREEN, G.S.
GREENWOOD, D.D.	GRIFFIN, S.	GRIMMER, G.	GROVER, J.
GUERDON, C.	GULSTON, D.	GUTHRIE, R.A.	GUTTERIDGE, W.
HACKET, M.J.	HAGUE, L.	HAINES, G.A.	HALEY, H.W.
HALEY, J.R.	HALEY, W.D.	HALL, A.	HALL, J.
HALL, N.	HAMILTON, D.	HAMILTON, J.A.	HAMILTON, T.G.
HANEY, W.S.	HANDSON, W.	HANRATTY, P.	HARDY, G.W.
HARKNESS, G.	HARKNESS, J.C.	HARKNESS, W.J.	HARNESSE, S.
HARRIS, A.	HARRIS, G.	HARRIS, G.H.	HAWE, F.C.
HAWKINGS, C.E.	HAWKYARD, H.	HAY, W.D.	HAYES, E.W.
HEARST, J.H.	HENDERSON, A.J.	HENDERSON, W.	HENDERSON, W.A., DR.
HENSHAW, A.G.	HESKEITH, W.G.	HEWITT, W.	HICKEY, F.
HICKS, B.	HICKS, J.	HIGGINS, T.F.	HILL, H.L.
HIPPLE, J.S.	HIPPLE, W.C.	HITCHCOCK, S.	HOBIN, J.
HODGINS, R.	HOLLAND, F.T.	HOLLAND, R.	HONEYBOURNE, A.
HOOPER, R.V.	HORNBOSTEL, A.P.	HORNBOSTEL, G.E.	HOUGHTON, F.A.
HOWARD, A.	HOWARD, A.R.	HOWARD, E.F.	HOWARD, J.
HOWARTH, J.L.	HOWE, C.	HOWELL, A.J.	HOWES, R.
HUCKER, C.	HUFF, J.H.	HUNT, J.M.	HUNT, R.S.
HURRY, R.C.	HURST, J.H.	HYNE, J.H.	IRVINE, H.J.
IRVINE, T.	IVENSON, A.	JACOBS, F.	JACQUES, R.

JAMES, J.F., DR.  
 JANES, F.  
 JERVIS, C.E.  
 JOHNSTON, B.  
 JOHNSTON, W.  
 JONES, L.E. D.S.O.  
 KARNS, J.  
 KELLAM, F.  
 KEMSLEY, G.  
 KILLER, C.P.E.  
 KNIGHT, R.  
 LAIDLAW, N.J.  
 LANG, J.  
 LANGAN, J.P.  
 LAPLANTE, C.E.  
 LAWRENCE, D.D.  
 LAWRENCE, W.A.  
 LENNOX, W.  
 LETHBRIDGE, J.  
 LEWIS, L.  
 LITTLEFIELD, T.E.  
 LOGAN, C.  
 LOTT, R.L.  
 LOVER, R.  
 LUCAS, J.E.  
 LUMBY, C.A.  
 LUSCOMBE, C.  
 MACDONALD, J.  
 MACFEE, M.D.  
 MACKENZIE, J.  
 MACKENZIE, U.A.  
 MACRAE, M.  
 MAHUE, F.  
 MANCHESTER, H.  
 MANN, H.A.  
 MARRIOTT, G.M.  
 MARSHALL, J.  
 MATHEWS, J.G.  
 MAVITY, W.B.  
 McCARTHY, J.W.  
 McDONALD, D.  
 McDONALD, R.  
 McFEE, K.  
 McGREGORY, J.  
 McKENZIE, M.F.  
 McLAREN, J.F.  
 McLEAN, J.  
 McMANN, E.  
 McNAUGHTON, H.R.  
 McRAE, J.  
 MERCER, N.W.  
 MILLARD, H.C.  
 MILLER, M.L.  
 MILLIKEN, A.E.  
 MILNE, J.C.  
 MITCHELL, S.W.  
 MOORE, J.  
 MORPHEW, A.J.  
 MORRIS, W.G.  
 MORRISON, M.L.  
 MUMFORD, J.V.  
 MURPHY, A.  
 MYLES, J.  
 NAYWOG, A.R.

JAMIESON, C.  
 JANESS, J.W.  
 JOHNSON, E.W.  
 JOHNSTON, E.  
 JONES, E.H.  
 JORDAN, R.  
 KEAT, C.W.P.  
 KELLS, G.P.  
 KENNEDY, J.  
 KING, J.  
 KNIGHT, W.W.J.  
 LAIDLER, H.  
 LANG, M.  
 LAPHAM, E.W.  
 LATCHFORD, W.A.  
 LAWRENCE, J.M.  
 LEBEL, A.  
 LEROUX, D.  
 LETHBRIDGE, W.  
 LEWIS, W.A.  
 LIVERANCE, E.  
 LOGIE, D.  
 LOTT, W.H.  
 LUCAS, F.  
 LUCAS, J.F.  
 LUMBY, M.  
 LYNN, C.  
 MACDONALD, J.A.  
 MACGREGOR, H.M.  
 MACKENZIE, J.R.  
 MACKENZIE, W.J.A.  
 MACVICAR, W.W.  
 MAIR, G.  
 MANERS, E.  
 MANN, W.A.  
 MARRIOTT, H.R.  
 MASSON, J.  
 MATHEWS, O.H.  
 MAYS, U.T.  
 McClINTOCK, H.G.  
 McDONALD, D.K.  
 McDONNELL, J.  
 McGEE, T.H.  
 McINTOSH, C.E.  
 McKENZIE, S.  
 McLAUGHLIN, A.J.  
 McLLELLAN, A.  
 McMICHAEL, H.F.  
 McNEIL, S.E.  
 McVEY, J.P.  
 MERENZ, L.  
 MILLER, G.C.  
 MILLIGAN, G.C.  
 MILLIKEN, O.J.  
 MINNE, C.L.  
 MITCHELSON, A.R.L.  
 MOORE, L.  
 MORPHEW, E.  
 MORRISON, J.G.  
 MORRISON, R.G.  
 MUNDAY, C.F.  
 MURPHY, A.R.  
 NAPPER, E.P.  
 NEILSON, W.

JAMIESON, J.A.  
 JARVIS, J.  
 JOHNSON, W.  
 JOHNSTON, G.  
 JONES, J.A.  
 JOSS, R.  
 KEAT, W.T.  
 KELLY, F.L.  
 KENNY, R.Y., M.C.  
 KING, J.C.  
 KNOWLES, J.W.K.  
 LANE, F.E.  
 LANGAN, A.  
 LAPHAM, G.W.  
 LAURIE, R.  
 LAWRENCE, L.M.  
 LEITCH, S.  
 LESTER, C.A.  
 LEWIS, C.H.  
 LEZZETTE, L.  
 LLOYD, A.E.  
 LONDON, A.L.  
 LOVE, W.J.  
 LUCAS, G.E.  
 LUCAS, R.J.  
 LUMLEY, F.W.  
 MACADAMS, J.M.  
 MACDONALD, J.C.  
 MACGREGOR, R.G.  
 MACKENZIE, M.  
 MACLEAN, D.  
 MADDEN, R.G.  
 MAIR, W.J.  
 MANESS, A.W.  
 MANNERS, A.W.  
 MARRIOTT, R.A.  
 MATEER, I.L.  
 MATTHEWS, G.A.  
 McCALLUM, R.C.  
 McCORMICK, W.L.  
 McDONALD, G.A.  
 McDOUGALL, J.F.  
 McGIBBON, F.  
 McKENNA, J.L.  
 McKNIGHT, A.J.  
 McLAUGHLIN, J.P.  
 McLEOD, J.J.  
 McMURTIE, J.  
 McPHERSON, D.  
 MELDRUM, W.  
 MERRISON, J. G.  
 MILLER, J.  
 MILLIGAN, H.C.  
 MILNE, J.S.  
 MITCHELL, G.  
 MODELAND, R.  
 MORGAN, A.  
 MORRIS, B.  
 MORRISON, J.R.  
 MULLEN, A.E., DR.  
 MUNRO, D.  
 MUSSELMAN, S.B.  
 NASH, A.C.  
 NELSON, F.E.

JANES, E.  
 JENNINGS, W.E.  
 JOHNSON, W.E.  
 JOHNSTON, J.J.  
 JONES, J.E.  
 KANE, J.W.  
 KEENE, F.  
 KEMSLEY, F.L.  
 KERR, D.  
 KIRBY, G., JR.  
 KNOWLES, R.J.  
 LANE, J.  
 LANGAN, C.P.  
 LAPHAM, H.J.  
 LAWRENCE, C.H.  
 LAWRENCE, R.C.  
 LEITCH, V.  
 LESUEUR, N.L., M.C.  
 LEWIS, F.A.  
 LISTER, A.  
 LOETSCHERT, H.T.  
 LONGLEY, H.  
 LOVE, R.E.  
 LUCAS, H.T.  
 LUCKINS, A.E.  
 LUMLEY, W.  
 MACDOUGALLES,GF  
 MACDONALD, W.G.  
 MACKENZIE,DNMCM  
 MACKENZIE, M.F.  
 MACLEAN, N., DR.  
 MAGGS, W.  
 MALLEY, J.L.  
 MANESS, E.  
 MARKS, A.E.  
 MARRIOTT, W.C.N.  
 MATHEWS, A.A.  
 MAVITY, J.E.  
 McCALLUM, S.  
 McCRAE, N.  
 McDONALD, J.C.  
 McFEE, F.J.  
 McGIBBON, J.  
 McKENZIE, K.B.  
 McLAREN, A.  
 McLEAN, A.  
 McMAHON, W.J.  
 McNAMARA, J.  
 McRAE, M.  
 MERCER, J.  
 MIDDLETON, G.  
 MILLER, J.W.  
 MILLIGAN, J.  
 MILNE, C.A.  
 MITCHELL, O.J.  
 MOORE, G.A.  
 MORLEY, B.  
 MORRIS, H.L.  
 MORRISON, L.B.  
 MULLIGAN, R.T.  
 MURRAY, A.  
 MYLES, E.W.  
 NASH, F.  
 NELSON, R.C.

NELSON, R.H.  
 NICHOL, W.G.  
 NOEL, U.J.  
 NUHKATON, E.  
 O'CONNOR, W.N.  
 ORMOND, T.J.  
 PACQUETTE, J.J.  
 PAQUETTE, A.J.  
 PARKER, K.L.  
 PARSONS, C.  
 PATTERSON, W.  
 PEASE, W.  
 PETERSON, H.  
 PHILLIPS, W.E.  
 PIRRIE, T.W.  
 POTTER, P.  
 PRINGLE, A.C.  
 PURCELL, M.  
 RAMSAY, B.A.  
 RANDOLPH, J.W.  
 REEVES, H.J.  
 RICHARDSON, S.G.  
 RIGSBY, R.W.  
 ROBERTS, W.  
 ROBINS, A.  
 ROBINSON, W.  
 ROONEY, W.K.  
 ROSENBLOOM, R.E.  
 ROSS, R.E.  
 RUSSELL, F.  
 RYLANDS, W.S.  
 SANDERSON, E.J.  
 SARVIS, E.G.  
 SAVOY, E.  
 SCHOOLCRAFT, C.  
 SELVEY, H.C.  
 SHEDDEN, W.  
 SHORT, A.  
 SIM, R.K.  
 SIMPSON, R.G.  
 SINCLAIR, J.  
 SLATER, A.T.  
 SMITH, H.  
 SMITH, M.E.  
 SMUCK, J.W.  
 SPARLING, N.  
 SPENCER, W.T.  
 STAUFFER, T.D.  
 STEPLER, C.E.  
 STONER, G.P.  
 STRUTHERS, R.F.  
 STUBBS, L.N.  
 SWAN, J.A.  
 TANCOCK, J.E.  
 TAYLOR, H.M.  
 TELFER, H.R.  
 THOMAN, W.O.  
 THORN, H.W.  
 TOREK, P.  
 TRAINOR, H.  
 TREMEER, C.  
 TURNER, T.  
 VALLIS, C.G.  
 VIGNEAU, R.H.  
 NEWELL, J.S.  
 NISBET, D.W.  
 NORMAN, F.D.  
 NUNN, T.  
 O'DONNELL, F.J.  
 OWENS, G.E.  
 PALMER, H.W.  
 PAQUETTE, L.  
 PARKER, R.  
 PARSONS, D.A.G.M.C.  
 PAUL, C.  
 PELL, B.  
 PETERSON, O.  
 PHIPPEN, C.  
 POLE, W.H.  
 POTTER, W.O.  
 POUSETTEE, A.C.B.  
 QUIGLY, W.J.  
 RAMSAY, L.H.  
 RANDOLPH, R.  
 REYNOLDS, E.  
 RIDEALGH, A.  
 ROADHOUSE, R.T.  
 ROBERTSON, D.N.  
 ROBINSON, A.  
 RODD, W.  
 ROSE, A.  
 ROSS, E.  
 ROSS, W.  
 RUSSELL, F.J.  
 SAMIS, C.H.  
 SANDFORD, F.R.  
 SAUNDERS, E.  
 SCARROW, R.  
 SCOTT, W.G.  
 SHANKS, S.  
 SHEEHAN, J.  
 SHORT, A.O.  
 SIMMONS, E.S.  
 SIMPSON, T.C.  
 SINCLAIR, L.H.  
 SLOAN, O.S.  
 SMITH, J.  
 SMITH, S.  
 SNELL, H.  
 SPENCE, T.  
 STAMM, H.  
 ST. CLAIR, J.W.  
 STEWART, J.  
 STOREY, G.B.  
 STUART, D.  
 SULLIVAN, W.K.  
 SWANN, T.  
 TANNER, C.A.  
 TAYLOR, S.  
 TELFER, L.O.  
 THOMAS, O.  
 TILLEY, J.P.  
 TORRANCE, W.  
 TRAPP, G.R.  
 TRIPP, H.  
 TYLLER, G.E.  
 VALLIS, C.J.  
 VINCE, G.  
 NEWTON, F.  
 NISBET, H.A.  
 NORTH, J.G.  
 O'CONNOR, C.  
 OLIVER, A.  
 PAGE, H.  
 PALMER, J.  
 PAQUETTE, L.M.  
 PARKER, W.H.  
 PARSONS, H.M.S.  
 PAUL, R.  
 PELL, J.  
 PHILLIPS, A.H.W.  
 PIRRIE, J.  
 PONTEFRACT, R.W.  
 PROCTOR, D.  
 PROWSE, H.C.  
 QUINN, H.  
 RANDOLPH, C.  
 REDDING, W.T.  
 RICHARDSON, G.  
 RIDEALGH, H.W.  
 ROBB, W.E.  
 ROBERTSON, W.  
 ROBINSON, J.R.  
 RODEY, E.A.  
 ROSE, H.  
 ROSS, J.  
 ROWE, J.P.  
 RYAN, E.  
 SAMIS, N.E.  
 SANGSTER, J.  
 SAUNDERS, O.  
 SCHELL, R.  
 SCULLEY, R.W.E.  
 SHARLAND, T.  
 SHILLINGLAW, L.G.  
 SHORT, G.T.  
 SIMPSON, C.F.  
 SIMPSON, W.N.  
 SINCLAIR, W.J.H.  
 SMILY, H.T.  
 SMITH, J.L.  
 SMITH, S.J.  
 SNIDER, W.T.  
 SPENCER, J.H.  
 STANLAKE, R.W.  
 STEEL, A.E.  
 STOKES, S.G.  
 STOREY, W.G.  
 STUART, G.F.  
 SUTCLIFFE, E.  
 TAGG, C.  
 TANNER, D.  
 TAYLOR, T.H.  
 TENNANT, A.W.  
 THOMPSON, A.E.  
 TINSLEY, J.H.  
 TOTTEN, I.  
 TRAVIS, J.T.  
 TURNER, G.  
 TYLLER, J.  
 VANVALKENBURG, G.  
 WADE, A.  
 NEWTON, J.  
 NISBET, P.E. (NURSE)  
 NORTHCOTE, A.F.  
 O'CONNOR, M.J.  
 OLIVER, F.  
 PAGE, R.R.  
 PALMER, W.S.  
 PARDEE, H.M.  
 PARSONS, A.W.G.  
 PATTERSON, C.E.  
 PEARSON, J.  
 PERCIVAL, J.C.  
 PHILLIPS, R.  
 PIRRIE, J.M.  
 PORTER, W.G.  
 PRICE, F.W.  
 PURCELL, D.  
 QUINN, R.  
 RANDOLPH, D.R.  
 REED, J.  
 RICHARDSON, G.A.H.  
 RIDGE, W.  
 ROBERTS, R.  
 ROBERTSON, W.J.  
 ROBINSON, P.S.  
 RODEY, J.B.  
 ROSENBLOOM, E.A.  
 ROSS, P.  
 ROWLAND, C.A.  
 RYAN, J.G.  
 SANDERSON, E.D.  
 SARGEANT, F.H.  
 SAVAGE, R.W.  
 SCHWARTZ, A.L.  
 SEDWICK, L.  
 SHARPE, G.  
 SHILLINGLAW, T.W.  
 SHORT, J.E.  
 SIMPSON, J.A.  
 SINCLAIR, H.  
 SKIPP, A.W.  
 SMITH, G.  
 SMITH, L.K.  
 SMITH, W.  
 SPARLING, E.R.  
 SPENCER, T.  
 STAUFFER, G.  
 STEEP, E.  
 STONEHOUSE, A.A.  
 STOTHERS, J.  
 STUBBS, H.  
 SUTHERLAND, R.  
 TAIT, C.W.  
 TAYLOR, E.  
 TAYLOR, W.H.  
 TESKEY, A.  
 THOMPSON, P.  
 TINSLEY, R.L.  
 TOWERS, R.I.  
 TRAYNOR, P.  
 TURNER, J.H.  
 URMSON, J.  
 VIGNEAU, J.E.  
 WADE, R.J.



WADE, W.  
WALKER, W. L.  
WALLER, W.  
WANAMAKER, W.T.  
WARD, J.E.  
WATERS, A.  
WATSON, W.G.  
WEBSTER, E.H.  
WEST, E.B.  
WESTON, H.  
WHALEN, C.  
WHITLAM, W.D.  
WILKIE, F.N.  
WILLIAMS, A.D.  
WILLIAMS, J.  
WILLOWS, F.  
WILSON, D.E.  
WINGROVE, V.J.  
WITHERS, S.C.  
WOODS, G.  
WYKESMITH, W.A.  
YEATES, W.W.  
ZINK, H.

WALKER, E.S.  
WALLACE, F.W.  
WALLEY, J.  
WANLESS, A.G.  
WARD, J.S.  
WATSON, E.  
WATTHAM, W.J.  
WEIR, C.  
WEST, W.N.  
WESTON, J.H.  
WHALLEY, J.  
WILCOCKS, G.  
WILKIE, J.  
WILLIAMS, C.H.  
WILLIAMSON, B.  
WILLS, W.M.  
WILSON, J.J.  
WISE, C.E.  
WOOD, V.H.  
WOOLNER, H.  
WYLD, H.  
YORKE, G.B.  
ZINK, L.J.

WALKER, F.R.  
WALLACE, J.  
WALLIS, J.W.  
WARD, F.  
WAREHAM, W.C.  
WATSON, N.F.  
WEATHERRILL, B.P.  
WELCH, G.M.  
WESTON, A.  
WESTON, R.W.  
WHITE, E.W.  
WILES, N.  
WILDING, H.  
WILLIAMS, G.  
WILLIS, J.  
WILSON, B.  
WILSON, S.W.  
WISE, M.  
WOODIWISS, E.  
WRIGHT, J.  
WYNNE, J.  
YOUNG, H.C.

WALKER, W.H.  
WALLACE, J.W.  
WALTERHOUSE, J.E.  
WARD, H.  
WARNE, H.  
WATSON, R.  
WEATHERRILL, R.J.  
WELSH, G.E.  
WESTON, C.E.  
WESTON, T.  
WHITE, J.H.  
WILKIE, A.  
WILKINSON, D.G.  
WILLIAMS, G.H.  
WILLIS, R.  
WILSON, C.  
WILSON, W.J.  
WISEMAN, W.  
WOODROW, C.S.  
WRIGHT, W.E.  
WYSEMAN, R.G.  
YOUNGS, E.A.

## **ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 62 PLAQUES CONTINUED**

(THERE ARE TWO SMALLER PLAQUES LOCATED ON THE OUTSIDE WALL  
OF SARNIA LEGION, ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ABOVE LARGE MEMORIAL PLAQUES.  
PLAQUE #1 WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL SARNIA CENOTAPH UNVEILED NOVEMBER 1921)

### **PLAQUE #1**

1914 – 1918

PRO HONORE ET JUSTITIA

ERECTED IN MEMORY OF  
THE RESIDENTS OF SARNIA  
WHO PAID

THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

ANSBRO, G.P.  
ADAMS, A.R.  
BENWARD, N.  
CRAWFORD, R.B.  
CROUCHER, J.  
EDWARDS, F.W.  
GUERTIN, P.E.  
ILIFFE, R.  
KETCH, A.H.W.  
MCGIBBON, H.  
MCDONALD, A.  
POTTER, A.E.  
STOTT, H.  
WESTON, A.  
WEATHERILL, C.

ACKERMAN, R.H.  
BEAUMONT, G.  
BISSETT, C.  
CORRICK, A.  
CHAPMAN, W.H.  
EDDY, W.P.  
GORE, G.  
JOHNSTON, F.  
KNIGHT, C.E.  
MAJOR, C.R.  
NASH, H.  
REYNOLDS, W.H.  
TIMPSON, E.A.  
WRIGHT, T.W.  
WHEATLEY, G.

ALLAN, A.J.  
BENNETT, J.W.  
BOLTON, M.  
COULTER, W.J.  
CAUSLEY, E.F.  
EBERLY, A.E.  
HANNA, N.W.  
JONES, A.  
KNOWLES, N.  
MCMULLEN, L.C.  
NORWOOD, J.H.  
SIMMONS, M.J.  
TOWERS, N.E.  
WADE, R.  
WILLIAMS, F.J.

ALLAN, J.H.  
BATEY, R.A.  
BARNES, C.H.  
COWAN, S.  
CHESTER, F.J.  
FORD, P.J.  
HAZEN, G.D.  
JANES, C.J.  
LUMLEY, R.H.  
MCINTOSH, A.  
NOEL, U.J.  
SMUCK, D.R.  
THOMSON, D.A.E.  
WATSON, E.P.  
WISEMAN, A.

## ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 62 PLAQUES CONTINUED

### PLAQUE #2

(PLAQUE #2 WAS ADDED TO THE ORIGINAL SARNIA CENOTAPH IN NOVEMBER 1922)

#### IN MEMORIAM

BELL, A.	BELL, A.W.	BENDALL, W.G.H.	BENTLEY, DR.D.B.
BREARLEY, N.	BURY, H.G.	CARSON, R.J.	CRAWFORD, R.P.
DAVIES, S.R.	DICKINSON, G.	DOXTATOR, F.	ELLIOTT, J.M.
FAIR, R.	FITZGERALD, A.L.	GILES, G.T.	HALL, G.
HARRIS, G.H.	HOWE, C.	HOWARTH, J.L.	IRESON, A.
JOHNSTON, G.C.	KERR, D.	MONTGOMERY, D.C.	MANNING, H.
MCMUTRIE, J.A.	NICHOL, D.L.	POWELL, T.	PIERRIE, J.M.
REID, G.	RODBER, A.	ROBINSON, F.J.	ROGERS, A.
SKINNER, W.B.	STEELE, J.	SALISBURY, J.	SOPER, R.W.
SCOTT, W.	SMITH, H.	SUMMERS, E.	VALLIS, H.
WILSON, C.B.	WILKINSON, W.		

## IMPERIAL OIL LIMITED – SARNIA REFINERY PLAQUE

(IN APRIL OF 1949, THE PRESIDENT OF IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY  
UNVEILED A MEMORIAL PLAQUE AT THE SARNIA REFINERY,  
DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE EMPLOYEES  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN WORLD WAR II)

1939 – 1945

THEY GAVE TO THE LAST FULL  
MEASURE OF SACRIFICE THAT  
LIBERTY MIGHT NOT PERISH

FRED BIRKINSHAW  
WM. D.L. CAMERON  
A. EDWARD CONWAY  
THOMAS H. ELLIOTT  
WALLACE C. HORLEY  
FREDERICK H. IRWIN  
GERALD R. KELLY  
WALLACE E. LANG  
THOMAS G. MILLS  
H. PAUL MORRIS  
W. JOHN OLIVER  
DOUGLAS C. POLE

CHARLES RICHARDS  
W. JOHN ROGERS  
DOUGLAS J. ROSS  
JAMES R. SHANKS  
JAMES G. STRONACH  
LES. G. SUTHERLAND  
STANLEY J. TESKEY  
H. FRASER THOMPSON  
JACK A. THURLOW  
WALTER F. TOTTEN  
ROBERT J. WILCOX  
JOHN D. WRIGHT

SARNIA REFINERY

**SARNIA COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE & TECHNICAL SCHOOL**  
**WAR MEMORIAL PLAQUE**

IN MEMORY OF OUR STUDENTS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF CANADA  
1939 – 1945

DOUGLAS (EARL) AIKEN  
WILLIAM J. (JOHN) ANDERSON  
GEORGE V. (VARNUM) ANDREW  
WILLIAM C. ANDREW\*  
KEITH (JAMES) BANKS  
WILLIAM (JOHN) BARR  
JOE GRIFFITHS BELL  
MAX BERGER  
HUGO (HYSERT) BORCHARDT  
CLEMENCE BRAKEMAN  
GEORGE W. (WILLIAM) BROWN  
PAUL A. (ALBERT) BROWN  
DAVID (WARNOCK) BURKE  
KENNETH (LESLIE) BURR  
WILLIAM CAMERON  
WILLIAM F. (FREDERICK) CARLTON  
STUART A. (ALLAN) CARR  
ROSS (EDGERTON) CLARK  
WILLIAM BROWN CLARK  
JOHN C. (CHARLES) CLARKE  
WESLEY (PERCIVAL) COLEMAN  
A. (ADAM) EDWARD CONWAY  
FRED (JOHN) DAWS  
JACK (FREDERICK) DOWDING  
WILLIAM DRINKWATER  
RALPH LESLIE ELLIOT  
THOMAS HAROLD ELLIOT  
JOHN (CLARENCE) ESSELMONT  
GEORGE ESSER  
HUGO (OSCAR) FARNER  
LORNE (HOWARD) FERGUSON  
GORDON WILLIAM FORDYCE  
CHARLES (ST. CLAIR) FOSTER  
JOHN (MACKINTOSH) FOWLIE  
LLOYD (GEORGE) GALLAWAY  
REX (THOMAS) GAMMON  
ARTHUR (FREDERIC) GANDER  
WILLIAM (JAMES) GLASS  
LLOYD THOMAS GRAHAM  
LYLE (CARLYLE) GORING

FRANCIS HAGGERTY\*\*  
JOHN N. (NORMAN) HALLAM  
THOMAS HAMILTON  
JOHN M. (MICHAEL) HARRIS  
VICTOR (HENRY) HARRIS  
ROLAND (CRAIG) JAMIESON  
JAY S. (SYVER) JOHNSTON  
RUSSELL E. (EARL) JOLLY  
GLYN JONES  
ROSS (JAMES) KEE  
GERALD R. (REGINALD) KELLY  
WILFRED L. (LESLIE) KNIGHT  
GEORGE WILLIAM KNOWLES  
JOHN LYLE LECKIE  
TOM (EDWIN) LEE  
HECTOR LEGARRIE\*\*\*  
ROBERT (LACHLAN) LOCHEAD  
W. (WILLIAM) ELDON LUCAS  
WALLACE (EWING) LANG  
DONALD C. (CAMERON) MACGREGOR  
DONALD (LEONARD) MCCLURE  
JAMES MCCLURE  
GILBERT CAMPBELL MCFADYEN  
VICTOR (HERBERT) MCKEOWN  
PATRICK (DOUGLAS) MCLAUGHLIN  
OMAR MARTINDALE  
LEONARD (RAYMOND) MEERE  
RALPH J. (JACKSON) MELLON  
RODOLFO MENDIZABAL  
WILLIAM STUART METCALFE  
DAVID DOUGLAS MILLER  
THOMAS GORDON MILLS  
PAUL (EVERETT) MISENER  
PAUL (HOWARD) MORRIS  
JOSEPH THOMAS MURPHY  
EDWIN ROBERT MYLES  
CHARLES ARTHUR NASH  
DON NEAL  
BARRY O'CONNOR  
WILLIAM JOHN OLIVER

TED PARSONS  
DOUGLAS (CAMPBELL) POLE  
ROSS (NORMAN) POLE  
BRUCE POWELL  
T. (THOMAS) EDWARD POWELL  
JAMES E. (EDWARD) QUINN  
MELVIN RAMSAY  
ROBERT (DRUMMOND) RAMSAY  
CHARLES V. (VALENTINE) RICHARDS  
DOUGLAS (ALEXANDER) ROSS  
ARNOLD (CHARLES) SCHILDKNECHT  
JAMES (ROGERS) SHANKS  
GORDON SMITH  
EDWARD SAMUEL STOKES  
GEOFFREY (WILLIAM) STONE  
JAMES (GATHERUM) STRONACH  
LES (GORDON) SUTHERLAND  
STANLEY J. (JAMES) TESKEY  
CLAIR (KENNETH) THAIN  
JACK ALEXANDER THAIN  
ARTHUR CAMERON THOMPSON  
HOWARD FRASER THOMPSON  
MYLES K. (KEITH) VOKES  
FLOYD (GOERGE) WILLIAMS  
WILLIAM PATRICK LOGIE WILLIAMS  
RICHARD (NORMAN) WILSON  
FRED (ERVINE) WISE  
JAMES (LENOURY) WRIGHT  
JOHN D. (DAVID) WRIGHT  
JOHN H. (HASWELL) YORKE  
ISAAC B. (BUCK) ZIERLER

NOTES:

\*William C. Andrew – Son of A.G. Andrew (then at 111 North College Avenue in Sarnia), was reportedly a part of the Civilian Technical Corps, and was aboard the SS Vancouver Island when it was torpedoed on October 15, 1941 on its way to the U.K.. He is not listed in the Canadian veterans database because the Civilian Technical Corps was a British non-military body of paid craftsmen. The CTC was comprised of U.S. male citizens, but according to a November 15, 1941 article in the Globe & Mail, two Canadians, including William C. Andrew, were a part of this group. Source: Ian Brown

\*\* Francis Haggerty – the correct spelling is (Hugh) Francis Hegarty

\*\*\*Hector Legarrie – alternative spelling is Hector Le Gare

SOURCES:

Sarnia Observer February 7, 1946 (Pg. 3) @ at Sarnia Library 124 Christina St., Sarnia  
(the original list was compiled by Miss Doris Wilkins)

SCITS World War II memorial website: [www.lkdsb.net/scits/memorial/plaque.html](http://www.lkdsb.net/scits/memorial/plaque.html)

**ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**  
**WAR MEMORIAL PLAQUE**

**THE HONOUR ROLL OF  
SARNIA'S FALLEN CATHOLIC SOLDIERS**

**THE FOLLOWING SARNIA STUDENTS FROM CATHOLIC PARISHES  
SERVED IN WAR AND MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE**

**WORLD WAR I (1914-1918)**

JAMES WILLIAM BENNETT  
EDWARD FRANK CAUSLEY  
THOMAS CREIGHTON  
GEORGE GORE  
FRANK HICKEY  
DANIEL EDWARD V. MANNING  
JOHN REGINALD SERGEANT SALSURY

NEAL BENWARE  
FREDERIC ALOYSIUS CHESTER  
PETER JOHN FORD  
PERCIVAL EDWARD GUERTIN  
FREDERICK JOHNSON  
URBAN JOSEPH NOEL

**WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)**

WILLIAM JOHN ANDERSON  
WILLIAM JOHN BARR  
ROBERT CHARLES DIONNE  
HECTOR LEGARE  
PATRICK D. McLAUGHLIN  
JAMES M. BARRY O'CONNOR  
EDWARD THOMAS SHEA

JOSEPH LEOPOLD AUBIN  
RAYMOND WILLIAM DIONNE  
HUGH FRANCIS HEGARTY  
GEORGE VICTOR L. LONEY  
ALLAN J. McLELLAN  
MICHAEL J. PAITHOUSKI  
RICHARD NORMAN WILSON

**THE KOREAN WAR (1950-1953)**

EDWARD JOSEPH MICHAEL KNIGHT

PATRICK WILLIAM O'CONNOR

**AFGHANISTAN PEACEKEEPING (2001-2011)**

WILLIAM JONATHAN JAMES CUSHLEY

**“WE ARE THE DEAD. SHORT DAYS AGO – WE LIVED, FELT DAWN, SAW  
SUNSET GLOW, LOVED AND WERE LOVED, AND NOW WE LIE ”**

**FROM LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN McRAE'S “IN FLANDERS FIELDS”**

*HE AND THEY GAVE THEIR YOUNG LIVES THAT WE MAY LIVE.  
HE IS EVER WITH US IN SPIRIT.*

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**CENTRAL BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

MARION E. BROWN  
PHYLLIS HUGHES #  
GOLDIE POWELL #  
B. AILEEN RIDEALGH  
JEAN I. TUTTLE  
ETHEL BRIGHT

I. RAY ATKIN  
HOWARD BAKER  
JOHN BAZELEY #  
WM. J. BENETEAU  
DONALD A. BOWDEN #  
WM. HUGH BRIGHT  
KENNETH BUXTON  
FRED J. FLEMING  
HAROLD FOWLER  
CLARENCE FRASER  
JOSEPH FRITZLEY #  
CLIFFORD GARDINER  
GORDON GARDINER  
ROGER GARDINER  
ROSS L. GLENN  
JOHN E. HAYES  
L. FRANK JOLLIFFE  
MORLEY LUMBY #  
JOHN MACKENZIE  
NIVEN MACKENZIE  
WILLIAM MACKENZIE

RAYMOND MATTINGLEY  
DOUGLAS McRURY  
CALVIN MORRIS  
WALTER NICHOLLS  
GEO. RAMESBOTTOM  
JAS. RAMESBOTTOM  
GLEN ROSEBRUGH  
LORNE C. SCHULTZ  
WM. E. SCHULTZ #  
WM. (BERT) SHAW  
WM. T. SHAW  
LEONARD SINGLETON  
ROBERT G. SMITH  
WM. T. THORPE  
GORDON TUTTLE  
DALTON WALPOLE  
VICTOR WALPOLE  
GEO. SINGLETON  
MURRAY THORNER  
DONALD BRYENTON  
BERT THORPE  
CHARLES WALLIS  
JAMES A. GUISE  
FLOYD WILLIAMS\*  
FRED WILLIAMS  
HARLEY WILLIAMSON  
JOHN McLAGAN\*  
FRED GEORGE

NOTES:

Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action.

Names with a pound symbol # beside their name were discharged.

SOURCE:

Central Baptist Church located @ 391 London Rd., Sarnia

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH**  
WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

GILBERT N. WATSON  
ERNEST E. WATSON  
WILLIAM McCRIE  
D.J. MOTT  
JACK THORNER  
STANLEY CAMPBELL  
M. JEAN ROBERTSON  
ARNOLD HODGINS  
W. LANG\*  
ALLAN G. McLAREN  
W.M. DAWSON  
TOM PRESSEY  
MEAFORD THOMPSON  
MAX FALCONER  
DONALD ROBERTSON  
L. JOHN PHIPPEN  
NEIL CRAIG  
DR. MAURICE G. HILL  
HERBERT K. JARVIS  
W. "DUCKY" KNOWLES\*  
ALLAN W. LAWSON  
W. GRAHAM LINK  
MORLEY LUMBY  
DONALD L. McCLURE\*  
DONALD A. McRITCHIE  
FRANK J. MACDONALD  
JIM MILLER  
WM. A. MURRAY  
BILL PEARSON  
ROSS N. POLE\*  
HOWARD REED  
ERNEST F. RUSSELL\*  
LLOYD G. SMITH  
SAM STOKES\*  
KEN VANHORNE  
WM. C. ANDREW\*  
MORRIS A. ARCHER  
ROSS BAKER  
TUXIS A. BEATTIE  
ALFRED H. BUTLER  
RUSSELL C. BROWN  
PAUL BROWN\*  
BETTY A. CAMERON  
JACK C. CLEAVE

A.C. WEBB  
HADYN C. WESTON  
HAROLD WIGGINS  
CARL THORNER  
DONALD TAYLOR  
LYLE KIRK  
ROSS GLENN  
WILLIAM SHAW  
ROSS PALMER  
KENNETH PARKINSON  
DON HAMILTON  
VERNE P. KIRK  
JAMES HOLLINGER  
JOHN E. FALCONER  
J. ROBB  
W. STUART CARSON  
LLOYD B. ROBERTS  
WILFRED HILLIER  
JOHN JACKSON M.D.  
GLEN A. LAMBERT  
J. LYLE LECKIE\*  
JOHN R. LITTLE  
DR. J.G. MACKENZIE  
L. McCLINTOCK  
DR. NORMAN McMILLAN  
DON McGILLIVRAY  
PAUL MORRIS\*  
JOHN D. MURRAY  
FRED W. PEMBLETON  
ROBERT D. RAMSAY\*  
HOWARD W. ROSS  
DON RUTHERFORD  
WM. R. SOUTHCOMBE  
E. MURRAY TAYLOR  
DR. G.L. ANDERSON  
R.F. ATKINSON  
DON R. BAIRD  
ERNEST N. BANKS  
JIM BERRY  
HUGO H. BORCHARDT\*  
DAVE BURKE\*  
GORDON J. BRUTON  
EDWARD B. CAMPBELL  
JOHN C. CLUME

JACK A. WEBSTER  
ARTHUR EMMETT  
JACK MARSHMAN  
HAROLD THORNER  
KEITH RINTOUL  
F.T. HOLLANDS  
J. PARR  
A. PELL  
KENNETH FULCHER  
REID DUNCAN  
JOHN HOUSTON  
ISABELLE McLEAN  
KENNETH PALMER  
JACK GLADWISH  
W.C. ROBB  
J.T. BIEHN M.D.  
DELMARM.VANDENBURG  
CARLYLE E. HODGINS  
GLYN JONES\*  
MAJOR D. LAUGHER  
EDGAR S. LECKIE  
BOB LOUGHEAD\*  
J.K. McCLURE\*  
ARCHIE MACDOUGALL  
BASIL W. MACDONALD  
W.S. METCALFE\*  
JOHN R. MURRAY  
BRUCE MURRAY  
DOUG C. POLE\*  
MELVIN H. RAMSAY\*  
JAS. H. RUSSELL  
JOHN SANDS  
FRANK STIRRETT  
JACK TALLAMY  
GEORGE V. ANDREW\*  
JIM ARNOLD  
BOB BANNISTER  
JOE G. BELL\*  
STEWART BRADD  
HARRISON BROCK  
WM. T. BUTLER  
H.G. CALLISTER  
H. MURRAY CLARKE  
MAXWELL R. CRAIG

M. COWPER-SMITH  
JOHN L. DATE JR.  
RICHARD H. DYBLE  
CHAS. S. FOSTER\*  
DONALD FRASER  
W. DONALD GIFFEN  
STUART GRANT  
JACK M. HARVEY  
CAMERON R. WIGGINS  
FRED G. WHITCOMBE  
A. LASCELLES  
RICHARD N. WILSON\*  
DOUGLAS L. ROSS  
JOHN E. HAYNE  
HARRY PETERSON  
WM. ARNOLD  
DONALD WEBSTER  
GRIFFITH BELL\*  
LEO BAILEY  
KENNETH FORBES  
BEVERLY PALMER  
GORDON A. McPHAIL  
CHARLES BROWETT  
MARJORIE EMMETT  
ALAN KEAT

KENNETH C. COOK  
FRED J. DAWS\*  
A.R. FLEMING  
THOS. E.G. FOX  
BILL GAMBLE  
KENNETH GILLESPIE  
ROBT. E. GOODLAND  
JOHN A. HAYES  
LLOYD WILLIAMS  
GERALDINE P. WHITCOMBE  
C.S. LASCELLES  
KEITH FISHER  
ROBERT B. ELDER  
IAN RUTHERFORD  
D.E. FLEMING  
ALVIN THOMPSON  
MELVIN LAWRENCE  
EDWARD L. IVINSON  
DONALD BROWN  
ROY LYFORD  
JACK LECKIE  
ROY C. McPHAIL  
CHARLES A. McKENZIE  
LES SUTHERLAND\*  
ROY BASS

H. "BUDDY" DATE  
NEIL W. DOVE  
ROY FLEMING  
CHAS. D.J. FOX  
W.L. GIFFEN  
S. LLOYD GORING  
EDWIN F. GUSTIN  
WM. H. WHITING  
JOHN D. WRIGHT\*  
ARTHUR M. LAWSON  
WILBUR J. MACDONALD  
MELVIN FISHER\*  
ROBERT CAMPBELL  
WM. MACKENZIE  
GILBERT McFADYEN\*  
THOS. MURPHY  
ROBT. MacGREGOR  
DON McCRIE  
CHARLES WALLIS  
IAN CUNNINGHAM  
MILTON CARDIFF  
HUGH McPHAIL  
DOUGLAS BAIRD  
DONALD MARRIOTT  
THOMAS ELLIOT\*

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

SOURCES:

Central United Church located @ 220 George St., Sarnia

"The Centurian – A Memorial" published by Central United Church, October 1946



FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**OUR LADY OF MERCY ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH**  
WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

AMBROISE, A.R.  
AMBROISE, CARMEN  
ATRAS, S.  
AUBIN, J. LEOPOLD\*  
BAKER, WILLIAM  
BEACHEY, VYRIL  
BEACHEY, G.H.  
BEACHEY, HUGH  
BEACHEY, MARY  
BEACHEY, R.W.  
BEDARD, ALEX  
BENNETT, CLAT  
BERRY, WILLIAM  
BETTRIDGE, C.R.  
BIRMINGHAM, GERALD  
BIRMINGHAM, L.F.  
BLONDIN, C.M.  
BLONDIN, F.T.  
BLONDIN, MOSES  
BLONDIN, O.W.  
BLONDIN, MRS. O.W.  
BLUNDY, PAUL  
BOUCHER, W.J.  
BRIDGER, WILLIAM J.  
BROWN, GERALD  
BRUSSEAU, L.B.  
BUKOVINSKY, J.  
BUTLER, PATRICK  
CAMERON, JOHN B.  
CAUSLEY, LEO  
CHUMKO, JOHN  
CHUMKO, MICHAEL  
CLARKSON, LOUIS  
CLEMENS, JACK  
COOKE, CLIFFORD  
CORBETT, JAMES  
COTE, CONSTANCE  
COWELL, H.W.  
COWLEY, C.J.  
CROFTON, J.A.  
DENLEY, HERBERT J.  
DENLEY, JOSEPH  
DENNIS, JOHN E.  
DENNIS, JOHN H.  
DERUSH, W. JOHN  
DIFEDERICO, M.

DIONNE, MELVIN  
DIONNE, RAY\*  
DIONNE, ROBERT\*  
DIONNE, RONALD  
DOOHAN, JAMES M.  
DOOHAN, WILLIAM R.  
DOUCHER, WILLIAM K.  
DOYLE, FREDERICK  
DOYLE, PATRICK E.  
DUBREUIL, HARVEY  
EGAN, J.M.  
EGAN, VINCE J.  
ENNETT, RICHARD W.  
ENNETT, WALTER H.  
EVELAND, HOYT  
FAUTEUX, DONATO A.  
FAUTEUX, J.R.  
FILLION, ERNEST  
FLYNN, RAY  
FORBES, F.G.  
FOSTER, NORMAN  
FOSTER, STANLEY S.  
FRAZER, R.  
GAVLAK, S.A.  
GILMORE, ARTHUR  
GOLAB, JOSEPH  
GONYOU, HAROLD  
GRIFFIN, EDWARD  
GRIFFIN, V.J.  
GUERTIN, V.E.  
GUZI, WALTER  
HASLIP, JOHN  
HASLIP, ROBERT  
HAWKINS, M.S.  
HEFFRON, CHARLES  
HEFFRON, R.A.  
HEWITT, F.W.  
HEWITT, J.D.  
HEWITT, J.L.  
HIGGINS, W.F.  
HOBIN, ANNE  
HUGGETT, BERNARD D.  
HUGGETT, L.W.  
JACQUES, MARY  
KEELAN, R.J.  
KEELAN, W.O.

KELCH, H.E.  
 KINCH, DON  
 KNIGHT, EILEEN  
 KNIGHT, JOHN H.  
 KOVAL, JOSEPH  
 LALONDE, C.F.  
 LAMBERT, MORRIS  
 LANGAN, GERALD J.  
 LAPOINTE, N.J.  
 LAPOINTE, R.J.  
 LAROCQUE, JOHN I.  
 LAROCQUE, MERRILL J.  
 LECLAIR, J.A.  
 LECLAIR, LEO  
 LEGARRIE, HECTOR\*  
 LEGAULT, A.E.  
 LEGAULT, LEO P.  
 LESSARD, H.A.  
 LEVERQUE, ROGER  
 LONEY, GEORGE\*  
 MACDONALD, JAMES A.  
 MACDONALD, ROBERT R.  
 MADZENIAK, J.  
 MADZENIAK, MARY  
 MARCY, A.P.  
 MCALLISTER, WILLIAM  
 MCCART, JOHN  
 MCMAHON, G.J.  
 MCMAHON, H.J.  
 MCMANN, ELEANOR  
 MCMULLEN, A.A.  
 MERCURIO, EDWARD  
 MERCURIO, M.A.  
 MONDOUX, A.J.  
 MUNDY, C.Q.  
 MUNDY, F.V.  
 MURPHY, FRANK  
 MYERS, J.T.  
 NEVILLE, STEVE  
 O'DRISCOLL, J. W.  
 O'LAUGHLIN, M.E.  
 OUIMET, AMEDEE  
 OUIMET, G.  
 PAQUETTE, ALBERT  
 PELLETIER, P.J.  
 PETTIT, FRANK  
 PETTIT, H.

PETTIT, LLOYD  
 PETTIT, VAUGHN  
 PICKERING, THOMAS J.  
 POWELL, ARTHUR  
 POWER, T.M.  
 POWER, W. A.  
 QUINLAN, CHARLES C.  
 ROBBINS, WILLIAM T.  
 ROSENBLOOM, EARL  
 RYAN, LEO J.  
 SABOURIN, C.A.  
 SALAK, J.  
 SAUVE, JOSEPH  
 SAUVE, LEONARD  
 SCHELL, HERBERT H.  
 SHANGRAW, WILLIAM  
 SHEA, E.T.\*  
 SIMA, ANDREW  
 SIRDEVAN, ALAN  
 STEFANKO, STEPHEN  
 STEVENS, O.K.  
 STEVENS, JOHN  
 SUHLER, J.D.  
 TAMBORO, C.F.  
 TAYLOR, C.J.  
 THORPE, ROBERT, H.  
 TOBIN, P.G.  
 TULLY, A.J.  
 VANROOYEN, JOHN P.  
 WALSH, CLARENCE  
 WALSH, JACK  
 WASYL, A.  
 WEISS, JOHN  
 WEISS, WILLIAM  
 WHITE, L.J.  
 WILES, EMMETT  
 WILKINSON, MELVIN  
 WILSON, EDWARD L.  
 WILSON, RICHARD\*  
 WOODCOCK, ROBERT J.  
 WRIGHT, LLOYD  
 WRIGHT, S.M.  
 WRIGHT, STUART  
 ZAMOIC, ANNE  
 O'BRIEN, PATRICK  
 STEVENS, JAMES, E.  
 SNYDER, CARLISLE

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

SOURCES:

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church located @ 390 N. Christina St., Sarnia  
 Sarnia Canadian Observer – March 23, 1945 (Pg. 14): @ Sarnia Library 124 Christina St.

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, SARNIA**  
WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES 1939 - 1945

ARMSTRONG, JAMES  
ASBURY, DAVID W.  
BELL, KENNETH  
BELTON, JOHN  
BORROWMAN, Dr. A.M.  
BRODIE, NORMAN  
BROWN, GEORGE\*  
BURD, STEPHEN  
BURLEIGH, WILLIAM  
BELTON, ELIZABETH  
BROWN, ARTHUR  
CAMERON, GEORGE D.\*  
CARR, JAMES  
CARR, STUART\*  
CHILTON, MAURICE J.  
CLARK, WILLIAM B.\*  
CONN, HENRY  
COOK, ALEX  
CRAIG, LESLIE  
CRAIG, WILLIAM  
CLARK, DAVID  
CLARK, IAN  
CUNNINGHAM, ERIC  
CRAWFORD, JOHN  
CHALMERS, ALEX  
DALZIEL, I. BRUCE  
DARRACH, NEIL C.  
DOBBINS, I. NORMAN  
DOHERTY, I. DAVID  
DOHERTY, THOMAS B.  
DOWDING, HARRY I.  
DUNCAN, REID  
DUNCAN, STEWART  
DAWSON, WILLIAM  
DUNLOP, ROBERT  
DOWDING, JOHN F. \*  
DEAN, GEORGE M.  
ELLIOT, THOMAS H. \*  
FAIRLIE, JOHN  
FORBES, JOHN  
FOWLIE, JACK\*  
FRANCE, JOHN  
FERGUSON, ANGUS  
FERGUSON, JOHN

GAMMON, REX T. \*  
GAMMON, WILLIAM A.  
GARRETT, JAMES K.  
GARRETT, JOHN M.  
GIBB, JOHN  
GOUGH, GEORGE  
HARBORNE, DONALD  
HARKINS, GORDON F.  
HART, DONALD  
HAY, ARTHUR J.  
HAYES, ALEX M.  
HENDERSON, HERBERT J.  
HENDERSON, PETER J.  
HENDERSON, THOMAS J.  
HILLIS, J. FLOYD  
HUNTER, WARREN  
HARKINS, WILLIAM  
HAY, MRS. EDITH  
HUNT, JAMES  
INGERSOLL, GEORGE C.  
ISBISTER, LESLIE  
ISBISTER, ROBERT  
JOHNSTON, RAYMOND  
JOHNSTON, WALTER  
JAMIESON, JOHN  
KEE, ROSS\*  
KING, ALVIN  
KNOWLES, WILLIAM\*  
LEACH, WILLIAM  
LOCKHART, HOMER A.  
LOCKHART, OWEN M.  
LOTT, ANGUS  
LUCKHURST, ROSS  
LOGAN, JAMES  
MacFARLANE, MATTHEW A  
MacGREGOR, DONALD\*  
MacKENZIE, DOUGALD  
MacKENZIE, LOGAN  
MacKENZIE, ROBERT  
McDERMID, WESLEY K.  
McCLUGHAN, ROBERT  
McGIBBON, PETER  
McGIBBON, ROBERT  
McLAREN, KENNETH W.

McLEAN, JACK  
McMILLAN, ARCHIE  
McMILLAN, JACK  
MacFARLANE, WINNIFRED  
MacKENZIE, RUTH  
MacLEAN, LACHLAN  
McINTYRE, RAYMOND  
McKENZIE, WILLIAM  
McCRAE, DAVID W.  
McGIBBON, MARGARET J.  
McNEILL, L. ALEXANDER  
MACKLIN, DOUGLAS  
MAIDMENT, CHARLES  
MILLER, JAMES  
MISENER, JOHN  
MISENER, PAUL\*  
MOORE, ORVILLE  
MORRISON, JACK  
MILLER, JOHN  
MILLS, PAUL  
MURRAY, JOHN  
NEEDHAM, KENNETH  
NEELY, JOSEPH R.  
NEEDHAM, JOHN  
O'DELL, GORDON  
PAISLEY, W.G.  
PALMER, ALBERT  
PALMER, DONALD  
PALMER, EDWARD  
PATON, PETER  
PAUL, FRANCIS  
PHIPPEN, JOHN L.  
PRINGLE, L. DALE  
RANKIN, JOHN  
ROSE, ALEX C.  
ROSE, DONALD  
ROSE, HAROLD  
RUTHERFORD, DONALD  
RUTHERFORD, JAN  
RUTHERFORD, Dr. W.B.  
RIDDELL, HUBERT J.  
SCOTT, DONALD  
SHANKS, JAMES R. \*  
SHAW, CHARLES  
SHAW, ROBERT

SIMPSON, FIELD  
SLEETH, TREVELYAN J.  
SMITH, JAMES  
SNEDDON, JAMES  
STEPHENSON, R.M.  
STEPHENSON, V.L.  
STEWART, JAMES D.  
STIRLING, HUGH J.  
STOVER, CHARLES  
STUART, HOWARD E.  
SWANSON, H.E.  
SMITH, MARGARET C.  
SINCLAIR, H. THOMAS  
SLOANE, JOHN  
SUMMERS, AUBREY  
SUMMERS, MARIAN E.  
SCOTT, GLENN  
STOKES, EDWARD S. \*  
TAYLOR, GORDON  
THOMPSON, CAMERON\*  
THOMPSON, FRASER\*  
TORRANCE, JAMES  
TURNBULL, HARRY R.  
TURNBULL, WILLIAM D.  
TUTT, Dr. W.R.  
TAYLOR, WINNIFRED  
TRUSLER, JACK  
TAYLOR, ISABEL  
WALKER, CARL  
WATSON, NEAL M.  
WILLIAMS, WILLIAM A.  
WOODROW, CHARLES C.  
WYVILLE, ALLEN  
WYVILLE, FREDERICK  
WILLIAMSON, ROBERT  
WILSON, JACK  
WELSH, D. ROY  
WELSH, ARTHUR B.  
WELSH, THOMAS M.  
  
CORNISH, HARRY  
FINLAY, RICHARD  
FARNER, HUGO\*  
OLIVER, W. JOHN\*  
POWELL, T. EDWARD\*

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

SOURCE:

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church located @ 261 Christina St., Sarnia

## ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PLAQUES

1914 – 1918

IN PROUD AND AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF THE MEN OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,  
SARNIA WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR CANADA AND THE EMPIRE DURING  
THE GREAT WAR

MAJOR DAVID B. BENTLEY, M.D.  
DIED APRIL 5, 1917  
PTE. CAMERON R. BISSETT  
KILLED SEPTEMBER 3, 1918  
CORP. WILLIAM H. CHAPMAN  
KILLED SEPTEMBER 27, 1917  
LIEUT. STEWART COWAN  
KILLED OCTOBER 1, 1916  
CAPTAIN WILLIAM A. HENDERSON, M.D.  
DIED OCTOBER 25, 1916  
FLT-LIEUT. DAVID HEGLER McGIBBON  
KILLED SEPTEMBER 15, 1918  
LIEUT. RUSSELL H. SOPER  
KILLED 1917  
CAPTAIN NORMAN EWART TOWERS  
KILLED SEPTEMBER 20, 1916

“AVETE FRATRES, AVETE ET VALETE.”

1939 – 1945

IN PROUD AND AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE MEN OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, SARNIA  
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE SECOND GREAT WAR

F.L. GEORGE WILLIAM BROWN, R.C.A.F. SEPTEMBER 16, 1944	P.O. GEORGE WILLIAM KNOWLES, R.C.A.F. OCTOBER 8, 1942
W.O.-PT. WILLIAM DONALD CAMERON, R.C.A.F. AUGUST 31, 1943	SGT-PT. DONALD CAMERON MACGREGOR, R.C.A.F. MAY 11, 1942
SGT.-A.G. STUART ALLAN CARR, R.C.A.F. JANUARY 23, 1944	SGT-PT. EVERETT PAUL MISENER, R.C.A.F. OCTOBER 11, 1942
SGT.-OB. WILLIAM BROWN CLARK, R.C.A.F. AUGUST 31, 1941	F.O. WILLIAM JOHN OLIVER, R.C.A.F. OCTOBER 6, 1943
P.O. JOHN FREDERICK DOWDING, R.C.A.F. OCTOBER 17, 1944	W.O.-PT. THOMAS EDWARD POWELL, R.C.A.F. OCTOBER 5, 1942
P.O. THOMAS HAROLD ELLIOT, R.C.A.F. APRIL 25, 1944	P.O. JAMES ROGER SHANKS, R.C.A.F. SEPTEMBER 13, 1942
P.O. HUGO OSCAR FARNER, R.C.A.F. SEPTEMBER 24, 1943	LT. EDWARD SAMUEL STOKES, R.C. DRAGOONS SEPTEMBER 3, 1944
F.L. JOHN MACINTOSH FOWLIE, R.C.A.F. MARCH 15, 1945	F.SGT.-OB. HOWARD FRASER THOMPSON, R.C.A.F. JUNE 28, 1942
F.SGT.-W.A.G. REX THOMAS GAMMON, R.C.A.F. JULY 24, 1942	P.O. ARTHUR CAMERON THOMPSON, R.C.A.F. JANUARY 28, 1944
F.O. JAMES ROSS KEE, R.C.A.F. FEBRUARY 19, 1944	

“LEST WE FORGET”

SOURCE: St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church located @ 261 Christina St., Sarnia

*BEAUTIFUL WORDS OF JESUS: COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOUR...  
AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.*

**ST. CLAIR UNITED CHURCH HONOUR ROLLS**  
**AAMJIWNAANG FIRST NATIONS RESERVE, SARNIA**

IN HONOR OF  
THE MEN FROM  
**THE SARNIA INDIAN RESERVE**  
WHO SERVED THEIR COUNTRY  
IN THE GREAT WORLD WAR 1914-19

FRED DOXSTATER\*  
ALBERT DAVID  
ELIAS JAMES  
FRANK JACOBS

EDWIN MANESS  
ALEX R. NAYWOG  
J.F. WILLIAMS  
WELLINGTON RODD

ARTHUR W. MANESS

CANADA AND THE EMPIRE

NOTE: Name with the star \* was killed in action

NOTE: The Honour Roll below was unveiled in early February of 1944, prior to the end of World War II.  
Thus, there is no war end date recorded on the Honour Roll.

GOD SAVE THE KING  
1939 – 194

**HONOUR ROLL**

WITH GREAT PRIDE ST. CLAIR UNITED CHURCH AND DEEP GRATITUDE  
WE RECORD THE NAMES  
OF OUR MEMBERS ENLISTED IN THE SERVICES OF OUR KING AND COUNTRY

LEONARD E. MANESS\*  
LEO NAHMABIN \*  
GORDON JACOBS\*  
ERVINE BRESSETTE\*  
MELVIN JACOBS\*  
DAVID WILLIAMS\*  
GENEVIEVE ROGERS\*  
STAFFORD F. ROGERS^  
JAMES E. PLAIN ^  
FREDERICK F. PLAIN^  
LEONARD PLAIN~  
HARLEY J. WILLIAMS\*  
CLIFFORD DAVID#

CARL F. MANESS#  
STANLEY C. JACKSON#  
DOUGLAS SIMON#  
THOMAS STONE#  
TELFORD ADAMS JR#  
CLARENCE ROGERS#  
EDISON KAHGEE\*  
ALVIN KAHGEE\*  
PERCY JAMES~  
MILFORD COTTRELLE~  
SYLVESTER E. STONE\*  
CHRISTOPHER L. ADAMS#

NOTES:

Names with a star \* beside their name served with Canada military

Name with a pound sign # beside their name served with United States military

Names with an upward arrow ^ beside their name were reserve

Names with a squiggle ~ beside their name were discharged

# **ST. CLAIR UNITED CHURCH HONOUR ROLLS continued**

## **AAMJIWNAANG FIRST NATIONS RESERVE, SARNIA**

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**SARNIA RESERVE**  
WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH  
CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

GARNET WILLIAMS#	HARLEY WILLIAMS*
TELFORD F. ADAMS#	LEONARD E. MANESS*
CHRISTOPHER ADAMS#	LEO A. NAHMABIN*
ERVINE L. BRESSETTE*	LEONARD PLAIN~
MILFORD COTTRELLE~	JAMES E. PLAIN^
CLIFFORD DAVID~	FREDRICK PLAIN^
STANLEY C. JACKSON#	STAFFORD F. ROGERS^
GORDON H. JACOBS*	GENEVIEVE P. ROGERS*
MELVIN H. JACOBS*	CLARENCE ROGERS#
PERCY JAMES~	THOMAS J. STONE#
CARL F. MANESS#	DAVID R. WILLIAMS*
CLIFTON PLAIN#	SYLVESTER E. STONE*
THEODORE STONE	PETER JAMES~
THOMAS WILLIAMS#	DOUGLAS SIMON#

### NOTES:

Names with a star \* beside their name served with Canada military

Name with a pound sign # beside their name served with United States military

Names with an upward arrow ^ beside their name were reserve

Names with a squiggle ~ beside their name were discharged

### SOURCE:

St. Clair United Church Church located @ 978 Tashmoo Ave., Aamjiwnaang First Nations Reserve, Sarnia

**ST. GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH**  
**HONOUR ROLL**

**FIRST GREAT WAR**

AHERN, E.G..	HARRIS, A.	NEWTON, J.
BAKER, J.	HARRIS, G.H.	PAGE, H.
BARKER, G.H.	HOLLANDS, F.	PARDEE, H.M.
BENDALL, T.	HOWARD, A.	PARSONS, D.A.G.
BENDALL, W.G. *	HOWSE, C.	PARSONS, H.M.S.
BENDING, A.	JAMES, A.A.	PARSONS, A.W.G.
BENDING, C.H.	JAMES, J.F.	PEARSON, J.H.
BERESFORD, H.	JANES, F.	PHILLIPS, E.
BERESFORD, T.	JONES, L.E.	PHILLIPS, F.G.
BOSWELL, J.W.	JOHNSTON, B.A.	PLAYNE, L. *
BRADLEY, T.P.	KNOWLES, J.W.	POUSSETTE, H.R.
CHEDWICK, A. *	KNOWLES, T.N. *	RANDOLPH, D.R.
CHESTER, F.J. *	LESUEUR, N.L.	RANDOLPH, W.L.C.
CHEYNE, W.	LUCAS, H.T.	RANDOLPH, J.W.
CLARKE, E.T.	LUCAS, G.E.	REED, J.
CLEMENCE, S.	LUCAS, J.F.	SMILEY, T.H.
DUKE, J.	LUCAS, FRANK	STUART, J.
EMERICK, W.F.	LUCAS, GORDON	TURNBULL, A.S.
FAWCETT, C.	MacADAMS, J.M.	VanVALKENBURG, G.
FAWCETT, H.	McVICAR, W.W.	WADE, A.
FINLAY, R.G.	MELLON, J.R.	WADE, W.
GARVEY, G.G.	MUMFORD, J.	WADE, R.
GILROY, E.C.	MULLIN, A.E.	WALKER, E.S.
GILSON, A.	NASH, F.	WALKER, W.L.
GORMAN, F.	NASH, H.	WRIGHT, T. *
	NEIL, P.	MacADAMS, B. Miss

**SECOND GREAT WAR**

ABRAHART, W.A.	CLARKE, C.C.	GALLAWAY, E.D.
AGNEW, D.J.	CLARKE, C.W.	GALLAWAY, J.K.
AIKEN, F.R.	CLARKE, J.C.*	GALLAWAY, L.G.*
ALLISON, J.H.	CLARKE, R.C.	GALPIN, R.R.
AMBLER, J.G.	CLEMENT, W.R.	GARVEY, T.G.
ATWOOD, W.H.	CRANMER, D.L.	GRAHAM, F.A.
BAWTENHEIMER, J.R.	CRANMER, H.G.	HAGUE, T.A.
BLANCHARD, M.J.	CRANMER, W.O.	HALE, W.G.
BLANCHARD, R.W.	DEPEW, J.H.H.	HALLAM, J.N.*
BRADFORD, C.M.	DICKINSON, R.R.K.	HANEY, D.W.
BRAKEMAN, J.C.*	EAST, T.A.	HANEY, T.V.
CARES, E.G.	EHMAN, J.A.	HANEY, W.S.
CAWTHORN, B.S.	EHMAN, S.L.	HARRIS, M.E.
CHIVERS, C.W.	EHMAN, W.H.	HARRIS, W.E.
CHIVERS, E.C.	EWENER, R.C.	HODGINS, G.D.
CHURCH, J.G.	EWENER, W.A.	HUESTON, A.M.
CHURCH, J.G.	FIELDING, E.L.	HUESTON, E.H.
CHURCH, W.H.	FOUBISTER, E.J.	HUESTON, W.M.



HUNT, W.D.  
 HUNTER, C.C.  
 JAMES, G.A.  
 JAMES, J.P.  
 JANES, D.M.  
 JANES, K.B.  
 JOLLY, N.R.J.  
 KEWLEY, W.E.  
 KINDERSLEY, R.E.G.  
 LEACH, N.F.  
 LECKIE, L.E.  
 LESUEUR, C.R.  
 LESUEUR, N.L.  
 LESUEUR, R.E.  
 LEWIS, J.A.  
 LORRIMAN, C.A.  
 MacADAMS, H.W.  
 McINTYRE, G.  
 McINTYRE, P.H.  
 MEERE, A.E.  
 MEERE, J.F.  
 MEERE, L.R.\*  
 MENDIZABAL, R.\*  
 MILLHOLLAND, A.S.  
 MILLHOLLAND, W.B.  
 NASH, C.A.\*  
 NEILSON, D.H.  
 NETHERY, A.H.  
 NEWMAN, S.R.  
 NEWTON, F.B.

NEWTON, J.W.  
 PACAUD, R.A.  
 PALTRIDGE, C.K.  
 PALTRIDGE, D.A.  
 PALTRIDGE, R.F.  
 PARDEE, T.B.  
 PARKER, R.L.  
 PARKER, W.E.  
 PERRY, B.C.  
 PHILLIPS, F.J.  
 PHILLIPS, S.L.  
 PINKETT, W.H.  
 POWELL, S.B.\*  
 RANDOLPH, A.B.  
 RICHARDSON, F.H.R.  
 RICHARDSON, R.S.  
 RICHARDSON, T.G.  
 ROBBINS, G.K.  
 SAYMAN, H.  
 SCHREIBER, F.E.  
 SCHWEITZER, J.C.  
 SCROGGIE, N.A.  
 SIM, B.A.  
 SIM, B.A.  
 SIM, R.J.  
 SIMPSON, J.H.  
 SMITH, A.C.  
 SMITH, R.B.  
 STRONACH, J.G.\*  
 SUTHERLAND, L.G.\*

WALKER, J.G.  
 WHALLEY, W.K.  
 WILCOX, H.T.  
 WILCOX, R.J.  
 WILKINSON, F.R.  
 WOODROW, C.E.  
 WOODROW, H.S.  
 WRENSHALL, C.  
 WRIGHT, C.W.  
 WRIGHT, J.L.\*  
 WYNNE-JONES, A.

BURKE, D.W.\*

WOMEN'S SECTION

AHERN, N.F.  
 BAIKIE, M.L.  
 CLARKE, P.M.  
 COLLINS, F.P.  
 DEPEW, A.V.  
 DURANT, D.M.  
 HALE, V.  
 HUGHES, M.I.  
 KERSHAW, M.U.  
 McLEOD, J.M.  
 NASH, M.E.  
 REEVES, M.J.

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

SOURCE:

All Saints Anglican Church (formerly St. George's Anglican Church) located @ 248 Vidal St., Sarnia

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH**  
WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

ALLINGHAM, J.C.  
BATEY, D.  
BELTON, J.W.  
BERRY, J.  
BLAKE, C.W.  
BLAKE, E.R.  
BRITTON, G.W.  
BURGESS, R.  
CAMERON, H.S.  
CARTER, C.C.  
CASE, R.S.  
COCKS, J.H.M.  
CROCKETT, C.  
CORNER, R.  
DAGG, C.S.  
DELDERFIELD, R.J.  
DUNFORD, H.W.  
DUNFORD, T.  
EVERINGHAM, E.  
FINAN, E.T.W.  
FISHER, J.M.  
GALLAWAY, L.G.\*  
GANDER, J.R.  
GORDON, C.  
HARVEY, J.M.  
HARMER, J.H.  
HARRIS, R.  
HOAD, C.E.  
HOLLANDS, W.C.  
HORNBLOWER, C.  
HODGINS, D.  
JOHNSTON, J.S.\*  
KAY, S.  
KETTLE, J.  
KIRBY, D.A.  
KIRBY, W.L.  
KNIGHT, N.L.  
KNUDSEN, J.F.  
LAIDLER, T.  
MAGILL, T.H.  
MILDON, D.  
MORPHEW, A.F.  
MORPHEW, MARGARET  
MYLES, E.R.\*

AMOR, J.G.D.  
BATEY, W.G.  
BELTON, W.G..  
BERRY, J.A.  
BLAKE, C.J.  
BLAKE, J.J.  
BUCKINGHAM, J.E.  
BURKE, D.  
CARLTON, S.G.  
CARTER, R.P.  
CHIVERS, W.N.  
COCKS, H.C.  
CROOKS, H.  
CROXFORD, W.R.  
DAWS, F.J.\*  
DOBSON, G.E.  
DUNFORD, J.W.  
DURBAN, J.A.  
FARNER, R.  
FIRTH, R.C.  
FLAVELL, A.J.  
GAMBLE, W.  
GARVIN, G.  
GROVER, J.  
HEALEY, C.W.  
HARRIS, J.  
HARRISON, C.C.  
HOAD, J.R.  
HOLLERAN, G.  
HORNBLOWER, J.  
JANESS, R.  
JONES, G.  
KENT, E.G.  
KEYS, J.  
KIRBY, G.D.  
KIRBY, W.H.  
KNIGHT, P.T.  
KNUTT, R.  
LE NEVE, K.  
MAGILL, T.W.  
MITCHELL, R.D.  
MORPHEW, G.  
MURRAY, D.S.  
McCLINTOCK, L.G.

BACKMAN, H.G.  
BELL, R.  
BENTLEY, L.J.  
BLACKMORE, F.A.  
BLAKE, C.P.  
BOODY, G.H.  
BURGESS, G.  
BUTTERFIELD, A.  
CARLTON, W\*.  
CASE, L.R.  
COCKS, REV. H.F.C.  
COPLAND, J.W.  
CONNOLLY, E.  
CURRAN, J.F.  
DAWS, L.  
DRINKWATER, W.\*  
DUNFORD, W.L.  
ELDRIDGE, C.  
ALLEN, EDNA  
FISHER, E.A.  
GALLAWAY, E.D.  
GANDER, A.F.\*  
GEORGE, E.  
HALL, K.  
HEALEY, F.H.  
HARRIS, J.M.\*  
HARRISON, J.F.  
HOAD, S.F.  
HOLLERAN, W.C.  
HURST, H.J.  
JOHNSON, B.  
KARR, G.S.  
KENT, R.W.  
KIPPER, LINDA  
KIRBY, S.J.  
KIRKPATRICK, W.J.  
KNIGHT, W.L.\*  
LAIDLER, H.G.  
MAGGS, F.H.  
MARTIN, L.J.  
MITCHELL, D.L.  
MORPHEW, J.J.  
MURRAY, D.  
McKEGNEY, E.L.

McKEGNEY, J.C.  
NEEDHAM, K.  
NUTT, FLORENCE A.  
PEARSON, W.S.  
PIRRIE, J.  
RAWCLIFFE, J.D.  
RICHARDS, C.V.\*  
ROLLO, W.G.  
SECORD, L.  
SKELTON, R.J.  
SUMNER, B.  
THAIN, D.  
TIMPERLEY, G.D.  
WALKER, G.  
WATSON, G.T.  
WILKINSON, M.J.  
WILSON, J.  
CAMPBELL, A.J.  
BRITTON, J.E.  
ALLINGHAM, L.R.  
HOWES, MARJORIE  
MITRINK, M.L.  
BACKMAN, A.  
DERHAK, E.  
HUGHES, F.  
MOORE, K.  
WALKER, J.  
ELLIOT, H.S.

McKEGNEY, W.E.  
NEEDHAM, T.  
NUTT, J.J.  
PIPPARD, F.A.  
POWELL, T.E.\*  
RAWCLIFFE, C.  
RICHARDSON, R.S.  
ROSS, R.L.  
SEWELL, W.  
SMITH, J.R.  
SUTTON, C.L.  
THAIN, J.\*  
TIMPERLEY, J.E.  
WALLER, L.  
WEBSPER, W.  
WILLIS, S.  
WRIGHT, A.  
HARRIS, M.D.  
CHAPPLE, N.L.  
BLOOMFIELD, PEARL  
HILL, E.A.E.  
MITRINK, C.  
BERRY, D.  
DUNN, L.  
McKEGNEY, R.  
PERKINS, J.K.  
WASSON, J.E.  
REECE, E.

NEEDHAM, J.  
NIELD, R.  
PARSONS, A.E.\*  
PIPPARD, G.E.  
RATTEE, J.T.  
REDDING, W.  
ROBBINS, J.  
SADLEIR, C.W.  
SIMPSON, W.P.  
STEWART, J.  
THAIN, C.  
THOMAS, L.C.  
WALDECK, E. JEAN  
WATSON, E.C.\*  
WESSELL, BETTY  
WILLIS, J.R.  
YUKISH, W.  
HUMPHRIES, R.  
PASS, HELEN  
CHIVERS, J.W.,  
KNUDSON, L.  
WALTON, J.  
BIRKENSHAW, F.  
HOAD, A.W.  
MITRINK, S.  
STRACHAN, J.  
WYSEMAN, A.  
STEWART, C.A.

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

SOURCE:

All Saints Anglican Church (formerly St. John's Anglican Church) located @ 248 Vidal St., Sarnia

FOR KING AND COUNTRY  
MEMBERS OF  
**ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH CANADA'S FIGHTING FORCES

REV. T.J. MCCARTHY  
HARDING, D.  
ABDO, E.  
ALLEN, J.  
ALLEN, C.  
ALLAN, R.  
ANDERSON, S.  
ANDERSON, WILLIAM.\*  
BARR, WILLIAM.\*  
BARBEAU, W.  
BAYDUCK, R.  
BAYDUCK, L.  
BECOWERY, M.  
BELLENGER, E.  
BOURASSA, H.  
BOYLE, R.  
BOYLE, W.  
BORCE, E.  
BROWN, ALBERT  
BROWN, JOSEPH  
BROWN, WILLIAM  
BUTLER, PATRICK  
BUTLER, JAMES.  
BUTLER, JOHN  
BUTLER, STEVE  
CAROBIN, P.  
CAUSLEY, R.  
CAUSLEY, C.  
COLBOURNE, JACK  
COLBOURNE, JOSEPH  
COTE, T.  
COOPER, G.  
COOKE, K.  
CRAWFORD, J.  
CRADDOCK, J.  
CRIBBIN, TOM  
CURRAN, JOHN  
CURRY, JAMES  
CURRY, JOSEPH  
CURRY, R.  
DAWSON, J.  
DAWSON, JAMES  
DEVINE, D.  
DENNIS, JOHN  
DERUSH, E.  
DERUSH, F.  
DERUSH, O.  
DERUSH, W. JOHN

DEVEREAUX, JOHN  
D'ATH, P.  
DIONNE, RAYMOND\*  
DOOHAN, JAMES  
DOOHAN, WILLIAM  
DOUCHER, R.  
DOYLE, H.  
DUFFY, F.  
DUNN, V.  
DUNN, D.  
DUNN, L.  
EGAN, FRANCIS  
EGAN, JOSEPH M.  
EGAN, VINCE J.  
FAUBERT, LEO  
FAUBERT, R.  
FELLOWS, FRED  
FELLOWS, J.  
FELLOWS, G.  
FISHER, T.  
FISHER, R.  
FISHER, R.  
FILION, J.  
FORD, J.  
FOSTER, J.  
FRANCOEUR, F.  
FRENKOWSKI, P.  
GAWUNICK, N.  
GAWUNICK, W.  
GLEASON, R.  
GOOD, E.  
HARKNESS, G.  
HASLIP, ROBERT  
HAYES, T.  
HAGGARTY, F.\* (HEGARTY)  
HEALEY, K.  
HEALEY, T.  
HEMSTREET, F.  
HEMSTREET, M.  
HEMSTREET, R.  
HEWITT, J.D.  
HEWITT, F.W.  
HIPPLE, J.  
JORDAN, REV. J.  
KIRLUIK, P.  
KIRLUIK, S.  
KINCH, DON  
KERWIN, KENNETH

KNIGHT, MISS EILEEN  
 KNIGHT, G.  
 KNIGHT, EDWARD J.\*  
 KOLOTA, J.  
 KOLOTA, W.  
 KUMSKY, F.  
 KUMSKY, P.  
 LALONDE, C.F.  
 LAPOINT, N.  
 LAFOND, H.  
 LEGARRIE, H.\* (LEGARE)  
 LEVACK, F.  
 MACDONALD, JAMES A.  
 MACDONALD, ROBERT R.  
 MCDERMOTT, P.  
 MCCARTHY, KENNETH  
 MCKENZIE, C.  
 MCKEOWN, W.  
 MCLEAN, F.  
 MCLEAN, L.  
 MCLELLAN, ALLAN\*  
 MCMANUS, G.  
 MATHERS, L..  
 MORRISSEY, I.  
 MORRISSEY, JOHN  
 MULLIGAN, JAMES  
 MULLIGAN, JOSEPH  
 MULLIGAN, R.  
 MURPHY, G.  
 MORAN, W.  
 MILNE, HAROLD  
 NEIF, ROBERT  
 NELSON, J.  
 NEVILLE, STEVE  
 NOLAN, W.  
 O'BRIEN, A.  
 O'CONNOR, BARRY\*  
 O'CONNOR, PATRICK\*  
 O'CONNOR, E.  
 O'REILLY, PATRICK  
 O'REILLY, MICHAEL  
 PARROTT, P.  
 PAYNE, F.  
 PAQUETTE, ALBERT  
 PAQUETTE, K.  
 PAITHOUSKI, NICHOLAS  
 PAITHOUSKI, MICHAEL\*  
 PETTIT, FRANK

PETTIT, G.  
 PETTIT, HAROLD  
 PETTIT, LLOYD  
 POWERS, J.  
 PRENTICE, F.  
 PRENTICE, D.  
 PRENTICE, P.  
 PROULE, A.  
 QUINN, JOHN P.  
 QUINN, THOMAS  
 QUINN, C.  
 RYAN, THOMAS D.  
 SADOQUIS, G.  
 SADOQUIS, M.  
 SADOQUIS, ROLLAND  
 SAUVE, R.  
 SAUVE, A.  
 SAUVE, V.  
 SANTACHE, R.  
 SHEEHY, F.  
 SHIRLEY, J.  
 SHORTT, M.  
 SMITH, R.  
 SNIDER, C.  
 SULLIVAN, M.  
 SUMMERS, J.  
 TAYLOR, C.J.  
 TAYLOR, J.  
 TIMMERMAN, T.  
 TOBIN, JOSEPH  
 TOBIN, W.  
 TRACEY, J.  
 TRIPANIER, B.  
 TULLY, A.J.  
 VARNEY, R.  
 VALLEE, V.  
 VANROOYEN, JOHN P.  
 WADE, R.  
 WALSH, REV. C.  
 WARD, E.  
 WARD, JOHN  
 WASTELL, J.  
 WESTON, H.  
 WOODCOCK, JAMES  
 WOODCOCK, JOSEPH  
 WOODCOCK, C.  
 WYNNE, E.  
 WYNNE, W.  
 WYNNE, G.

NOTE: Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action

#### SOURCES:

St. Joseph's Sarnia Catholic Church located @ 293 Stuart St., Sarnia  
 Sarnia Canadian Observer – March 23, 1945 (Pg. 14): @ Sarnia Library 124 Christina St.

# ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

## HONOUR ROLL

L. PERRY #  
J. ROBB  
G. SMITH  
D. MOORHOUSE  
W. HOLLERAN  
W.P. STONER  
D. AUSTIN  
W. JARVIS  
D. FINNIGAN  
J. MURRAY  
IAN MILNE  
A. HAMILTON  
H. ANDERSON  
R. COX  
K. COLLINS  
C. FOX  
D. CREBSON  
J. MacMILLAN  
B. FLETCHER  
J. BARTLEY  
W.A. ROSE  
M. BROWN  
N. GREER  
R. RAE #  
W. HALEY  
A. BURKHOLDER  
K. BROWN  
D. HALLAM  
B. PHILLIPS #  
E. GREER  
J.A. ROSE  
J. McCAW  
W. PASSMORE  
V. STAUFFER  
M. PASSMORE  
N. REID  
A. FOULTON  
B. McCAW  
D. STAUFFER  
W. McCAW  
A. McDONALD  
W. LANG\*  
J. GRIFFITH  
R. ANDERSON  
J. SMITH  
G. MILNE  
S. BRENNAN

G. KELLY\*  
W. KIRK  
J. CLIFT  
P. CHAPPELLE  
J. ALLEN  
W. KELLY  
L. McKAY  
J.R. KNOX  
J. WALTON  
G. QUINN  
D. SCHNARR  
G. GREER  
H. GREER  
MAJOR G. STIRRETT R.C.A.  
MAJOR J. MacDONALD R.C.A.M.C.  
FLT.CMDR. E. FERGUSON R.A.F.  
LIEUT. H. HAINES R.C.A.  
LIEUT. WM. REID R.C.A.  
CH./P.O. WM. SPENGE R.C.N.  
STF./SGT. R. BENDING R.C.A.M.C.  
SGT. D.D. MILLER R.C.A.F.  
SGT. H. HOBBS R.C.E..  
SGT. D.A. MacMILLAN R.C.A.  
SGT. L. LAUR R.C.A.  
SGT. J. QUINN R.C.A.F. \*  
CPL. THOS. HAMILTON R.C.E. \*  
L/CPL. A.G. STIRRETT R.C.E.  
L/CPL. R. DAILEY R.C.O.C.  
BDR. A. HODGINS R.C.A.  
SGT. J. MURRAY R.C.A.F.  
A/G. R. McALLISTER R.C.A.F.  
GNR. K. LAUR R.C.A. #  
PTE. D. ROSE  
PTE. R. DUNCAN  
PTE. A. TAYLOR  
PTE. WM. FLETCHER  
GNR. CHAS. SADLEIR R.C.A.  
GNR. H.S. CAMERON R.C.A.  
GNR. D. LUCKAM R.C.A.  
TPR. WM. KELLEY TANK CORP.  
J.F. HALEY R.C.A.F.  
D. VAIL R.C.A.F. \*  
A. MINERS R.C.A.F.  
A/C. W. IRVINE R.C.A.F.  
GNR. C. HODGINS R.C.A.  
LD./S. A. MacMILLAN R.C.N.  
GNR. THOS. GREER R.C.A.

LD./S. K. HOUSTON R.C.N.  
L/CPL. R.A. WADHAM R.C.O.C. #  
PTE. E. WALTHAM  
GNR. C. HUMPHREY R.C.A.  
SPR. ROBT. SCOTT R.C.E.  
GNR. R.M. WHITING R.C.A.  
STK. C. MacMILLAN R.C.N.  
PTE. F. DAVIDSON KENT REGT. #  
PTE. E. BULMAN  
PTE. T. GUTTERIDGE R.C.A.F.  
PTE. C. CAVEN  
PTE. W. KANE U.S.A.  
A/C. W.J. ALLEN R.C.A.F.  
PTE. R. STREET KENT R.  
GNR. V.R. CLARK R.C.A.  
E.W. BROWN  
J.A. BROWN  
J. LAING  
W. KIRKPATRICK  
C. CAMPBELL #  
L. CAVEN #  
L.S. MURRAY  
J.R. MURRAY  
D. MacKINLEY  
R.A. ZINK #  
N. BROWN

#### Additional Names WWII

N.F. ANDERSON  
G.R. BRENNAN  
A. BROOKS  
HAZEL BROWN  
J. BURGESS  
J. CAMPBELL  
J. CRAWFORD  
E. DAVIS  
E. DAWSON  
P. DAWSON  
W. DEMPSEY

I. FERGUSON  
L. FOLEY  
D. FOX  
M. GARSIDE  
J. GOODALL  
J. GREASON  
R. HACKNEY  
ELIZABETH JAMIESON  
J. JAMIESON  
J. KNIGHT  
M. KESHANEK  
B. MATTINGLEY  
R. MORRISON  
T. MOORE  
J.D. MURRAY  
R. MUNRO  
R. McCAW  
R. McGIRR  
J. NUTTALL  
M. PHIBBS  
D. PASSMORE  
G.W. PASSMORE  
D. PALFRAMAN  
R. PALFRAMAN  
R. ROSS  
A. ROWE  
D. SANDS  
O. SMITH  
W. THOMPSON  
J. WADE  
G. WAITE  
J. WALKER  
E. WILKINS  
R. WILKINS  
D. WILLIAMSON  
J. WILLIAMSON  
R. WILLIAMSON  
C. YOUNG  
J. YOUNG  
R. YOUNG

#### NOTES:

Names with a star \* beside their name were killed in action.  
Names with a pound symbol # beside their name were ????

#### SOURCE:

St. Paul's United Church located @ 360 Devine St., Sarnia

CITIZENS OF SARNIA-LAMBTON THAT FOUGHT IN THE  
**KOREAN WAR**

1950 – 1953

<u>NAME</u> (* = killed in action)	<u>REGIMENT</u>
L.R.W. AULPH	
BILL ANDERSON	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
PALMER ARNOLD	
SYRIL BABIN	
ROBERT BACHELOR	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
JOE BALOGNA	
J.B. BARRIE	
LEONARD ROE BEATSON	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
WILF BEDARD	
ORV BLONDIN	Royal Canadian Engineers
F.L. BROOKS	
CHARLES BROWN	US Army
J.P. CAHILL	
CHARLIE CHAFE	Royal Canadian Navy
KEN CHIDWICK	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
G.A.D. CHURCHER	
H.W. CLARK	
JOSEPH CONNOR	
DOUG COOPER	
WALLACE T. CRAVAN	Royal Canadian Navy
JAMES CROSSMAN	Royal Canadian Regiment
DONALD DARK	Royal Canadian Navy
GOLDIE DAWSON	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
PAUL DENSMORE	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
C.J. DOEY	
WILLIAM EMBERLEY	
CHARLES EMMONS	Royal Canadian Navy
BRUCE CARLTON EYRE	
ROBERT FADER	
JC FERGUSON	
GEORGE GALLOP	Royal Canadian Army
EDWARD GAMMON	
VIC GANDER	Royal Canadian Army Service Corps
ERNEST GELINAS	
FRED GENERAL	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
WILF GERMAN	
ROBERT GRAHAM	Royal Canadian Navy
ERNEST GREENBIRD	
TED HASLIP	
C. HATFIELD	
JOHN HENNESSY	Royal Canadian Regiment
RUSS HOBSON	
BRUCE L. HOUCK	
ALBERT HURST	
W.J. IDEN	
ROBERT EDWARD JAMES	Royal Canadian Regiment
JOHN KEMP	



EDWARD KETTLE	Royal Canadian Navy
EDWARD JOSEPH MICHAEL KNIGHT*	Royal Canadian Regiment
JACK EDWARD LACHANCE	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
GUY LACHAPELLE	
GUY LUC LALONDE	Royal 22nd Regiment (The Van Doos)
BOB LAPAGE	Royal Canadian Regiment
W.J. LEITCH	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
ROB LESLIE	
WILLIAM LESPERANCE	
G.A.D. LETHONEN	
HAROLD MACDONALD	Royal Canadian Regiment
PETE MCDONALD	RHR
HAROLD MCLELLAN	Royal Canadian Horse Artillery
GEORGE MCPHEE	RSF
JIMMY MERCER	
JOSEPH ANTHONY MILLS	Royal Canadian Regiment
PETE MORREAU	
BRUCE MURCH	Royal Canadian Navy
HOWARD NEUBAURR	Royal Canadian Regiment
RENNIE NICKSON	Medic
CARSON NIXON	Military Police
PATRICK WILLIAM O'CONNOR*	Royal Canadian Regiment
WILLIAM E. OLDALE	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
A.D. ORTON	
ARNOLD PALMER	
HOWARD PEARCE	Royal Canadian Regiment
DAN PHILLIPS	
RONALD PHILLIPS	
JAMES PRIOR	Royal Canadian Horse Artillery
JACK PYNE	
KENNETH REDMOND	
LESLIE ROBERTSON	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
ROBERT ROSEI	Royal Canadian Regiment
GEORGE S. SADOQUIS	
KEN SAUVE	
AL SCOTT	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
JAMES H. SILVER	US Marine Corps
KEN SISSON	
WILLIAM R. SMALE	
HAROLD BRUCE SMITH	
R.D. STEPHENSON	
R.J.K. STEVENS	
JACK SWETLISHNOFF	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
DONALD THOMAS	US Military
JOHN RICHARD TOOLE*	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
TERRY TULLY	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
GEORGE VALE	RCSC
DAVE VANSICKLE	Royal Canadian Regiment
HANK WELLINGTON	Royal Canadian Engineers
PETE WELLINGTON	Royal Canadian Army Service Corps
LEN WHITE	Royal Canadian Engineers
R.F. WILLIAMS	

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Lieutenant Alfred Roy Adams  
D: Oct 17, 1918 Age: 32



Pilot Officer Douglas Earl Aiken  
D: Jun 25, 1944 Age: 23



Private Arthur John Allan  
D: Sep 27, 1916 Age: 25



Private James Howard Allan  
D: Jun 13, 1916 Age: 27

*DEAR, MY THOUGHTS ARE EVER OF YOU AND WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.*

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



S/L-Pilot Robert Wilfred Alexander  
D: Sep 21, 1944 Age: 24



Robert W. Alexander  
with his wife Milfred Florence



Flying Officer-AG George Varnum Andrew  
D: Dec 20, 1943 Age: 20



Civilian Tech Corps William Charles Andrew  
D: Oct 15, 1941 Age: 20



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private Charles Harris Barnes  
D: Oct 10, 1918 Age: 20



Corporal Isaac George Bell  
D: Jul 8, 1944 Age: 23



Navy Coder Joseph Griffiths Bell  
D: Sep 20, 1943 Age: 21



Private James William Bennett  
D: Oct 1, 1916 Age: 26

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Major Dr. David Benjamin Bentley  
D: Apr 5, 1917 Age: 52



Major Dr. David Bentley with two of his  
sons Albert (L) and David (R)



Private Cameron Robert Bisset  
D: Sep 3, 1918 Age: 21



F/O-BA Hugo Borchardt with Marilyn & Hugo Jr.  
D: Jul 21, 1944 Age: 30



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Able Seaman Paul Albert Brown  
D: Dec 1, 1940 Age: 20



F/O-Pilot Allan William Campbell  
D: Aug 25, 1944 Age: 26

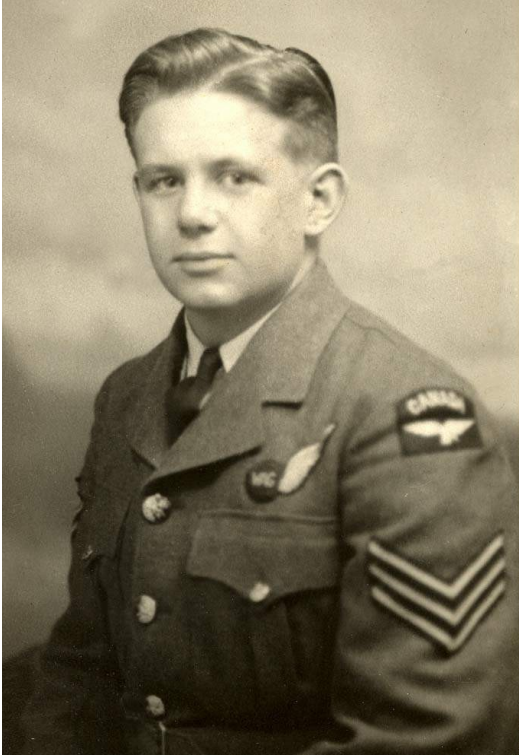


Private Edward Frank Causley  
D: Aug 30, 1918 Age: 20



Sergeant-Observer William Brown Clark  
D: Aug 31, 1941 Age: 29

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



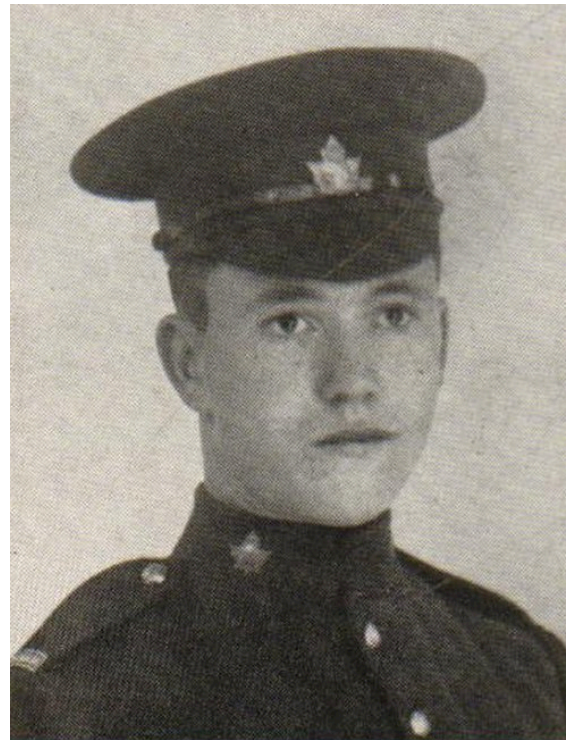
WAG Wesley Percival Coleman  
D: Sep 8, 1943 Age: 21



Lieutenant Stewart Cowan  
D: Oct 1, 1916 Age: 26



Lance Corporal Robert Palmer Crawford  
D: Sep 12 1916 Age: 29



Lieutenant Royal Bruce Crawford  
D: Oct 1, 1918 Age: 20

*HE WILL NOT AGE. HIS SONG IS SUNG AND HE REMAINS FOREVER YOUNG.*



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private William Jonathan James Cushley  
D: Sep 3, 2006 Age: 21



William Cushley with his mother Elaine  
Just before leaving for Afghanistan



Father Errol Cushley surrounded by his children  
Back: Amanda and Lisa, Front: William, Errol and Tonia



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Flying Officer-Pilot Frederick John Daws with his wife Kathleen May  
D: Jul 25, 1943 Age: 22



Army Sapper Raymond William Dionne  
D: May 23, 1943 Age: 43

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private Wilfred Albert Durocher  
D: Feb 26, 1945 Age: 29



Wilfred A. Durocher with his wife  
Florence Agnes and their son



F/L-BA John (Jack) MacKintosh Fowlie  
D: Mar 16, 1945 Age: 24



A young John (Jack) MacIntosh Fowlie



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



P/O-WAG Lloyd George Gallaway  
D: Oct 1, 1942 Age: 25



Lloyd G. Gallaway with his brother Eddie



Private George Thomas Giles  
D: Oct 7, 1916 Age: 29

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Lieutenant William Richard Graham  
D: Mar 2, 1945 Age: 26



William R. Graham  
with his daughter Susan



William R. Graham with his wife Dorothy (Dodie)

*IN THE PRIME OF LIFE I LEFT THIS WORLD, MY BELOVED WIFE AND DEAR LITTLE GIRL.*



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Lance Bombardier Russell Raymond Green  
D: Aug 13, 1944 Age: 25



Private Percival Edward Guertin  
D: Apr 11, 1918 Age: 31



Lieutenant Neil William Hanna  
D: Nov 20, 1918 Age: 23



WAG John Michael Harris  
D: Apr 7, 1941 Age: 28



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Lieutenant Thomas Douglas Hazen  
D: Aug 19, 1918 Age: 22



Sergeant Clifford Vernon Hebner  
D: Oct 5, 1944 Age: 32



Private Gerald Reginald Kelly  
D: Sep 14, 1944 Age: 19



Lance Corporal Albert Harold Willsea Ketch  
D: Aug 15, 1917 Age: 24



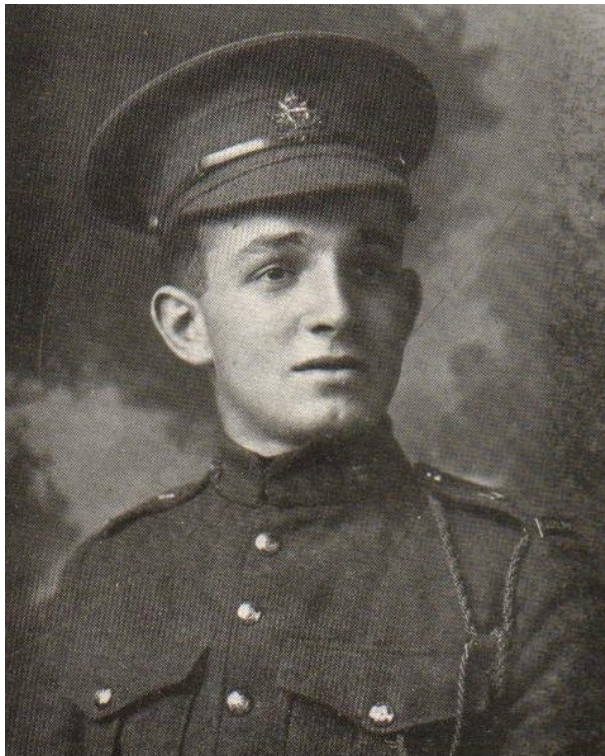
CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Chief Petty Officer Alfred Smedley Kettle  
D: Feb 10, 1942 Age: 31



Private Leslie Gordon Kirk  
D: Sep 13, 1944 Age: 23



Private Charles Edwin Knight  
D: Oct 26, 1917 Age: 21



WAG Wilfred Leslie Knight  
D: Jun 9, 1945 Age: 19

*WEEP NOT, MOTHER; HIS COUNTRY AT STRIFE, A SOLDIER WILLINGLY GIVES HIS LIFE.*

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Corporal Paul Adolph Larson  
D: Feb 24, 1945 Age: 23



FS-O William W.H. Lavers (center)  
D: Sep 10, 1942 Age: 23



John Lyle Leckie (center) as a baby  
with his older siblings Marjorie & Ken



Young John Lyle Leckie  
Future Flying Officer-Bomb Aimer  
Dec 17, 1944 Age: 27



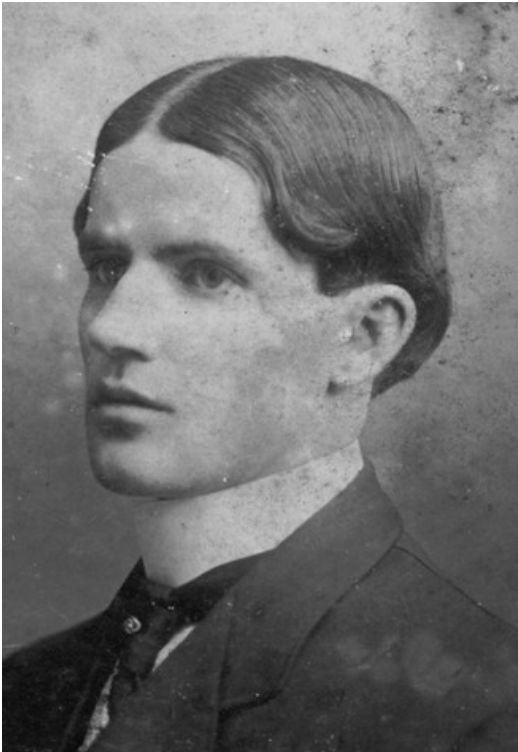
CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Gunner George Victor Lawrence Loney  
D: Aug 8, 1944 Age: 28



Rifleman John Louis Lychowich  
D: Jun 8, 1944 Age: 26



Private Charles Robson Major  
D: Aug 21, 1917 Age: 34



F/L-Pilot Albert Robert McCallum  
D: Dec 15, 1942 Age: 23

*DEAR SON, YOU WERE OUR PRIDE. FATE WILLED THAT YOU BE A HERO.*

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Trooper Donald Leonard McClure  
D: Jul 30, 1943 Age: 22



Private James Kenneth McClure  
D: Dec 13, 1944 Age: 24



Private Albert Alexander McDonald  
D: Aug 28, 1918 Age: 24



Captain Walter Wake McKenzie  
D: Feb 19, 1917 Age: 25

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private John Pettigrew McLagan  
D: Apr 30, 1945 Age: 37



WAG David Douglas Miller  
D: Sep 28, 1942 Age: 26



Private David Chester Montgomery  
D: Apr 26, 1917 Age: 23



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



F/O-Navigator Howard Paul Morris  
D: Dec 16, 1943 Age: 22



WOII-AG Charles Arthur Nash  
D: Jun 12, 1943 Age: 24



Flying Officer-Navigator Howard Paul Morris

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private Patrick William O'Connor  
D: May 30, 1951 Age: 27



Patrick W. O'Connor  
with his brother John



Patrick W. O'Connor with his wife Vera Irene

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Lieutenant Ernest Edward Ottaway  
D: Oct 21, 1944 Age: 32



F/O-Navigator Arthur Edward Parsons  
D: May 1, 1943 Age: 27



Corporal Brent Donald Poland  
D: Apr 8, 2007 Age: 37



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Seaman Stephen Bruce Powell with his mother Cora  
D: Oct 22, 1940 Age: 18

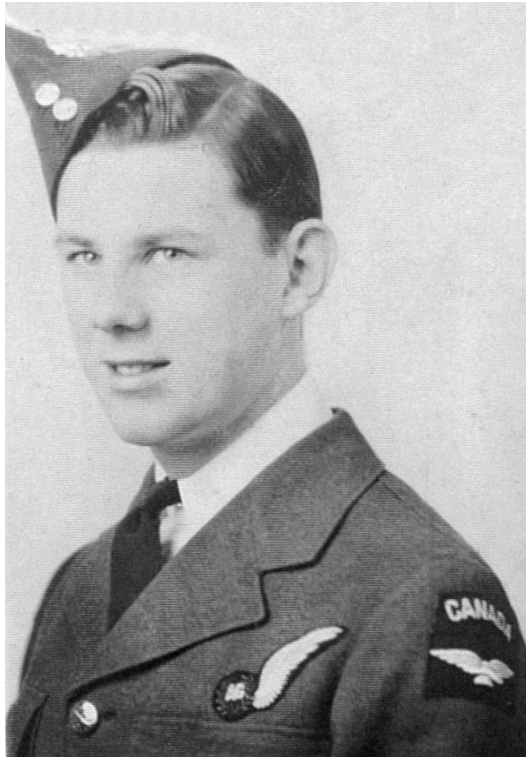


W/O II-Pilot Thomas Edward Powell  
D: Oct 5, 1942 Age: 24



2nd Lieutenant Leslie Playne  
D: Mar 27, 1918 Age: 23

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Warrant Officer II-Air Gunner James Edward Quinn  
D: Jan 13, 1943 Age: 21



Private George Alexander Reid  
D: Oct 5, 1915 Age: 31



Lieutenant Walter Frank Scott  
D: Aug 10, 1918 Age: 25



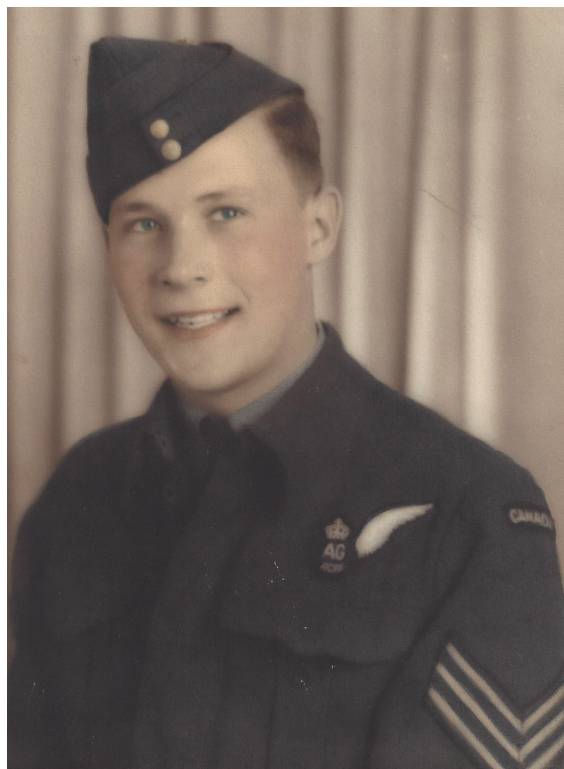
CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



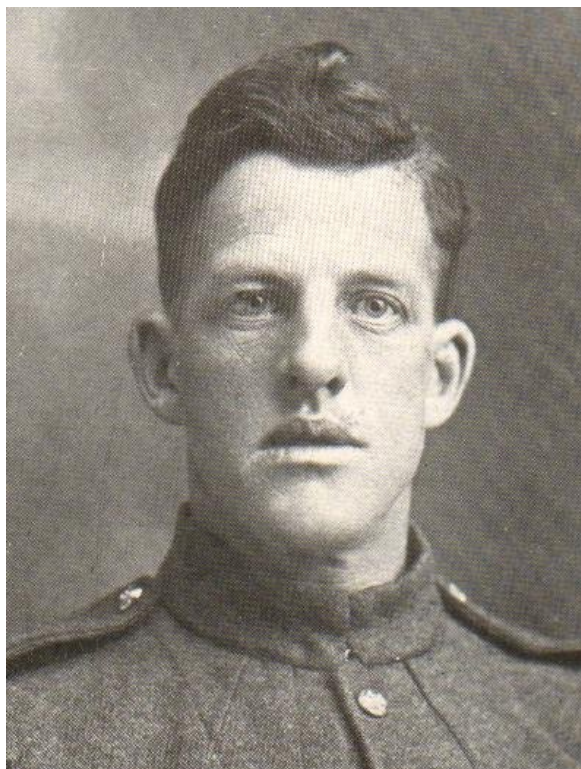
Private Harry Smith  
D: Feb 15, 1918 Age: 28



Lieutenant Russell Wright Soper  
D: Apr 2, 1918 Age: 28



Flight Sergeant-AG Geoffrey William Stone  
D: Nov 8, 1944 Age: 19



Private Herbert Stott  
D: Aug 17, 1918 Age: 36



CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



P/O-Air Gunner Stanley James Teskey  
D: Apr 25, 1945 Age: 19



Corporal John Richard Toole  
D: Oct 11, 1951 Age: 22



Captain Norman Ewart Towers  
D: Sep 20, 1916 Age: 29



Private Alfred Weston  
D: Jul 31, 1916 Age: 22

CITY OF SARNIA FALLEN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHS



Private John Alexander Wilson  
D: May 19, 1916 Age: 23



Lance Corporal Thomas William Wright  
D: Nov 9, 1918 Age: 37



Flying Officer-Pilot James Lenoury Wright  
D: Mar 15, 1945 Age: 28

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[jerrycarol@bell.net](mailto:jerrycarol@bell.net)
- b - Lyn Westfall (e-mail), daughter of William Wilfred Henry Lavers, confirming her fathers information.  
[lyn.westfall@sympatico.ca](mailto:lyn.westfall@sympatico.ca)
- c - Bill Bullock (phone), nephew of Hugh Frances Hegarty. Provided information about his uncle (eg. correct spelling of name), and has records of his military career and service.
- d - Kevin McHarg (e-mail), National Director-Hero to Hero Team Canada and Marsha Guthrie (e-mail), niece of W.R. Graham. Both provided information on W.R. Graham.
- e - Garry McBean (e-mail). Provided information on J.E. Quinn.  
[gmcb@cogeco.ca](mailto:gmcb@cogeco.ca)
- f - Richard Prudom (e-mail). Provided information on his uncle C.A. Nash.  
[richard.prudom@st-clair.net](mailto:richard.prudom@st-clair.net)
- g - Dan McCaffrey (e-mail). Reporter, historian and author, provided stories on Daniel Crone (Boer War, printed November 2005), Charles Henry Living (WWII, printed November 2007) and Mayor William Paul.  
[danval3@cogeco.ca](mailto:danval3@cogeco.ca)
- h - Jeff Beeler. Lambton County Library, Sarnia Branch  
 Contributed portion of information on Max Berger

- i - Cathy Jolicoeur (e-mail), niece of John (Jack) Fowlie, provided information about her uncle.  
the\_jolicoeurs@yahoo.ca
- j - Shawn O'Keefe. Grandson of James L. Wright, provided information about his grandfather.  
keefers@bell.blackberry.net
- k - Ian Mason – Provided information on Ross Stevens  
ilmason@xcelco.on.ca
- l - Trevor Sherwood – Provided information on Gordon Fordyce  
thsher@btinternet.com
- m - Alice Frew – Provided information on Gerald Kelly  
bryanfrew@gmail.com
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- o - Joseph Paithouski – Provided information on his uncle Michael Paithowski  
joepski\_76@hotmail.com
- p - Don Poland – Provided information on the Poland family including sons Brent and Mark.  
dpoland1@cogeco.ca
- q - George Mathewson – The Sarnia Journal  
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- r - Errol and Elaine Cushley – Provided information on William Cushley  
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- s - Henry Nevile – Provided information on Herbert Nevile  
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- t - George Pitfield – Lay minister at St. Clair United Church  
Aamjiwnaang First Nations, Sarnia.
- u - Lou Howard – Former crew member of the *H.M.C.S. Sarnia*  
lou.howard1@yahoo.ca

The following poems were used in this project:

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- Pg. 7 – “Aftermath”, Frank Walker
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- Pg. 40 – “The Soldiers’ Widow”, Edgar Guest
- Pg. 42 – “My Son”, Myrtle Corcoran Watts
- Pg. 66 – “This was my Brother”, Mona Gould
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- Pg. 178 – “Canada’s Men”, Author unknown
- Pg. 293/294 – “Korea”, Patrick O’Connor
- Pg. 403 – “For the Fallen”, Laurence Binyon
- Pg. 404 – “Imagine”, John Lennon



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Bill Douglas (Royal Canadian Legion)  
Bryan and Alice Frew (info on G. Kelly)  
Eldon Grant (Sombra Museum)  
Joe Horley (The Sarnia Refiner)  
Teresa Iacobelli (historian)  
Cathy Jolicoeur (niece of J. Fowlie)  
Frances LaChance (info on P. O'Connor)  
Brian Lynch (SCITS teacher)  
George Mathewson (Sarnia Journal)  
Dan McCaffrey (Reporter/Historian)  
Linda McLaughlin (Haines Printing)  
Fred Morley (Royal Canadian Legion)  
Robert Molland (re: P. O'Connor)  
Rev. Lloyd Murdock (St. Andrew's Church)  
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Ann Pearce (St. George's/St. John's Church)  
Don Poland (info on Brent Poland)  
Ken Sauve (Korean War vet)  
Barbara Simpson (Sarnia Observer)  
Teresa Sowinski (Sarnia Library)  
Dana Thorne (Lambton Cnty. Archives)  
Bev Walkling (WWI letters)  
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Denis Couture (RCAF websites)  
Bill Dickie (St. Patrick's)  
Scott Elliot (Royal Canadian Legion)  
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Joan McRae (info on T.Lee)  
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Janet Mountain (Central United Church)  
Glenn Ogilvie (Glenn Ogilvie photography)  
Joe Paithouski (info on M. Paithowski)  
George Pitfield (St. Clair United Church)  
Richard Prudom (info on C.A. Nash)  
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**Mayor Mike Bradley** – From the very outset, his belief in the worth of the project, his incredible on-going support, and his desire to see the successful completion of the project was a great motivator. His admiration for the men and women of the military is abundantly evident as is his respect for their sacrifice.

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## ABOUT THE PROJECT RESEARCHER

Project researcher Tom Slater was born in Thunder Bay (Fort William), Ontario, the younger of two sons, along with older brother Ken, to parents Oliver and Frances Slater. He was raised and educated in Thunder Bay, attaining a Bachelor of Science (Biology) degree from Lakehead University. He then attained his Bachelor of Education degree from Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario.

Tom has always had a keen interest in military history, partly due to his parents' own war experiences. During the Second World War, his mother, Frances, would work for a time in 1944 at the Canadian Car and Foundry in Thunder Bay where Hawker Hurricane airplanes for the Royal Air Force were built. His father, Oliver, was a veteran of World War II. Oliver Slater first enlisted at age sixteen with the Canadian Army (Militia) on September 16, 1941, in Kenora, Ontario. He served with the 16th Medium Battery Reserve Army, with the rank of Gunner for just over a year and a half. He would leave the army to join the Navy, enlisting at the age of seventeen and ten months, on June 26, 1943 in Port Arthur, Ontario. The minimum age to enlist without parental consent was seventeen years, six months. Although Oliver was slightly older than the minimum age, he was initially asked to provide a parent's consent, but that condition was later waived. As a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, Able Seaman Oliver Slater served on convoy duty in the "Battle of the Atlantic". Oliver served aboard several ships including the Fairmile Motor Launch *Q090*, the Frigate *HMCS Lauzon* and the aircraft carrier *HMS Puncher*, seeing action from the east coast of Canada and Newfoundland and across the Atlantic Ocean to Ireland and Great Britain. He was honourably discharged in September of 1947. Tom also had an uncle, Edward Dubeau, who would serve in World War II as a member of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, also serving on convoy duty off the east coast of Newfoundland and in the North Atlantic.

After Tom attained his Bachelor of Education degree, he and his wife, Jodi, began their teaching careers in Northern Alberta in the fall of 1982. One year later, expecting their first child, Tom and Jodi moved to Lambton County, where he began teaching with the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. Tom moved to St. Patrick's Catholic High School, Sarnia in the fall of 1985, where he taught science, biology and special education over three decades. He retired in June of 2013. Tom is the proud father of daughter Megan and son Bennett and has always surrounded himself with loving pets.

*For the Fallen*  
(by Laurence Binyon)  
*They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning  
We will remember them.*

*Imagine (portion of)*

*Imagine there's no countries*

*It isn't hard to do*

*Nothing to kill or die for*

*And no religion too*

*Imagine all the people*

*Living life in peace...*

*Imagine no possessions*

*I wonder if you can*

*No need for greed or hunger*

*A brotherhood of man*

*Imagine all the people*

*Sharing all the world...*

*You may say I'm a dreamer*

*But I'm not the only one*

*I hope someday you'll join us*

*And the world will live as one*

*John Lennon*



Sarnia, like thousands of other communities across Canada, had many of its sons and daughters answer the call of duty to serve their country during times of war. These “ordinary” local citizens left the comforts of their homes, as well as their schools, farms, jobs, trades and careers. They left their loved ones--grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives, children and friends--in response to a call by this nation to fight in far off lands to defend freedom.

For the fallen, they lost the opportunity to live full lives, enriched by friends and family. Their deaths affected not only their loved ones but also the Sarnia and Lambton community as a whole, not only then, but for future generations.

*The City of Sarnia War Remembrance Project* is a comprehensive record of Sarnia’s contributions during times of war and the sacrifices made by its citizens. It covers, in detail, the Boer War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and Afghanistan Peacekeeping. It includes the history of the Sarnia cenotaph; local news stories relating to these wars; letters from soldiers; expanded information on all of Sarnia’s fallen; records of local church war honour rolls; and photographs of many of the fallen.

It is an enduring tribute to all the Sarnia men and women who served, the fallen soldiers, and their loved ones, so that their sacrifices will be forever commemorated and remembered.

