

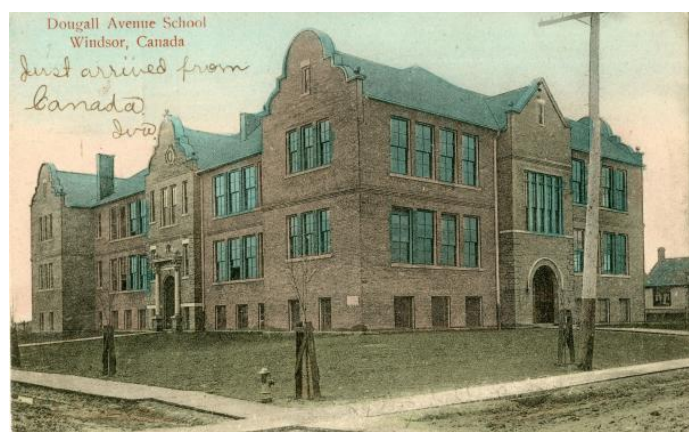
**Clark, Neil Newton**  
**Sergeant**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment**  
**L 53378**



Neil Clark was born on September 20, 1919 in Delia, Alberta, near Calgary. He was the third child in a family of four children. His eldest sister Muriel was born in 1914 and she died five days later. Sister Mary was born in 1918 and she later lived with her mother in Windsor, she married Forest Ladd. The youngest of the couple was brother George, he lived with his father in Avonlea and was from about 1923.

Both father and mother were of British descent and they were married on December 31, 1912 at St. Stephen's Church in Pauquette, Ontario. Father Emery Forest Clark was born in 1887 and he was a farmer by trade. Neil supported his father financially, who only had a small farm. His mother Ida was born in 1890 and she lived in Windsor, Ontario in the early 1940s. In the early 1930s they moved to a farm southwest of Avonlea, Emery put up a tent in Rosell's yard and works for Rosell. They were members of the Church of England. In 1945 father Emery started to work on the Claybank Brick Plant, 10 miles from Avonlea.

Neil went to school up to and including Grade 8 and was fourteen when he left school in 1934. He attended the Public School in Windsor, the Douglas Avenue and Park Street School. He was born and raised on a farm and it suited him well. So after school he worked as a farmhand on J. Farrell's farm in Avonlea for eight years.



*Photo School: archives southwest Ontario*

So after his military service Neil wanted to go back and work on a farm, preferably on a mixed farm. He spoke and wrote only English. The two sons were good singers and were very much enjoyed at school social events.

In his young life before his military service, Neil had lived at various addresses, two years in Delia, three years in Windsor, four years in Wheatly, one year in Tilbury and the last ten years in Avonlea, situated in the middle of Southern Canada near the town of Regina in Saskatchewan.

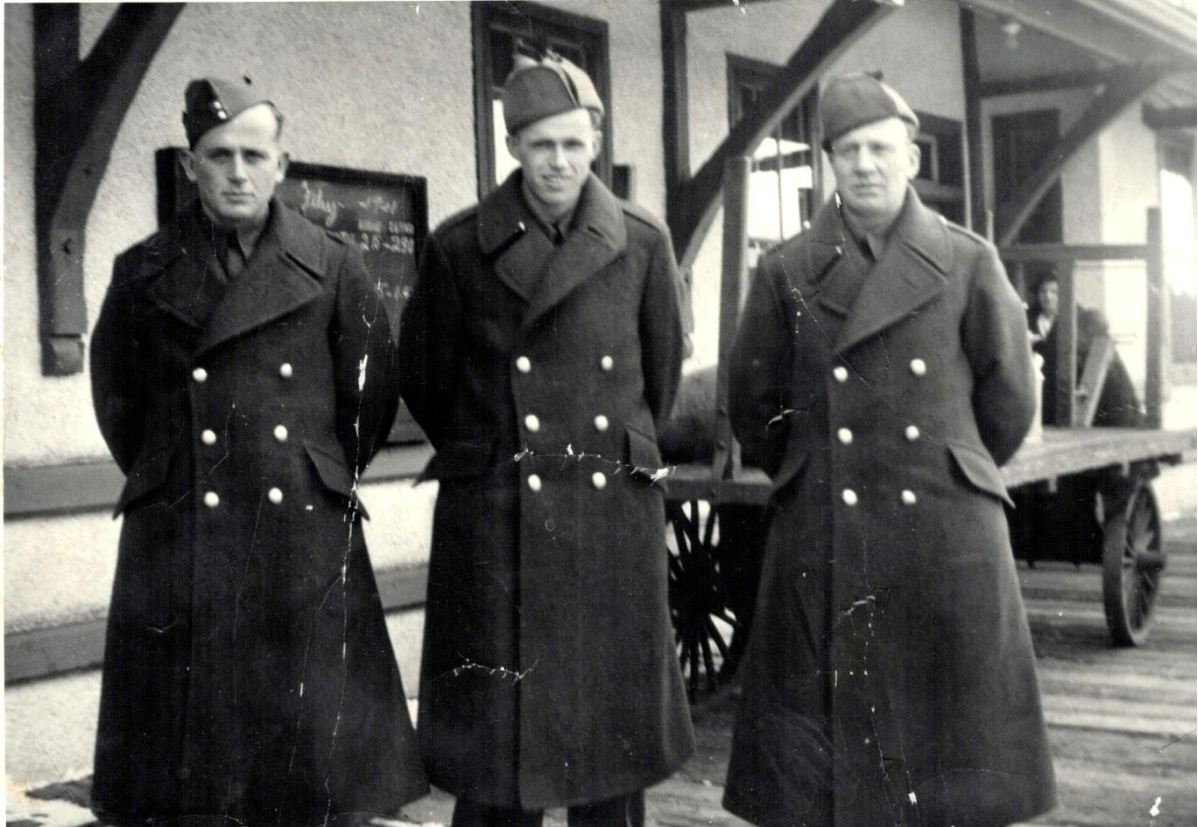


*Photo: Avonlea Heritage Museum*

Neil was 21 years old when he volunteered for service on February 20, 1941. That was in Regina, Saskatchewan, with the 14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars, 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment of the Active Force in Canada.

He was then 5 ft.4 tall and weighed 165 lb. He had a light brown complexion, blue eyes and dark brown hair and was well developed.

Neil was being trained in Huntingdon when he was sent to Camp Hospital on March 18 and he stayed there for a week. On 14 April he went to the A-12 Training Center in Farnham as a Trooper and then to St Hyacinth for further training.



*Neil (left) with two other soldiers, just before leaving for Europe, at the station of Avonlea*

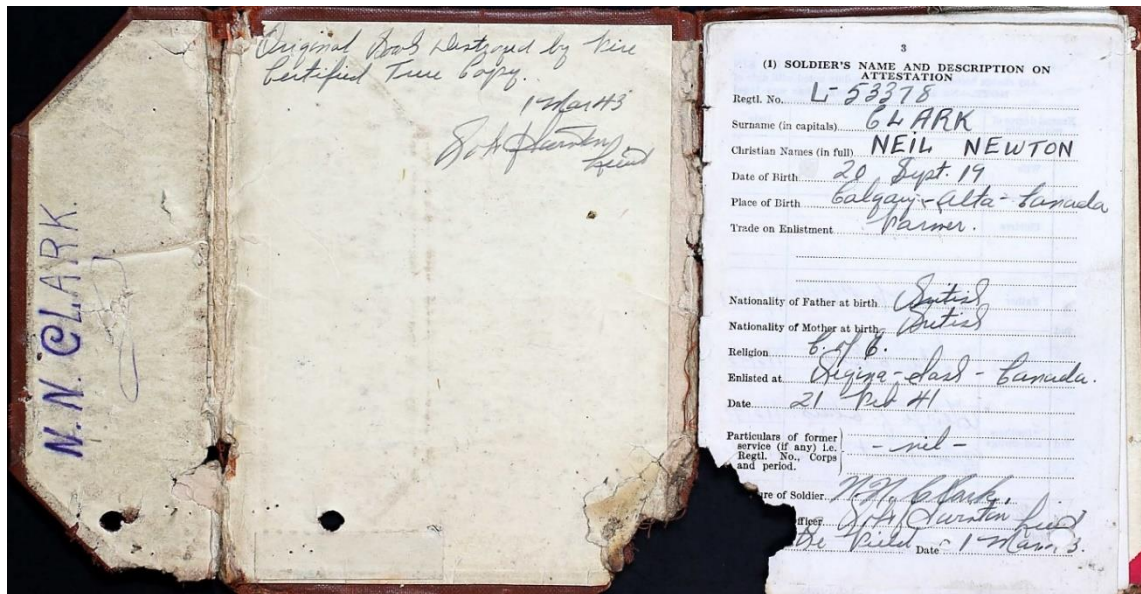
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Then soon followed the crossing to the war in Europe. On June 18, 1941 they boarded the boat in Halifax and they arrived in Gourock U.K. on July 2. Here he could catch his breath and was given leave. He was temporarily assigned to the Canadian Armoured Corps Holding Unit, but on September 27 he rejoined the 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment 'in the field'. From February 26, 1942, Neil was Driver Mechanical C and in that spring he had leave a few more times.

In February of that year he was promoted to A/Lance Corporal, after which he was a Trooper again temporarily from June 26 to August 1. On November 4 Neil was Lance Corporal and on December 3 Corporal. In the meantime he had a week off every now and then. Also on December 15, 1943, Neil was a Trooper again, at his own request. He was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp on January 6, 1944. With his regiment, he joined the Canadian Infantry Corps Division in January.

After more than three years in the United Kingdom, he left for France on July 4, 1944, to go to war in northwestern Europe. There he arrived on

July 6 as an A/Corporal, soon to be promoted to A/Sergeant on August 14. Neil was injured on September 25 and was in the Canadian General Hospital until October 10. This was a permanent hospital where the injured received intensive treatment. First they were taken to a Field Hospital for first treatment. On November 15, 1944, Neil was Sergeant.



The 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment (14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars).



This regiment was the reconnaissance unit of the Canadian army during the advance from Italy to the Netherlands. The 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment (14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars) received its training

and coastal defense duties in the south of England in the first three years of the war. It was not until July 6, 1944 (1 month after D-Day) that the troops landed at Gold Beach in Normandy, France, and then began their task as infantrymen for the first time. The first three deaths were mourned on 13 July.

They pushed back the German troops from Northern France towards Belgium and the Netherlands and they were then used for their actual task: as a reconnaissance unit during the advance of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Army. They were often far ahead of their troops and were involved in the liberation of important ports such as Dieppe, on 1 September 1944, and Antwerp, the Battle of the Scheldt, the liberation of towns and villages in the Netherlands and the invasion of Germany. In the meantime, fierce fighting had taken place and many people had been killed and injured on both sides.

Extract from the diary of the 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment:

- 1 Feb. 1944 in Angmering on Sea, southern England, on the English Channel, there was a lot of training and sport, including boxing matches*
- 1 March 1944 American troops arrive as neighbours in Rustington*
- 11 March 1944 third anniversary of regiment with festivities*
- 2 April 1944 large exercise "STEP"*
- 14 April 1944 accident during an exercise, four dead and one wounded, one soldier breaks his leg while trying to report this to HQ by bicycle*
- 21 April Camp Angmering cleared and abandoned with some regret*
- 22 April 1944 in Camp Goodnestone in barracks and tents, entertainment through outings, movies and many sports*
- 27 May 1944 General Montgomery says on a visit that the war will be over on January 31, many men had been training for four years and want action*
- 29 May 29 1944 General Eisenhower inspects the troops and talks to many of the men and was interested in how they were doing*
- 1 July 1944 they start in Goodnestone (UK) with the clearing and cleaning of the barracks, waved goodbye by canteen staff*
- 2 July 1944 departure of the crew in their vehicles to the shunting yard of the ship's cargo and the vehicles were made watertight for the crossing*
- 4 July 1944 from London Docks to Landing Ship Tanks*
- 5 July 1944 in the evening leaving the harbour with a tugboat*
- 6 July 1944 via the Thames with calm waters across The Channel*
- 7 July 1944 just before midnight the ship arrives in Caen in France*
- 8 July 1944 with LST (Landing Ship Tank) around 6 pm ashore in Tracey Sur Mer, where the vehicles were again well prepared and driven to the port*
- 11 July 1944 the first two soldiers wounded by a shell, three miles from the fighting in Caen*
- 13 July 1944 attacked by enemy tanks, the first reported dead*
- 1 September 1944 Dieppe liberated and the population was overjoyed*
- 9 September 1944 via Bulscamp in Belgium towards Ostend, at the end of October in Antwerp and to Noord-Beveland in the Netherlands*
- 9 November 1944 in Appeltern, later in Horssen, with a lot of high water*
- 17 December 1944 relieved by the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Recon. Regiment*
- 19 February 1945 in Germany, Headquarters in Reichswald at the end of March*

On February 26, 1945 they were in Germany, it was cloudy and that morning at 04.30 am Operation Blockbuster started, part of the Rhineland Offensive, the advance into Germany by the Allies. The 8<sup>th</sup> was tasked with protecting the division's left flank as it advanced towards Kalkar.

That was made impossible by enemy actions, a car was blown up and two men were killed.

On February 27, 1945, Headquarters moved to a new location north of Louisendorf. People worked hard to get the farm ready for that. The A Squadron encountered heavy enemy opposition that day, losing three cars and a carrier because of enemy bazookas. Three men were injured, six went missing and three men were killed: Corporal Strank, Corporal Coldwell and Sergeant Neil Clark. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Division took Kalkar that day without any resistance.

Neil Clark and the two other men were temporarily buried in the Canadian section of the cemetery in Kalkar, Germany, on March 1, 1945. Neil was in the second grave in the third row, he was 25 years old when he died.

On February 20, 1946 Neil was reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XX. H. 14.**

The text on his tombstone:

FOND MEMORIES OF YOU, SON  
WILL ALWAYS LINGER WITH US  
ALICE, GEORGE AND DAD



*Photo: Liesbeth Huisman*



SGT. N. N. CLARK  
Killed

Sgt. Clark, a former Windsor resident who enlisted in Regina, Sask., at the outset of the war, has been reported killed in action on the Western Front, his mother, Mrs. Ida Clark of 15 Wyandotte street west has been notified.

Born in Windsor, he was educated at Dougall Avenue School and Park Street School. Besides his mother, he is survived by one brother, George Clark of Regina, and a sister, Mrs. Forest Ladd of 849 Mercer street.

Neil Newton Clark received the following awards:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France & Germany Star
- Defense Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with

Clasp

The Memorial Cross was sent to Neil's mother in Windsor after the war.

*Windsor Daily Star*



**FACES TO GRAVES**

Stichting Faces to Canadian  
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story: Liesbeth Huisman-Arts, Research Team Faces to Graves.

N.B. Do you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

Veterans.gc.ca

Digital Archives Southwest Ontario

War Diaries WW2 project 44

[www.google.com/search?q=Avonlea](http://www.google.com/search?q=Avonlea)

Neil Clark is remembered at the cenotaph in Avonlea.



*Ceremony Cenotaph in Avonlea, November 11, 1953 – photo Avonlea Heritage Museum*



*Map Avonlea and surroundings: google.com*





Neil Clark

**WAR DIARY**  
OR  
**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**  
*(Erases heading not required)*

8th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (14CH)

MFM 11 (rev. 1972) d/vr (1972)  
Original, duplicate and triplicate to be forwarded to O. i/c 2nd Echelon for disposal.

Instructions regarding preparation of War Diaries (which will be kept from first day of mobilisation, creation or embodiment), are contained in F.S. Regs. Vol. 1.

Title pages will be prepared.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
GERMANY, MR 94845375	24 Feb	Cont'd	O.P.'s. were located. The whole operation was carried-out without any casualties although a few vehicles were slightly damaged by small-arms fire and shrapnel. In the evening, the Artillery fired a large number of shells into the German line and a few Jerry were heard to come this way in answer.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	25 Feb		Weather:- Partly cloudy and cold. The day was quiet, except for heavy shelling of the enemies' positions by our own Arty. 4 L.O's. went to Div. to act as Phantom L.O's. for operation Blockbuster.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	26 Feb		Weather:- Cloudy. Operation Blockbuster started at 0430 Hrs. and met with good success during the morning. 8th Recce. was given the task of left flank protection for the Div., with Calcar as an objective. Enemy small-arms fire, mortars and sniper activity was considerable and we were unable to reach our objective. One light car blew-up on a mine and Cpl. <del>Stevens</del> Stevens and Tpr. Barker, were killed. A Sqn. came under command of 4 Bde.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	27 Feb		Weather:- Cloudy. An early morning visit to 2 Div. Main, showed that 5 Bde. had reached the South-West corner of the Hochwald Forest. At 1030 Hrs. RHQ left its area North of Hessel and moved to a new location North of Louisendorf. Several hours of hard work were put in before the shelled-out farm that was taken over for RHQ, was clean enough to be used. A Sqn. working with 4 Bde. met some fairly heavy enemy resistance during the day and lost 3 cars and 1 carrier from Bazookas. A Sqn. suffered 3 other rank casualties killed, 3 other ranks wounded, 1 Officer and 5 other ranks missing. The 3 killed were Cpl. Strank, Cpl. Goldwall, Sgt. Clarke. The wounded were Sgt. Baldwin, Tpr. Durdell and Tpr. McNickel. Missing were Lt. Kaye, Tpr. Elle, Tpr. Fallowe, Sgt. Gavanagh and Tpr. Maloney. 43rd Div. took Calcar without any opposition.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	28 Feb		Weather:- Mostly cloudy. The day was quiet and uneventful for the Regiment, with B Sqn. on a holding job with 4 Bde. Lt. D.M. Elsdon and Lt. Montgomery arrived with 1 OR as re-inforcement. Just before noon, 7 German tanks counter-attacked through the South-east corner of the Hochwald Forest, against position held by the A & SH. Repelled by the 29th Arm'd. Recce. Regt. with the enemy losing 2 tanks.	