

Wharton, Cecil Stanley

Guardsman

Canadian Grenadier Guards

B/147758



Cecil Stanley Wharton was born on April 23, 1924 in the village of Mount Dennis near Toronto. His father, an English immigrant, worked for Kodak and his mother was a housewife.

Cecil has one older brother, Leonard, who joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1941. Cecil also had a younger sister, Freda. Leonard's ship was torpedoed in 1942 and his body was never found.



*Left to right: Cecil,
Freda, Leonard*

Cecil worked at a munition factory until 1943, but one night when he decided he did not want to go to work and went to play hockey with friends instead, he was fired and his next move was the army.



Cecil

On June 4, 1943, he enlisted and he ended up with the Grenadier Guards. At first he was trained in Camp Borden, after that he went to England and in August of 1943 he went to France.

On February 26, 1945, the Grenadier Guards were active in the battle for the Reichswald. The tank Cecil was in got stuck in the mud and because the men were affraid the tank was going to blow up, they all crawled out of the tank. They were shot. It is unknown if all of the crew members of the tank were killed.

Wireless School - T.S. Wing C.A.C. - Camp Borden - 13 October 1943



On that same day, besides Cecil Wharton, a total of eight soldiers of the Grenadier Guards were killed: Lt. G.T. Bereton, Guardsman R.D. Faulkner, Lance Sgt. J.J. O'Donnel, Guardsman W.H. Proudley, Guardsman L. Quasso, Guardsman S.A. Sharman and Guardsman G.M. Young. They were all initially buried in Keppeln, Germany.

Cecil was also buried in Keppeln, just outside of Kalkar, at first. In 1946 Cecil was reburied at the Military Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave **XXIV. C. 13.**

Awards:

1939-1945 Star
French Germany Star
War Medal
Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp



Life story Marian Straatman, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Source:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Library and Archives Canada
Sonja Vos
Cec Colbourne
Michael Colbourne
Dianne Hartley

Freda, Cecil's sister, explained how the death of both her brothers had destroyed her parents and herself. Especially Cecil was her big friend, Leonard was a bit too old to hang out with her a lot when they were little. When the big black army came by the house for the first time to announce that Leonard had been killed, her father had fallen to the floor crying... the next morning he had still been there. When the car came around for the second time, her mother did not want to answer the door, as if that way she could make sure Cecil was not dead.



Cecil's grave was adopted by the Vos family from Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Daughter Sonja Vos has searched contact with Freda and they maintained in touch all this time, by now Sonja stays in touch with Freda's children. Sonja has named her daughter after Cecil, her name is Katja Birgitta (after her grandmother's) Cecilia. She also knows who Cecil is and why she has his name.

Sonja Vos-grandpa and grandma Vos-Freda Wharton, 12 June 1999

Christmas Eve 24 December 2018



Photo: Diana Venis-Kerkhoven