

Private Herbert Hilliard MacDonald

Lincoln and Welland Regiment

Family Life:

Herbert Hilliard MacDonald was born on April 28th, 1925, to Beatrice (nee Clark) and John MacDonald, at Markdale, Ontario. Herb attended local public and high schools for his early education.

At age 16, Herb entered into an apprenticeship with General Electric in Peterborough as a machinist. After the war he returned to General Electric and then secured a position with Black Clawson Kennedy in Owen Sound. He subsequently pursued some employment opportunities in the Thornbury-Clarksburg area.

Later in life, Herb retired in Markdale on a disability pension. He died on February 9th, 1981.

Military Service:

Private MacDonald enlisted for military service in 1943, at the young age of 17. His active service overseas was with the Lincoln and Welland Regiment (L&WR). The L&WR was attached to the 10th Infantry Brigade as part of the 4th



Decorations:

Volunteer Service Medal
1939– 1945 War Medal
France and Germany Star
Defence Medal

Military Service:

Canadian Armoured Division (4th CAD). The 4th CAD first saw action during the Normandy Campaign in August of 1944. Private MacDonald joined the L&WR on September 22nd, 1944, and served with the Regiment as it fought its way through Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.

He was a Bren Gunner in B Company who was said to be a “fine marksman in action” and kept his weapon in “excellent condition at all times.”

Private MacDonald developed a close bond with fellow soldier Private Henry Riley. Riley was a foot taller than the diminutive MacDonald who stood at only 5 feet, two inches. The two were nicknamed “Mutt and Jeff” by other members in the Regiment.

Tragically, Private Riley was killed in action on January 26th, 1945, during the hard fought action to clear the Island of Kapelsche Veer. Private MacDonald deeply grieved the loss of his close pal.

Lessons Learned:

A local history entitled *Markdale at the Crossroads of Grey* remarked that Herb was one of the “unsung heroes of the Second World War” and “He rarely mentioned his war effort, but his buddies in the Lincoln and Welland Regiment knew him to be a fine soldier who earned his place in history.”