

Brown, Ross Alexander
Rifleman
Queen's Own Rifles of Canada
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
L 91715



in pace paratus



Ross Alexander Brown was born in Success, Saskatchewan on September 22, 1922. Success lies approx. twenty miles north-west of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, on Highway 32. He was the seventh of nine children: six sisters (Lucille, Phyllis Elaine, Helen Margaret (*Nora*), Donalda Susan, Fern, Iris Pearl) and two brothers (Clair Charles, Stuart George). All of them have in the meantime died (anno 2023).



Ross Alexander, Sarah Melissa (mother), Clair Charles and Stuart George.

His parents were Charles Henderson Brown (1883-1940) and Sarah Melissa Stewart (1884-1945). They married in Moncton, Ontario on June 26, 1906 and ran a farm and timber trade near Success. Charles and Melissa are buried on Mount Pleasant Burial Park in Swift Current, Saskatchewan. The family were members of the United Church.



After Ross Alexander had left primary education at the age of 13 (Grade VIII), he became a shop assistant at W.W. Cooper Department Store in Swift Current.



Douglas Ross with aunt Fern

Ross Alexander married Kathleen Schulz in Medicine Hat, Alberta on May 16, 1942 and with her he had a son, Douglas Ross, born on November 27, 1942. They then lived in Swift Current. Douglas Ross has in the meantime died in Washington State, USA.

On May 19, 1942 he signed up with the 22nd Field Company of the Royal Canadian Engineers (RCE) in Regina, Saskatchewan.

His registration papers mentioned that he was in excellent health, had blue eyes and black hair, was 5 ft 5" tall and weighed approx. 136 lbs.

He took his basic training in Dundurn, Saskatchewan, after which he served at various bases in British Columbia.

On May 26, 1944 Ross Alexander embarked in Halifax, Nova Scotia, bound for England, and from there he went to France on July 29, 1944. On August 1, 1944 he was among one of the ten replacement troops that were linked to A-Company of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada (QOR).

The QOR landed on Juno Beach on June 6, 1944 and conquered the strategic town of Bernières-sur-Mer by means of the Fort Garry Horse tanks. Subsequently, they fought their way to Anisy (8.4 miles inland), which was the aim of this action. On that day 143 soldiers died, got wounded or were captured. During the Battle of Caen – Operation Windsor - the QOR, as part of the 8th Infantry Brigade, were ordered to conquer Carpiquet airfield, which was being defended by the 12th SS Panzer Division Hitler Jugend. Thus they fought their way along the Normandy coast, after which, in the afternoon of October 4, 1944, they crossed the French-Belgian border in the vicinity of Poperinge.

In the meantime, Ross Alexander, together with twenty-two other soldiers, had received the Good Conduct Badge on September 18, 1944.

After crossing the French-Belgian border, fighting continued towards Zeeuws-Vlaanderen. On November 12 the QOR were moved towards Nijmegen en from there they departed for Berg en Dal on foot; on December 14, 1944 they found themselves near Wylerberg and ten days later near Dekkerswald.

On February 8, 1945 Operation Veritable was planned and British bombers bombed Kleve. The next day A-Company near Millingen were brought into position, but the Germans flooded the area, which resulted in the QOR being directed towards a higher position. On February 14, 1945 the QOR were under heavy fire and withdrew to the Ubbergen area.

On February 25, 1945 the QOR started preparing for Operation Blockbuster and during heavy fighting in the early morning of February 26, 1945 Ross Alexander was hit by deadly machine gun fire (*killed in action*). He was temporarily buried at the Canadian Military Cemetery in Bedburg (south-east of Kleve), plot 1, row 15, grave 5. Each grave was marked with a white cross showing the soldier's name, army number, and date of death. His wife was informed of his death by letter on March 10, 1945.

On July 12, 1946 his wife was informed of his last resting place at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **VIII. D. 6.**, where he was reburied on September 10, 1945.

On his headstone the following words are inscribed:

“COME TO ME,
ALL YE THAT LABOUR
AND ARE HEAVY LADEN,
AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST”



His military documents contained a will that stated that he left a plot of land (plot 16) in Swift Current to his sister Iris Pearl and all other possessions to his wife, Kathleen Brown. Allen Jergensen was Executor of the will. Among the personal belongings that he had with him and which were sent to his wife were a silver seal ring, a faux leather folder with snap fasteners, a faux leather folder with photos, a leather wallet and three souvenir coins.

Ross Alexander was awarded the following medals:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France and Germany Star
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp

On March 27, 1945 these medals were sent to his wife, who had in the meantime remarried and become Mrs. Lange and moved to Dallas in Oregon, USA.



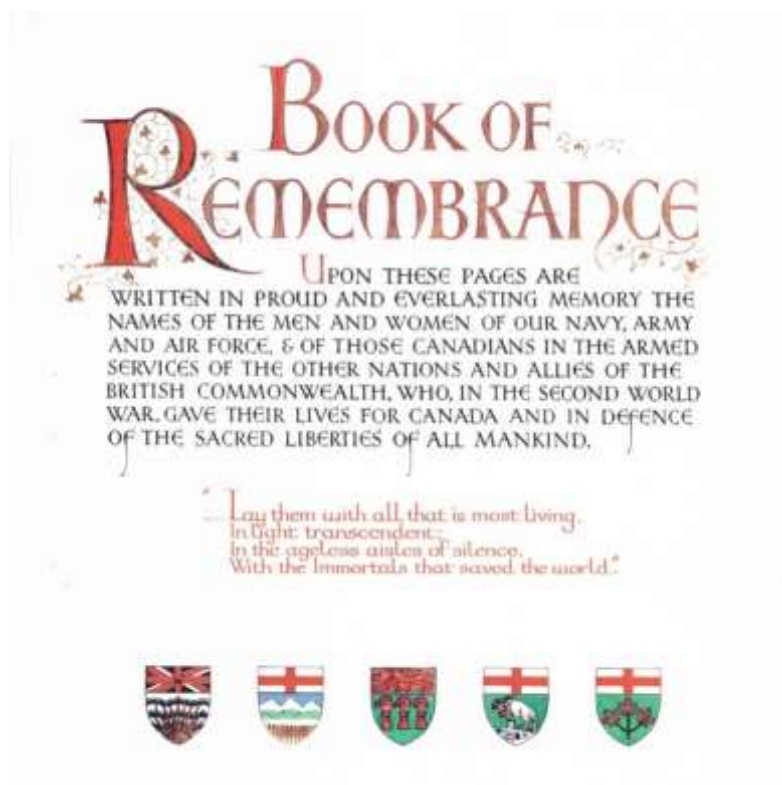
FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

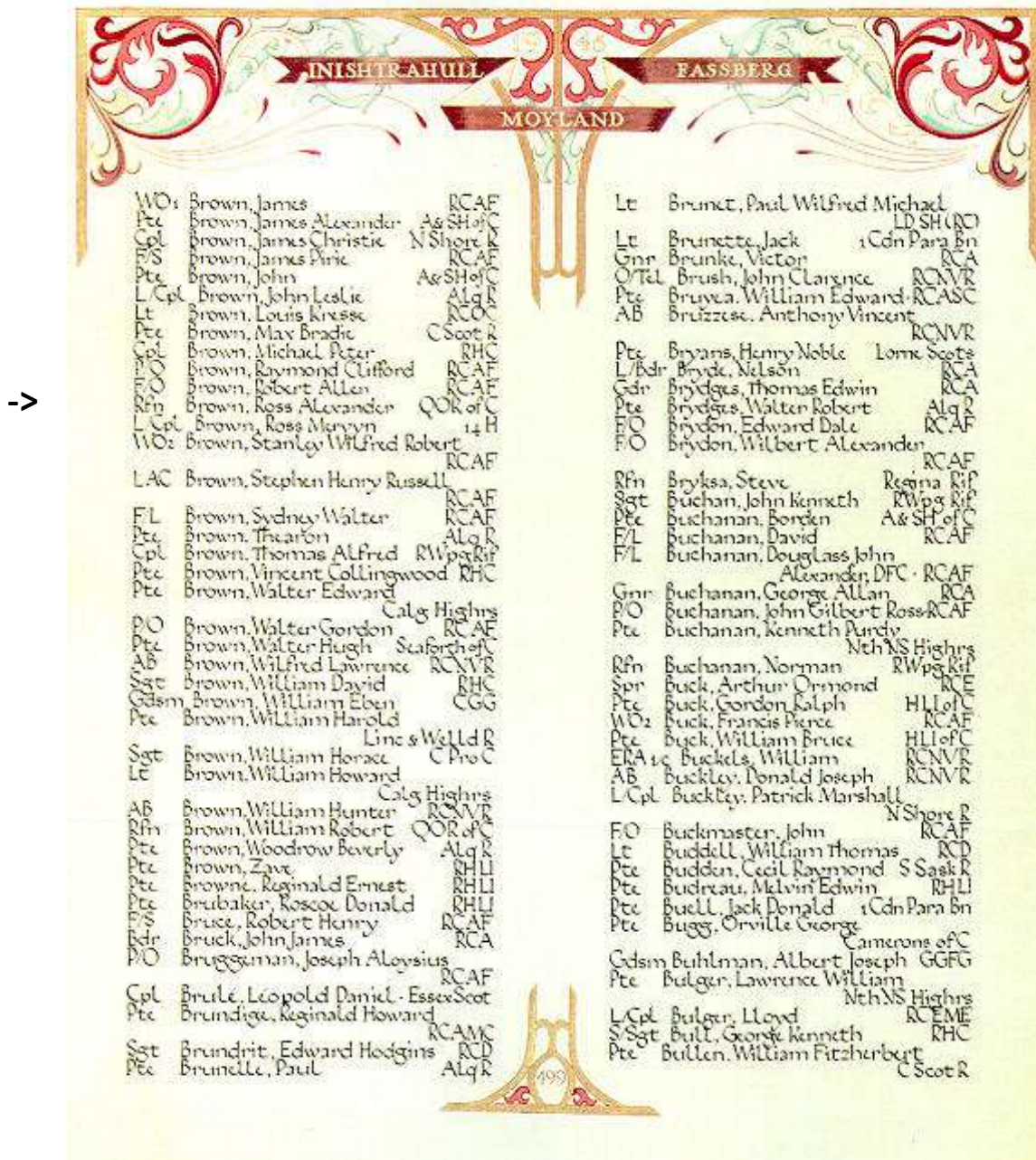
Life story: Henk Mostert, Research Team Faces to Graves.

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)
- Mr. John McNeil, Ross Alexander Brown's nephew
- www.veterans.gc.ca
- www.qormuseum.qor/research



Ross Alexander is commemorated in the *Second World War Book of Remembrance*, page 499.



Second World War Book of Remembrance (page 499).

* If you have a photograph of this soldier or any additional information, please contact info@facestograves.nl