

A PLACE OF HONOUR

Manitoba's War Dead Commemorated in its Geography

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Aandal, Private **Ralph B.** of Winnipeg (H 18844). Calgary Highlanders. He died 16 December 1944 at the age of 19 and is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was the son of the Reverend Martin and Clara S. Aandal of St. Vital. These are some excerpts from a few of his letters

home:

I had a nice trip out here. We rode on the train for quite a ways. Then we got off and rode on camel for miles and miles. The sand is about 40 feet deep. In other words, I am at Shilo (18 April 1944).

Well, I am in Debert, for how long I don't know. Talk about rain and fog – you've got to blow a whistle when you walk around so you don't bump into someone. The training is tough here but I don't know if we will take any of it or not. One of the two pips got killed Friday. A mortar bomb fell short; he was in the way. It makes a neat job. Say hello to pop and all the kids. Tell pop to brush up on his cribbage. So long, Ralph (17 September 1944).

I really froze this morning. The Governor General of Canada came to camp to inspect us. He *would* come on a day like this, it's the coldest day yet. We stood at attention for three hours; my hands were a deep blue. His wife was with him too. She talked to a few of us. When she spoke to me I nearly asked her to get me a discharge. At 12 o'clock it was all over and we got the greatest surprise of our lives. The Governor ordered our Brigadier to dismiss the troops for the day to catch up on our sleep. We really cheered the old boy. I ran in the hut and held my blankets by the stove until they nearly caught on fire. Then I went to bed and slept until 5, had supper and did a job I really love – I washed all my dirty clothes. Both my feet have gone to sleep. I am sitting on the flooring writing on my Bren box. I carry the Bren in our section. My address is still the same except I am in D Coy. Good Night. Love Ralph (2 October 1944).

Well, I am overseas at last. I had a nice trip and saw a lot of things which I can't write and tell you about. We are reinforcements over here, so we don't know when we will be going in action. I lost that little diary Vernon gave me. I felt bad about that, but tell him I will try to get another one and if I can't, I will remember everything that happens and tell him all about it. [Vernon, his little brother, had given him a diary for him to keep a journal of everything that happened so he could read it when he came back]. Well that's about all I can think of writing that wouldn't be censored. By the way, tell Lil to say hello to Mai Page and tell her I still love her like the seven year itch. Well, So Long for Now. Ralph (24 October 1944).

Well, I've left England and am now in Belgium. I had quite a bit of fun in England. I saw all the big art galleries and the wax museum. It really was worthwhile seeing. By the way, how about sending me some cigarettes? I am not broke but I hate the cigs they hand us. Make it Players Mild if you can. The meals are lovely – hard tack mutton or Bully beef – lovely! So long. Love Ralph. I am in a new place now. A. Coy. Calgary Highlanders (13 November 1944).

This last letter was postmarked the day he died:

I got a letter from Ruby. She told me Art's brother had been killed over here. I was sorry to hear that as I was hoping I would meet him someplace, but I guess that's out now. I just hope Art keeps his head down. I know mine is always pretty close to the ground. It's pretty grim here at times. We catch all the counter attacks. We have had 18 so far. We have been resting a few miles behind the lines for a couple of days. We are going in again in a couple of days. Right now I am sitting in a nice warm kitchen. We are living in their barn, but I got in good with the old lady, even if she can't speak English. We are still on the German border. How does the war look from a distance? When do you think it will crack? I haven't been sick at all out here. It's funny we all haven't gone to the hospital. We are laying in water day and night. I've seen me dive in up to my chest. Say hello to the rest of the family. By the way

Pop, don't let them chase you around too much. Give a woman an inch and she'll take a mile. Love Ralph (14 December 1944).

Aandal Lake (64 K/5), northeast of Reindeer Lake was named after him in 1972. His sister adds (9 March 1995): "Since we have not a gravesite here in Manitoba [Aandal Lake] is so very meaningful to us, his family."

Abbott, Sergeant **William G.** of Winnipeg (R 100271). No. 408 Squadron. He died 23 May 1943 at the age of 21 and is commemorated at Bournemouth North Cemetery, England. He was the son of William G. and Emily A. Abbott of Winnipeg. Abbott Lake (64 P/11), east of Nejanilini Lake was named after him in 1974.



Abel, Sergeant **Frederick J.** of Portage la Prairie (H 6154). Winnipeg Grenadiers. He died a prisoner of war 28 November 1942 and is commemorated at the Sai Wan War Cemetery in Hong Kong. He was survived by his wife Eva Abel of Portage la Prairie. Veteran Richard Trick recalls his experience in the internment camps and afterwards:

It was a "second hand" soldier uniform Richard Trick put on in 1939. "They were uniforms from the First World War," says Richard Trick, who at the age of 23 joined up and was shortly sent to Jamaica. Trick's role during his early days of service was to guard the German prisoners of war who had been captured when their battleship sank off the coast of South America. But within 17 months, the young Lance Corporal was on his way to Hong Kong. "We left for China on October 25, 1941," he said. "I was home from Jamaica in Stonewall just long enough to get married."

Anxious days awaited his young bride Helen, as the dark days of Pearl Harbour came and went, and she knew her new husband was now somewhere in the hills of the Orient fighting the Japanese. What she didn't learn until quite some time after the fact was that Richard had been taken prisoner of war. "We were taken prisoners on December 22, 1941 and we were prisoners of war for 44 months," says Trick. While a PoW, Trick was forced to work in the mines and shipyards, to survive on a meagre diet. He has many recollections of those dark days. "I was 95 lbs. when we came out when the war was finished," said Trick.

After the war ended, Trick was to spend days in hospital, his health badly compromised by the camp experience. More days after that and a long, arduous journey home in poor health were to pass before he was home on October 25, 1945. Trick joined the Royal Canadian Legion #52 in February, 1946, the same month he received his discharge and so became a veteran. He said he joined the Legion because he recalled the injustices faced by WWI veterans who had had, at first, no Legion to help them with family needs and personal needs. "I saw the merit of being a member," he said. "There were pensions to fight for. People had lost husbands, sons, fathers. The fight had not ended" (*The Argus* 6 November 1995).

Abel Lake (64 K/15), northeast of Lac Brochet was named after Sergeant Abel in 1972.

Abey, Pilot Officer **Mitchell G.** of Winnipeg (J 9511). No. 418 Squadron. He died 31 July 1942 at the age of 26 and is commemorated at Bergen-op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was an observer on Boston III W8326 on evening Intruder operations to Leeuwarden. The pilot and wireless air gunner were also killed. Abey Lake (64 P/6), southeast of Nejanilini Lake was named after him in 1974.

Abgrall, Private **Hervé** of St. Boniface (H 6960). Winnipeg Grenadiers. He died 19 December 1941 and is commemorated at the Sai Wan War Cemetery in Hong Kong. Abgrall Lake (64 K/14), northeast of Reindeer Lake was named after him in 1972.

Abigail, Lance Sergeant **Leonard D.** of Benito (H 70611). Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. He died 18 September 1945 at the age of 30 and is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was the son of Fredrick M. and Elizabeth J. Abigail of Benito and was survived by his wife Gladys I. Abigail of Benito and their unborn daughter. Abigail Lake (64 H/15), north of Etawney Lake was named after him in 1963.

Abram, Private **Albert J.** of The Pas (L 86912). South Saskatchewan Regiment. He died 20 July 1944 and is commemorated at Bretteville-sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery in Calvados, France. Abram Lake (64 F/14), east of Reindeer Lake was named after him in 1961.



Ackerman, Rifleman **Harold A.** of Portage la Prairie (H 18706). Royal Winnipeg Rifles. He died 12 April 1945 at the age of 19 and is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was one of the two sons of Harold and Violet Edith Ackerman (née Joyce) of Portage la Prairie. Ackerman Lake (64 N/12), southwest of Nueltin Lake was named after him in 1972.

Ackland, Lieutenant **Clifford N.** of Winnipeg. Lake Superior Regiment. He died 1 March 1945 and is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. Ackland Lake (64 K/13), north of Lac Brochet was named after him in 1972.



Adair, Flying Officer **David Kenneth** of Winnipeg (J 29705). No. 100 Squadron. He died 17 June 1944 at the age of 26 and is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was one of the four children of David N. and Mildred Adair of Winnipeg. Born in London, England, he had come to Canada with his parents in 1919. He was later awarded a scholarship to study Theology at St. John's College and was a bible class teacher and young people's sport educator. Adair Lake (64 O/1), north of Tadoule Lake was named after him in 1961.

Adam, Sergeant **Robert N.** of Oberon (H 40755). Royal Winnipeg Rifles. He died 14 April 1945 at the age of 37 and is commemorated at the Holten Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. He was the son of Robert N. and Margaret Adam and was survived by his wife Catherine Adam of Winnipeg. Adam Creek (64 P/10) which flows southeast into Caribou River was named after him in 1974.

Adams, Flying Officer **Douglas A.** of Newdale (J 23329). No. 172 Squadron. He died 14 August 1944 at the age of 21 and is commemorated at the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England. He was the son of William L. and Margaret Adams and the brother of Flying Officer Gavin R. Adams (see entry). Adams Bay (64 O/8) on the southwest shore of Baird Lake was named after him in 1988.

Adams, Private **Frederick W.** of Winnipeg (H 19188). Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. He died 20 August 1942 and is commemorated at Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, England. Adams Rapids (64 O/4), in the North Seal River was named after him in 1995.



Adams, Flying Officer **Gavin R.** of Newdale (J 9176). No. 87 Squadron. He died 24 November 1943 at the age of 23 and is commemorated at the Alamein Memorial in Egypt. He was the son of William L. and Margaret Adams of Newdale and the brother of Flying Officer Douglas A. Adams (see entry). Adams Peninsula (64 O/8) on the west shore of Baird Lake was named after him in 1988.

Adams, Flight Sergeant **Harry W.** of Ninette (R 106018). No. 7 Operational Training Unit, RCAF. He died 28 September 1942 at the age of 22 and is commemorated at the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, England. He was the son of Walter H. and Ellen E. H. Adams of Ninette. Harry Adams Island (63 P/5) in Wintering Lake was named after him in 1995.



Adams, Private **John H.** of Winnipeg (H 6294). Winnipeg Grenadiers, Mentioned in Dispatches. He died a prisoner of war 26 August 1942 at the age of 27 and is commemorated at the Sai Wan War Cemetery in Hong Kong. His death and that of three other Grenadiers sparked a war crimes investigation after the war. It was determined that he had been executed after trying to escape. Nine of the ten Japanese military personnel involved were found guilty. See **Payne**, Sergeant **John O.** for additional details. He was the son of Alfred and Irma M. Adams and was survived by his wife Rose C. Adams of Winnipeg. Prior to enlisting he had been employed as a printer. Adams Lake (64 G/11), east of Big Sand Lake was named after him in 1994.

Adams, Lieutenant **Lloyd H.** of Winnipeg. 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion. He died 6 June 1944 and is commemorated at Ranville War Cemetery at Calvados, France. Adams Hill (64 O/7), southeast of Sandhill Lake was named after him in 1995.



Adams, Lieutenant **Sidney A. Armstrong** of Winnipeg. Royal Canadian Engineers. He received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Manitoba in May, 1942 and was appointed Lieutenant with the RCE three weeks later. He was killed by mortar fire 17 June 1944 at the age of 25 and is commemorated at Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery at Calvados, France. He was the son of Earl V. A. and Mildred Adams of The Pas. Sidney Adams Bay (63 P/9) in Dafoe Lake was named after him in 1995.



Adams, Rifleman **William C.** of Selkirk (H 41531). Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Rifleman Adams took part in the Normandy invasion and was captured and executed while a prisoner of war 8 June 1944 at the age of 20. He had managed to enlist while still only 17 years of age and is commemorated at Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery at Calvados, France. He was the son of Percival A. and Marion Adams of Petersfield. Adams Creek (63 N/7) which flows northeast into Burntwood Lake was named after him in 1995.

Addison, Corporal **Willis K.** "Addie" of Winnipeg (H 42254). Loyal Edmonton Regiment. He died 12 December 1943 at the age of 29 and is commemorated at the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery in Italy. He was the son of Willis C. and Clara Addison and was survived by his wife Madge M. Addison (née Sisson) of Truro, Nova Scotia. His sister-in-law relates that in his last letter home he wrote "I'm looking down at the Adriatic, hoping for a ship to take me home." He was killed in action at Ortona. Addison Lake (64 K/11), northeast of Reindeer Lake was named after him in 1972.



Adie, Leading Supply Assistant **William C.** of Winnipeg (V 9681). HMCS *Avalon*, the Royal Canadian Navy shore establishment in St. John's, Newfoundland. He died 12 December 1942 at the age of 28 and is commemorated at Mount Pleasant Cemetery in St. John's, Newfoundland. He was the son of William A. and Minnie A. Adie of Winnipeg. His brother recalls (11 December 1996):

Bill was born in Tamworth, Staffordshire, England in 1914. He attended