

REMEMBER THE FALLEN

IN MEMORY OF:

JUNIUS LYMAN HOKAN



Hoka was born and raised in St. Catharines, Ontario son of Ella Grace and Lyman William Hogan, who served at Vimy and in Belgium during the First World War. At the age of 18, Junius Hoka enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force on 11 November 1940, in Niagara Falls, Ontario during a time when the RCAF had a policy of restricting enlistment to those who were white.

Hoka was not just a pilot but also a designer of a potentially significant navigation tool. Hoka flew with British ace Johnnie Johnson at Dieppe. On 26 September 1942, while flying as an escort service the weather forecasted winds of 55 kilometres per hour but the squadron ran into winds of 160 kilometres per hour. As a consequence, 60 kilometers off the English Coast the Spitfire ran out of gas. Junius’ last words were "Out of petrol, bailing out, so long boys, see you tomorrow". Second World War Spitfire Pilot Junius Lyman Hoka

IN MEMORY OF:

EDWARD ROBERTSON SMITH



Edward Smith was born 31 July 1915 in Niagara Falls, son of Mr. Edward Anderson Smith who lived at 1052 McRae Street, Niagara Falls, along with his stepmother Catherine and stepsister Leila Hogan. In August 1938 Smith was hired as a moulder on “D-line, Dept. 22G” at McKinnon Industries (General Motors). He worked there for six years and was their first Black employee to give his life in the war. When he married Madeline Inez Smith they moved to 30 Elberta Street, St. Catharines. They had one daughter, Leanna Madeline, who was eight years old when Smith enlisted.

Smith enlisted in the army in Toronto on 7 March 1944 and trained at Camp Borden. Smith embarked from Great Britain on 28 December 1944 to North West Europe where he joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's), R.C.I.C. On 7 March 1945, exactly one year from his enlistment date, he gave his life in action in Germany. He rests Nijmegen Canadian Military Cemetery in Holland.

IN MEMORY OF:

CHARLES ERNEST HARPER JR



Charles Harper was born 10 September 1920, son of Charles Ernest Harper and Ethel Flowers. He grew up at 62 North Street, St. Catharines along with sisters Elsie Mae, Ruth, Florence, Jeanette, and Lorna, and brothers James, Harry, and Richard. He and his wife, Sarah Loretta lived at 9 Francis St., St. Catharines but later Sarah moved to 28 Facer St. The former truck driver signed up in Hamilton on 15 September 15, 1942. He served in with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. Harper was a casualty while serving in Italy and died 27 March 1944. Rests at Moro River Canadian War Cemetery in Italy.

IN MEMORY OF:

CLARENCE ALVIN TRIMM



Lincoln and Welland Regiment, R.C.I.C.

Born 18 January 1924 in Montreal, Québec, son of James McDonald and Isabelle Matilda Trimm, Clarence left school at 15 and was employed as a stockkeeper at A. Gold & Sons. Trimm enlisted 10 May 1943 at Montreal South, Québec at age 19 with a future goal to become a mechanic. He served in France, Germany and Holland. While in action in northern Holland Trimm suffered a gunshot wound to the abdomen and died of wounds on 27 April 1945, less than a couple weeks before the end of the war.

FIRST BLACK PARATROOPERS

Charles Waterman became Canada's first Black paratrooper. Not long afterward Canada would have three other Blacks become paratroopers: Clarence Lapierre, Cleland Henson and Loyst Kelly.

Charles Waterman

Charles Waterman was born in the British West Indies but made his home in Toronto, Ontario working there as a furrier. Waterman was an amateur boxer who made it to the semifinals of the New York Golden Gloves in 1940. Waterman became the first Black paratrooper in Canada signing up in Toronto, Ontario when the first detachment was ready to go overseas. Waterman received his paratrooper training with the Canadian forces in Great Britain in preparation for the invasion of Europe.



Airborne Negroes Graduate

TWO Canadian Negroes recently qualified as paratroopers at Shilo Camp. The first two colored men to train as paratroopers in Canada, they are Pte. C. "Tex" Henson, 24, of Dresden, Ont., and Pte. Loyst William Kelly, 19, of Ingersoll, Ont. Tex joined the army in 1940 at Chatham, Ont., where he was on instructional duties until last October. Then the para-bug bit him. He applied, was accepted. Always interested in boxing and swimming and several other sports, the good-natured colored soldier earned himself the nickname of "muscle-builder" from his fellow 'chutists. A brother, Bill, recently joined the army, and another brother, Tom, 18, may be in uniform soon, Tex says.



Above is Pte. C. C. Waterman, of Toronto, first Canadian Negro to join the Dominion's paratroopers. He is now overseas. He received his paratroop training in Britain.

IN MEMORY OF:

Clarence David LaPierre



Clarence David LaPierre, born 9 November 1923 in Owen Sound, Ontario was adopted at birth by Lilian and Marcel LaPierre. Known by his friends as “Dude”, he was an athlete at the Owen Sound Collegiate and Vocational Institute. Afterward he worked with the Empire Stove and Furnace Company as a welder.

On 21 January 1943 he enlisted in Toronto, Ontario. After training at Camp Borden he transferred to the 48th Highlanders of Canada. Ten days later LaPierre arrived in Great Britain to join the 4th Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit then transferring to the Queens Own Rifles on 6 August 1943. On 17 January 1944 to the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion where he trained in preparation for the invasion of Normandy.

LaPierre parachuted into Normandy as part of Operation Overlord on 6 June 1944 landing in the drop zone west of Caen, France. The next day he was mortally wounded. He rests in Ranville, the first village to be liberated in the D-Day landings.

Cleland Harper Henson



Cleland Henson, born 9 September 1917 in Dresden, Ontario was the son of Peter Henson and the grandson of Rev. Josiah Henson of Uncle Tom's Cabin. He enlisted at Chatham, Ontario on 18 September 1941. After a year, he transferred to the 1st Parachute Bn. and graduated 1 October 1943 from Camp Shilo, becoming one of the first three Blacks in that unit. Henson embarked for the Great Britain on 12 January 1945 and parachuted into Germany on 24 March 1945 seeing action during Operation Varsity. Henson was discharged in 17 November 1945 and died in Flint, MI on 29 November 1980.

Loyst William Kelly



Pte. L. Kelly on the left checking the reserve parachute of his friend Pte. C. Henson. Shilo, Manitoba Courtesy of Canadian Army Photo

Loyst William Kelly of Ingersoll, Ontario signed up at the age of 19. He trained in Shilo, Manitoba. Other than a newspaper article that read “180 pound Kelly is a popular figure with the paratroopers” and a photograph of him at training camp little is known.