

Lieutenant Clarence Foster Heald

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CLARENCE FOSTER
HEALD
Lieutenant
Canadian Army

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Lieutenant Clarence Foster Heald was born in Edmonton, Alberta, on April 5, 1921. He and his family moved to London, Ontario when he was a young boy. After finishing his Secondary education at 16, he went into night school for Business, but finished after 3 months. He then moved to Toronto, Ontario, and became a Bank Teller at the Bank of Toronto (now known as TD Canada Trust). It is interesting that he had a very non-physically demanding job, and then went into a very physically demanding job, as a soldier. This shows the dedication of Canadians to serve their country during the war, even when they may have not been the best prepared. Mr. Heald enjoyed skating, baseball, hiking, as well as photography. He was described by the recruiters to be "mild and gentle". Mr. Heald served from November, 1939 to

November, 1941 in Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, as well as the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps, in London, Ontario. He was a very small man, standing at only 5 feet 7 inches, and weighing 118 pounds.

Mr. Heald was enlisted into the Brockville Rifles. He enlisted on May 12, 1942, at the age of 21. He was transferred around Canada for about a year, before being promoted to 2nd Lieutenant on February 13, 1942. He was eventually sent to the United Kingdom in May, 1944. He was put into the 1st Hampshire Regiment. After being sent to France, he was wounded in battle near Villiers Bocage, France. He then returned to the UK and stayed in hospital for about two weeks. Mr. Heald was then put into the Devonshire Regiment, where he fought in Europe again. His Regiment took part in Operation Varsity, a joint British-American operation culminating in the seizure of the Rhine river.

Sadly, it was probably during Operation Varsity that Mr. Heald received the wounds from which he would die. He passed away on March 31, 1945, 4 days after Operation Varsity. He was only 23 years old, but had been serving in the army full time since the age of 21, and part time since the age of 18. He received a Canadian Volunteer Service Medal for his service. On his medical records, it was noted that he had a scar on the outside of his right wrist, as well as one on his hip from an appendectomy. This is sadly necessary to note in order for somebody to identify his body post mortem. Mr. Heald was originally buried near the place of his death in Germany. Shortly after, he was reburied at the Holten Canadian Military Cemetery, in Holten, The Netherlands. His next of kin was his mother, Mrs. A. Clara Varnum, who resided in London, Ontario.

By Braeden Smith and Floris Israëls



A soldier kneels before his
brother's grave