

Chabluk, Meron
Rifleman
The Regina Rifle Regiment
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
H/20671



Marion ("Meron") Chabluk was born 4 December 1919 at Cooks Creek, a village between Oakbank and Beausejour in Springfield Rural Municipality, Manitoba. His Ukrainian father Stephen Chabluk immigrated to Canada in 1912. He married Meron's mother Annie Trusz, a Canadian born Ukrainian, at Winnipeg in 1918. Eight more surviving boys and two girls followed eldest Meron: Sophie, Harry, Julius, Elmer, Elsie, Lawrence, Barry, Peter, Johnny, and Ernie. The Greek Catholic Chabluk family farmed around Cooks Creek and worshipped at the Church of the Immaculate Conception.



MMHP0038 Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg Archives

The Chabluk children spoke both English and Ukrainian. Meron, who

became known as "Chab" to his friends, quit school age fourteen after completing grade 6 to work full time as a farm labourer. He left home age 16 earning \$5.00 per month plus room and board. His later ambition was find employment with a transfer company.

Cooks Creek School, Manitoba



Meron decided to join the Canadian Army Active Service after World War Two broke out, enlisting directly with The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders at Winnipeg 25 September 1940 age 20. He was a good looking lad at 5'6" tall, 150 lbs with hazel eyes. Meron remained in Winnipeg for both his basic and advanced infantry training, qualifying as a Class III Driver 20 May 1941. Meron was transferred to The Regina Rifle Regiment (RRR) 16 August 1941 and joined his new battalion at Camp Debert, Nova Scotia prior to shipping overseas with them as part of "A" Company.



They disembarked at Gourock, Scotland 1 September 1941 and provided coastal guard duties in the U.K. while also undergoing training.

RRR training maneuvers England Dec 1941

Meron was slightly injured 27 February 1942 when a truck he was travelling in overturned at East

Grinstead. Meron spent three days at 5 Casualty Clearing Station following treatment to his head and shoulder.

Meron qualified on both wheeled and tracked vehicles as a Driver Class III in May 1942. He was given fairly liberal leave time during his time in the U.K. and struck up a relationship with Vivienne Barbara Westcott from the Isle of Wight. Meron was assigned to the RRR Support Company 9 August 1943, likely with the Carrier Platoon, when they embarked for Combined Operations Training to Inverary. He was rated 1st Class Bren Gun 2 December 1943.

Meron remained in the U.K. during the Allied D-Day attack, disembarking in France 10 days later 16 June 1944. The RRR, also known as the 'Farmer Johns' or Reginas were combined with The Royal Winnipeg Rifles (RWR) and

M.F.S. 571
9603-941 (197)
H.Q. 1775-30-104

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REPORT ON INJURIES

Other than Wounds Received in Action

1. Certificate to be signed by injured officer or soldier:

I, H. 20671 (No. (number)) Rfn. (Rank) Shabluk (Name) Meron (Surname) hereby declare that the injury sustained by me on the 27th Feb 42 (Date of incident) did not (was/was not) occur while I was in the performance of military duty.

M. Shabluk
(Signature of officer or soldier)

East Grinstead (Station) 27-2-42 (Date)

2. (a) Description of injuries: A slight cut on the head and a slightly bruised left shoulder blade.

(b) Are the injuries serious or of such a nature that they ought to be the exciting cause of the ability later? The injuries were not serious at all.

(c) Whether admitted to hospital or sick quarters? 3 days in 5th C.C.S.

(d) How long before initial treatment was given? Treatment in one hour.

Date: _____ Signature of medical officer: _____

3. Short statement by injured person of the circumstances of the injury (see instruction 5). Signed statement of witness, or of persons to whom the injured person may have mentioned his injury, to be attached (see instructions 3 and 4):

As the truck upset and I fell out, I do not remember what happened. About half an hour later I discovered my injuries which were as mentioned above.

M. Shabluk

The Canadian Scottish to form 7th Brigade, 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. They were among the first Commonwealth units to attack at Juno Beach (Courseulles-sur-Mer) and suffered heavy D-Day casualties establishing a beachhead and then repulsed German counterattacks as they progressed inland in the following days. The Reginas were around Bretteville-L'Orgueilleuse when Meron rejoined them.

On 17 June the Reginas' "C" Company sent out a fighting patrol that was caught in a German crossfire, resulting in 13 casualties. After eleven days on the line, the RRR was relieved by The Queen's Own Rifles and moved back a couple of miles to Bray for rest. They were on the line again 29 June 1944, taking up positions along the Caen-Bayeux Road to counter the threat from German armour in yet another counterattack. On 4 July Operation WINDSOR was launched as a prelude to the Allied attack on Caen. The Reginas provided fire support to the RWR when they stormed Carpiquet and took it. They moved onward towards Caen where a three division assault on that city was launched 7 July, Operation CHARNWOOD. Ardennes Abbey was used by the 12th SS Panzer Regiment as a headquarters and was heavily defended with mortars, machine guns and 75mm guns, On 8 July the Regina Rifles were ordered to capture it.



After a fierce firefight at first light the Abbey was secured and the Germans driven out. The Reginas suffered 216 casualties that day, 36 of them fatal with another missing in action. This had been the worst fighting for the Battalion since D-Day. The capture of the Abbey by the RRR helped pierce the ring of defences around Caen, which finally fell to the Allies 19 July 1944.

RRR soldiers holding position Caen, France 10 July 1944

The RRR and 7th Brigade helped the Allies force the Germans retreat from Normandy that summer and cleared Channel Ports in September. They then engaged in the Battle of the Scheldt with a tough fight at the Leopold Canal along the Belgium/Netherlands border as part of Operation SWITCHBACK.



Regina Rifle soldiers at Ghent, Belgium November 1944

They were finally able to clear the Germans out of Breskens Pocket by 2 November 1944, opening up the shipping lanes to Antwerp, Belgium.

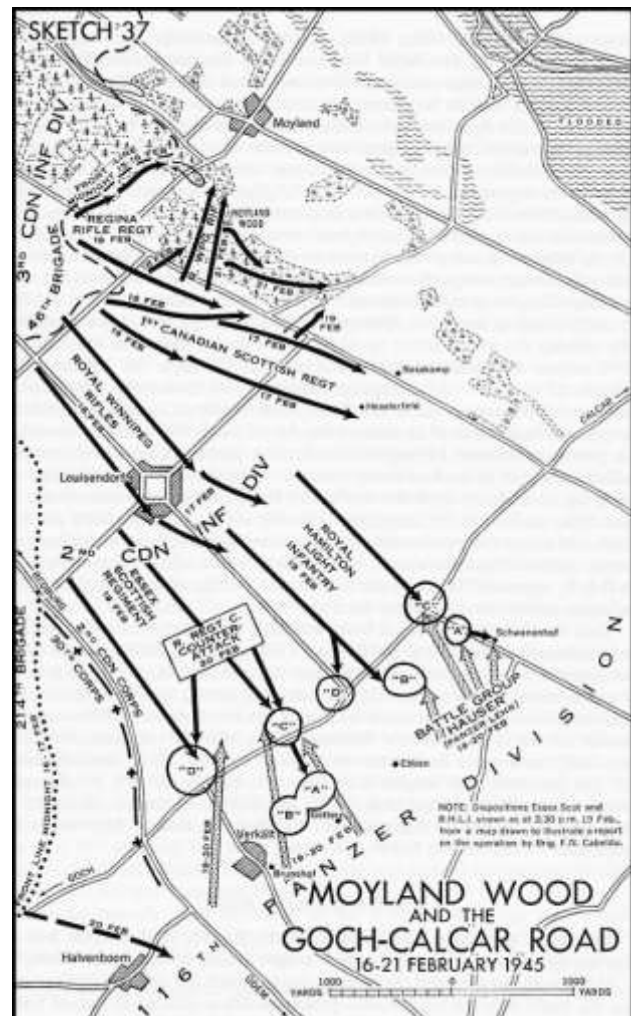
The RRR and 7th Brigade were tasked with static operations near Nijmegen, Netherlands 8 November and remained in the area for the next three months. Meron received permission to marry Vivienne and got word that she had given birth to their son Meron Patrick 16 November 1944. He was granted compassionate leave 8-17 December 1944 to the U.K. with the wedding held 13 December before he returned to duty in the Netherlands.



Personnel of the Regina Rifles preparing to attack enemy in Moyland Wood near Calcar, Germany, 16 February 1945.

The RRR finally moved out with their 7th Brigade and 3rd Infantry Division 8 February 1945 as part of the First Canadian Army under Operation VERITABLE.

They advanced through bombed out Cleve, Germany mounted on Kangaroo armoured personnel carriers and spent five days clearing the Germans from Moyland Wood 16-21 February 1945. First, The Regina Rifles and then The Canadian Scottish had attacked but were stalemated and repulsed by determined German paratroopers. It fell to The Royal Winnipeg Rifles to finish the job.



Meron was travelling on an Infantry Carrier when it hit a land mine 18 February 1945. He was killed in action that day, age 25.



Rifleman Meron Chabluk

Rifleman M. Chabluk was temporarily buried at Bedburg, Germany and later relocated to Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **X. F. 13**.

The inscription on his headstone:

THERE IS A LINK
DEATH CANNOT SEVER,
LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE
LAST FOR EVER



Meron Chabluk's campaign medals:

- 1939-45 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp



Meron Chabluk's name is included with their local WW2 fallen at the Springfield, Manitoba War Memorial.

Springfield, Manitoba War Memorial

Chabluk Lake, northeast of Reindeer Lake, Manitoba was named after him as a place of honour by the Manitoba Government in 1972.



Biography by Jim Little, Research Team Faces to Graves.

Sources Consulted:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

Veteran Affairs Canada – Canadian Virtual War Memorial

Ancestry public trees

Newspapers.com

Cooks Creek, Manitoba Ukrainian Catholic Church picture

<https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/cooks-creek-church>

Cooks Creek School picture

<https://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/cookscreekschool.shtml>

Regina Rifles WWII information <http://www.reginarifles.ca/index.htm>

Reid, Brian (2010). Named by the Enemy - A History of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles

Regina Rifles D-Day and Normandy information <https://warchronicle.com/the-story-of-the-royal-regina-rifles/#:~:text=The%20Landing,on%20the%20Isle%20of%20Thanet.>

Regina Rifles Moyland Wood picture and War Diary

<https://www.junobeach.org/canada-in-wwii/articles/liberation-of-the-netherlands-and-capitulation-of-germany/regina-rifle-regiment-war-diary-16-18-february-1945/>

Moyland Wood Battle map and information

<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/UN/Canada/CA/Victory/Victory-18.html>

Springfield, Manitoba War Memorial picture and information

<https://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/springfieldwarmemorial.shtml>

Holm, G. and Buchner, P. (2002). A Place of Honour – Manitoba's War Dead Commemorated in its Geography

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

ANNIE CHABLUK

After a lengthy illness on Sunday, July 12th, 1970, Mrs. Annie Chabluk aged 68 years, beloved wife of Stephen Chabluk of Oak Bank, Manitoba. Besides her husband Stephen, Mrs. Chabluk is survived by eight sons, Harry of Oak Bank, Julius, Almer, Lawrence, and Peter of Transcona, Johnny and Ernie of Winnipeg and Barry of Red Lake, Ontario, two daughters, Mrs. Nick Kichak (Sophie) of Winnipeg, and Mrs. Bill Skazyk (Elsie) of Lockport, three brothers, Harry Trush of Oak Bank, Nick Trush of Detroit, and Pete Trush of Hamilton, three sisters, Polly Rych of Detroit, Lilly Pundy of Chicago, and Mary Chopp of Cooks Creek, twenty four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mrs. Chabluk was predeceased by a son Meron, killed in action February 1945, and two sisters Kay and Nettie.

Prayers will be said on Tuesday evening (tonight) at 8:30 p.m., in The Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, Cooks Creek. Mass will be sung at 10 a.m. Wednesday morning. Rev. Fr. Bozyk officiating. Interment in the Parish Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Messrs. Dennis Kichak, Meron Chabluk, Gerald Chabluk, Bobby Skazyk, Gary Chabluk and Larry Kichak. Green Acres Memorial Chapel in care of arrangements. Ph. 222-3241.

The Canadian Army paid for Vivienne Chabluk and her baby's passage from the U.K. to Canada in 1946 as a widow of one of its fallen servicemen. They landed in Halifax and travelled by train to Manitoba, reversing the trip that Meron had taken back in 1941. Vivienne stayed at the Chabluk family farm and a few months later married Meron's brother Harry, who became Meron Patrick's Dad. Vivienne and Harry had two more children together and are pictured below to the right of Meron Patrick on his wedding day.



Winnipeg Tribune, 1970



Annie and Steve Chabluk

Chabluk, Rifleman **Michael Meron "Chab"** of Oakbank (H 20671). Regina Rifle Regiment. He died 18 February 1945 at the age of 25, along with one of his comrades when, while engaged in an attack, their personnel carrier hit a land mine. Rifleman Chabluk is commemorated at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland.

He was the eldest of the 13 children of Steve and Annie Chabluk of Oakbank and was survived by his wife Vivienne B. Chabluk of the Isle of Wight and their son Meron

He writes (22 November 2001):

"Chab," as he was known to his comrades, was born December 4, 1919 at Cooks Creek, Manitoba. He left home at the age of 16 and went to work for a local farmer where he worked for room and board and a wage of \$5.00 a month.

Rifleman Chabluk's sister Sophie recalls (22 November 2001):

I remember that first Christmas after he left home; he came back at Christmas with presents for everyone in the family. I got a new dress and one of the brothers, Elmer, got a mouth organ. Meron enlisted in Winnipeg with the Cameron Highlanders in 1940. He later transferred to the Regina Rifles and went overseas in September of 1941. I was very saddened because he wouldn't be here for my wedding. Chab was a very generous and fun-loving person without a mean bone in his body. He was also quite handsome and had many different girlfriends. Each time he had a new girlfriend he would write to me that he was REALLY in love this time and he was going to marry her. His letters always ended with "Sis, can you send me some cigs? I love you all."

Meron finally did marry a young girl in England. At the end of December, 1944, Chab's leave was ending and he was to return to his regiment. He came back three times to say goodbye to his wife Vivienne, his infant son and his mother-in-law. Then he left. That was the last time they saw one another.

Chabluk Lake (64 K/9), northeast of Reindeer Lake was named after him in 1972.