



Born in Chatham on September 9, 1925, Harold was another one of the young men whose formative years were dominated by the war.

Harold initially attended school in Louisville. A photograph of that time shows a group of attentive pupils and their teacher, Miss White. Moving to Chatham, to 103 Emma street, he and his brother Elmer, later attended Blessed Sacrament School.

The brothers enjoyed playing baseball, soccer and hockey. In fact, Harold would continue to carry the mark of a dedicated hockey player – a scar on the right cheek courtesy of a frozen puck. A more relaxing hobby involved the making of model airplanes.

After graduation, he elected to attend CVS. Here he took a variety of shop courses including woodworking and auto mechanics. In the carpentry shop, he produced a side table that still has a place of honour in Elmer's living room.

Harold was a dependable worker for Chatham Daily News. He delivered the newspaper for six years. After school and during school holidays, he worked as a clerk in Nelson and Wright Men's Wear.

The manpower shortage in Europe was getting critical. Volunteers for front line duty were needed desperately. Thus, Harold took the fateful step and went to get a medical examination. On April 14, 1944, he weighed 142 lbs, was 5'6 ½ inch tall, had brown hair and hazel eyes. The examiner also noted the scar on his right cheek.

Less than a month later, Harold enlisted in the army and received training in London. After stints at No 12 BTC, No 1 DD in Windsor and a course at Ipperwash, he was rushed out to No. 2 Transit Camp at Debert, NS by December 9. Leaving Canada on December 18, he disembarked in the UK on December 25.

He was flown to NW Europe (Holland) on February 12 ,1945. Attached to the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, he immediately saw action against the Germans . he distinguished himself in the fighting for crossing of the Twente canal. Later, he bravely tried to help another platoon that was in difficulties. The fighting around the Küsten canal was fierce, and Harold chose to be right in the middle of it. Here he died as the official letter explains:

*Dear Mrs Kemp:*

*It is with deep regret that I write this letter. It is my sad duty to inform you of the circumstances which surrounded the death of your son Lance-Corporal Harold Kemp.*

*Following an attack on the afternoon of Saturday 21 April '45 in the enlarging of the bridgehead over the Küsten canal south of Edeweicht in Germany Cpl Kemp was hit in the face by a German sniper's bullet while scanning the ground with binoculars. A stretcher bearer named Sheddon from our B Coy ran to his aid and was instantly killed by the same sniper just as he was preparing to fix up your son's serious wound. There was nothing that could be done for L Cpl Kemp and he died a few minutes later.*

*There is a little that I can say to alleviate your suffering at this loss but I do offer you my sincerest sympathy. The written word cannot bring back your dearly beloved son.*

*Perhaps I may increase your pride in him who paid the supreme sacrifice by simply saying that he died a true Canadian soldier. It was just exactly a month ago today when we crossed Twente canal in Holland and your son worked right alongside me through some very tough fighting. The following day he was promoted to Lance Corporal and he did some extremely fine work up through Germany. On that particular Saturday 14 Platoon had taken their small objective and 15 Platoon were passing through us and to our left. There was very heavy enemy fire, both mortar and small arms, and 15 Platoon started to fall back. On his own initiative L. Cpl Kemp, whose section was on the left of our platoon, undertook to bolster 15 Platoon and he was working with them when he was hit. He was one of the most liked lads in 14 Platoon. It required two more days of hard fighting before we advanced beyond the*

*point where L Cpl Kemp was killed but the advance has continued slowly against what is probably a last ditch stand of Germans. The final convincing of the Germans to unconditional surrender is necessitating some very tough fighting in spots but an armistice leading to a third World war in the near future cannot be accomplished without the efforts and sacrifices of men like your son.*

*The body is buried near the town of Friesoythe in Germany but after the war it will be removed to the common Canadian grave.*

*Those of us who still fight will never forget those who have given their lives. Please accept my deepest sympathy on the loss of so gallant a son.*

*Sincerely Lieutenant A.M. Sweeton.*

The final grave of Harold Kemp is on the Canadian War Cemetery at Holten plot: 10 row: A grave: 15

