



## Herbert & Mary Emms



Courtesy of: **THE FIRST HUSSARS**

Written by: Nick Corrie

Assisted by: Brad Emms



**HODIE NON CRAS**

*Name:* Herbert Douglas Emms

*Rank:* Trooper

*Service:* Number: L 105501

*Born:* March 4, 1922

*Discharged:* March 8, 1946

*Served in:* WW II

*Service:* Canadian Army

*Battle Group:* 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Armoured Brigade

*Regiment:* 6<sup>th</sup> Canadian Armoured Regiment (1<sup>st</sup> Hussars)

*Service Details:* Joined the Canadian Army on March 18, 1943 in Regina Saskatchewan. After basic training in Regina, transferred to Camp Borden, Canadian Armoured Corps. Trained as Driver Mechanic (DM) Group "C" (Track). Favoured with more motor mechanic training at Canadian Army Training School in Hamilton and further instruction with No. 15 Coy RCEME. In England, Trooper Emms was trained to drive a Sherman M4A Bulldozer Tank.

*Service Notes:* Taken on Strength (TOS) with the First Hussars on April 17, 1945. Served with the regiment through their Holland offensive into Germany. The Sherman Bulldozer Tank proved a valuable addition to the fighting capabilities of all units they assisted, often under direct fire from anti-tank guns and Panzerfaust weapons. Trooper Emms as a trained mechanic and driver, was part of the delegation assigned to collect from the battle fields, abandoned tanks, vehicles and weapons of all kinds until December 1945.



**HODIE NON CRAS**

**(Today Not Tomorrow)**



**CANADIAN WAR MEDALS**

**NW EUROPE**

## Herbert Douglas Emms - Personal History: Before, during and after the war

Trooper Herbert Emms, L 105501, was born on March 4, 1922, in Mankota, Saskatchewan to parents Joseph Emms (b. March 10, 1888 - d. February 24, 1969) and Kathleen Hain (b. May 6, 1898 - d. May 25, 1985). They were married in Saskatchewan on August 23, 1916 and had 5 children, 4 boys and 1 girl.

This small community lies on Provincial highway #18, the most southerly road in this prairie province. Approximately 40 miles south over fields and fallow only fit for a horse, one encounters the state of Montana, USA (no passport required at this unofficial crossing).



Joe & Kate

To Mankota's north, the happy traveller finds a better known and popular highway, *The Red Coat Trail*, so named in recognition of the North-West Mounted Police as they trekked west in 1874 to bring law and order to the wild and woolly, yet, mostly then, empty territory.



Mankota derives its name as a compilation of **Manitoba** and **North Dakota**, the original homes of the early settlers. Nearby to the south is located Grasslands National Park which protects one of Canada's few remaining areas of undisturbed grasslands. Designated in 1981, the special recognition afforded to prairie grasslands would have bewildered the early settlers who both

cursed and cherished the great clumps heaved from the ground.

The "Last Spike" of the CPR was driven home on November 7, 1885. With the country now tied together by the overused euphemism - "ribbon of steel" - the serious business of finding homesteaders was under way. Brochures and recruiters fanned out across parts of Europe to find hard working, undemanding, sturdy settlers to populate the barren territory and grow grain for shipment to the world markets. Therein lies the plan: settlers grow grain;

railway ships it for a fee which pays for the railway. By and large, the plan worked and still does. (The grumbling over shipping rates persists to this day.)

That same railway made the populating component of the plan the great success evident today. Settlers recruited from the Russian Steppes: Romanians, Ukrainians, and Russians themselves, were brought across the Atlantic in steerage to Halifax. Transferring to immigrant trains, they made their way in some degree of comfort to their new land on the prairies. (The last comfort they were going to see for awhile they discovered.) Other recruits came from Britain, France, Germany, or anyplace where humans seeking a new life could be found.



With no timber to be found thereabouts, the early homes or hovels more accurately, were made of this now today, revered and protected sod. Across the prairies sod homes became “home sweet home” to the unsuspecting newcomer.

How many people do you know who live in, say, Ontario, who have vowed to journey west to British Columbia, finally do it, and when they get home attempt to thrill their friends and neighbours with overworked brochure descriptions of white mountain peaks, green boreal forests and gleaming blue ocean scenes? Then in turn, a disparaging remark is added about the “boring prairies, crossed twice, bored twice.” To them I say “Phooey!” If they had just exercised a little patience



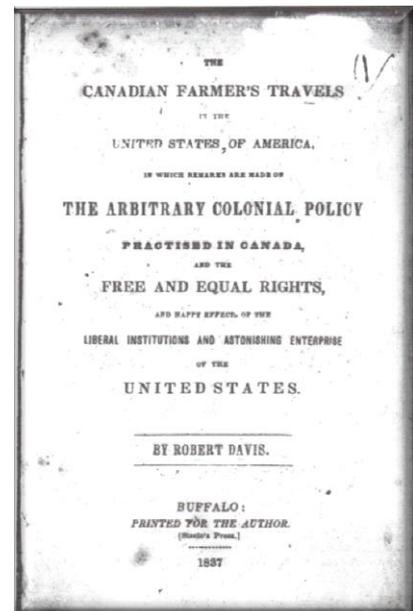
and stopped, looked about and listened (you can see forever and the silence is unfamiliarly strange) slowly but surely this vast land mass exposes a new appreciation of beauty, tranquility and rural civilisation - it's there!

The next time you journey west, slow down, stop even and learn, you're missing something great if you don't.

The prairie setting played a big role in Herbert Emms's life. Those who never stop will miss the point.

The Emms family that first immigrated to Canada, settled near Orillia, Ontario in 1837. They came as settlers from England with 13 children, the second great move made by people rejoicing under this name. The name Emms was formed many centuries ago by the early Norman settlers that followed the 1066 Conquest of the island. It was a name typically given to a good friend or beloved one. The name was originally derived from the Old French given name or nickname Amis or Ami, which means friend.

The year 1837 was one of the rare times in Canadian history when the country experienced armed rebellion. The skirmishes in both Upper and Lower Canada, today's Ontario and Quebec, are collectively termed a "revolt." The whole sorry episode was greatly supported and inspired by American "patriots" determined to drive the British from North America. It was all over in a heart beat. Nevertheless, the Emms family might have wondered at that point if their move to the colonies was wise. The passage of eight hundred years since the tumultuous Conquest involving the Emms's ancestors was long forgotten. This was a new experience with a new generation and no doubt the timing made it a bit of a worry. At least they were on the right side and British to boot.



Early in the twentieth century, Joseph Emms trekked west on his own, leaving behind the more settled and gentle countryside of Ontario. Once resigned to remain, further committed having married into another settler family, the Joseph Emms family created a pioneering ancestry to which Herbert and his siblings could be proud.

Serving as a testimony to these risk takers who ventured across the ocean and a few thousand miles of Eastern Canada to the unwelcoming, wide open and



barren prairie, to them who tolerated the cold, drought and crop eating insects, the wheat production by the 1920s offers proof to their perseverance and sound character. In little more than two decades, Canada's wheat exports exceeded all other countries. With the west thriving on Marquis wheat, a Canadian agricultural development, the country was becoming the bread basket of the world. Our wheat production surpassed the output of the next two countries, the United States and Argentina, bested them combined! The families featured here contributed appreciably to this incredible achievement.

Thus we have both the physical and human background from which Herbert Emms was born and reared to become a responsible, determined young man. In his younger years, he exhibited resourcefulness, a trait which lasted throughout his life time. Those times might best be described as an ability fuelled by a willingness, to push back when confronted by disagreeable chores or in his opinion, unwarranted duties, uncalled for and beneath his dignity. Once enlisted in the army, even military discipline didn't deter this disposition. How exhibited?

In his school days he was delegated to arrive at school early and light the stove in preparation for the class arriving, a job he hated. Solution – he pumped wood in until it turned red hot. Dismissed.

Dishwashing in the army for junior ranks is only too common. He hated this job too, so he conveniently dropped a pile of dishes. Dismissed.

He was delegated to light the barracks stove but he didn't want to and didn't. Dismissed.

For some reason he tried his hand - or was it his head? - at army boxing, He apparently never stopped hearing the bells.

Human beings are the product of nature and nurture, inherited and learned traits we display throughout our lives. Perhaps as much as resourceful, Herbert was a tad independently-minded, which is not unnatural for someone who

grows up in the isolation afforded by the open prairie. Herbert started early, displaying his independence when he cut out on his own at age 14.

Yes, at the tender age of 14 he left home to seek fame and fortune. His timing couldn't have been worse. The whole world was in the grip of a terrible depression with Canada no exception. How Herbert managed to survive under these austere times, removed from the family support group which had nurtured him, is a testimony to his determination to persevere. This quality would manifest itself in more useful ways later in life.



LtoR back Sidney Evelyn Herbert Joseph Clifford George

Nevertheless, he sucked up his independence long enough to join the army, where self-reliance, so valuable in civilian life, is deeply frowned upon. From all accounts, in the next three years it posed no problems for him or the army (dismissing the dish incident) but - why join up?



This question was often asked of a returning service man; it's probably still asked today after Afghanistan. In 1974 author Barry Broadfoot in his book *Six War Years 1939-1945* was treated to interviewing many WWII veterans, a luxury gone today. The question "why" occupied the first chapter. After the "dirty thirties" when poverty abounded, the simple realisation one would be fed and clothed convinced some to risk their lives. The thrill upon enlistment of a simple reward, a clean shirt, good boots, and a hot meal, drove the thought of death from the recruit's mind. That realisation would grab him later, in action.

In WWI the greatest reason to join up was patriotism. Many men were of direct British stock and Canada was part of the British Empire. To some degree

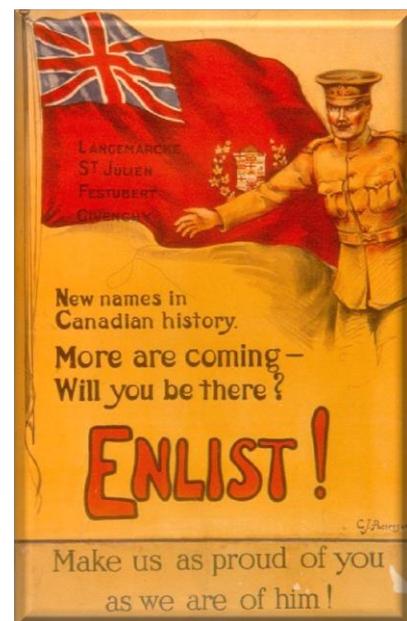
in the next war, patriotism was still a factor, drawing in recruits to their local Personnel Depots. The Empire connection, by then renamed the British Commonwealth, extended from British father, possibly a WWI veteran, to his Canadian born sons and, why not daughters too?

Recruiting influence beyond food and clothing Broadfoot discovered was simply – why not? Young men with little future at that time, seeing others tripping on down to join up, was reason good enough. It was the thing to do.

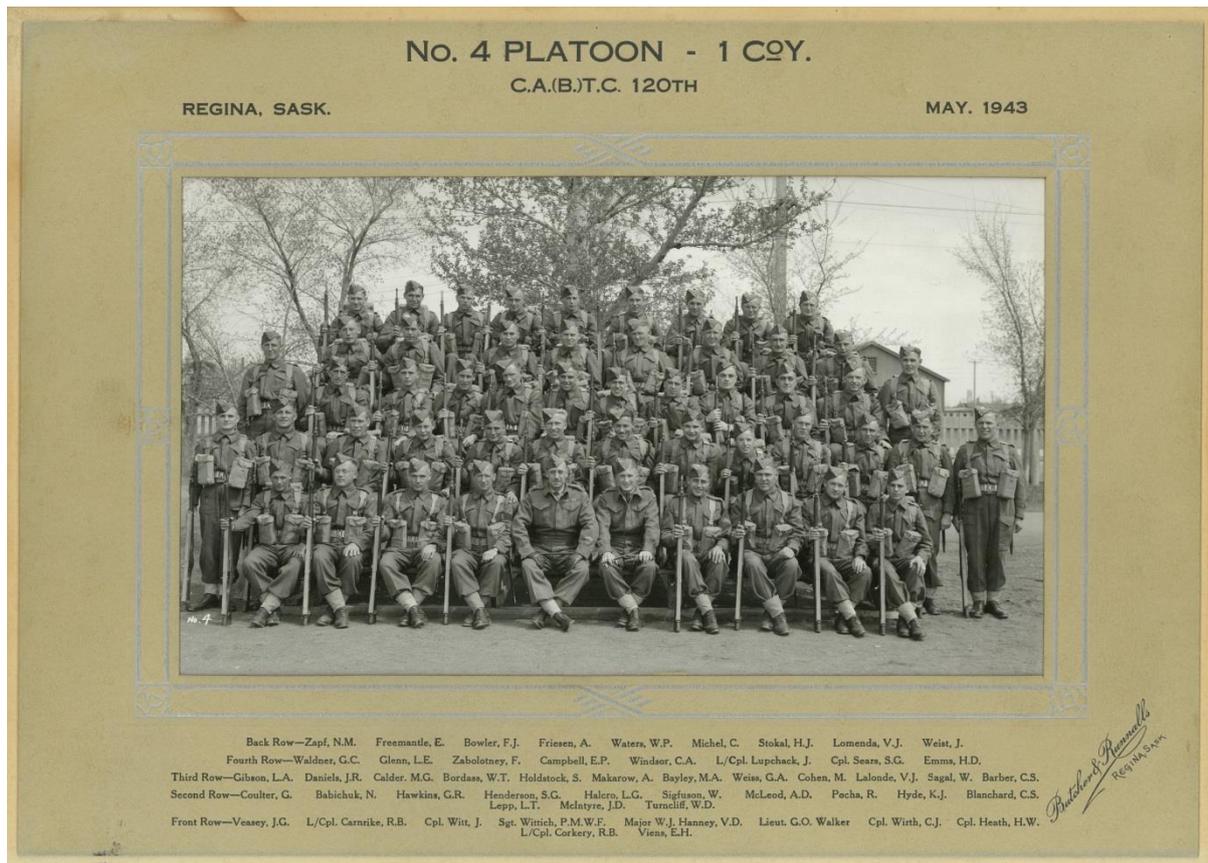
In the Emms household, the father was a casualty of WWI. He was Canadian born but closer to the family's English roots and that patriotic fervour so common to that war. He came home suffering from what at that time was called "shell shock," an enormous burden for him and the entire Emms family. By 1943 Herbert's eldest brother was in the army, odd jobs and farm life were a bit of a bore, while others he knew had already joined. Then too, there was always revenge for dad's invisible wound and in 1939; wasn't it Germany again? Why not! Off to Regina he went.

In compiling a biography of a Canadian war veteran, the acquisition of his records from Library and Archives Canada is practically a must-do exercise. The first paper to peruse is his Attestation Paper accompanied by the Personnel Selection Record. Reading beyond his home address, parent's names, occupation (farmer), marital status (single), education (grade nine and correspondence course in motor mechanics), the researcher comes upon the assessment conducted by the Army Examiner - probably the most useful item of all!

On March 18, 1943, a few days past Emms's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, the good Lieut. H.S. Toombs reviewing the applicant before him, noted he was not very active in sports, played the violin sometimes but not very well, had no hobbies, played cards and liked to dance. (obviously an oblique reference to his preference for female company). He had three bothers, one overseas, and a sister at home on the farm. He stood 5'10" tall and weighed 167 pounds.



Then the best part, the man's qualities: above average learning, considerable initiative, high mechanical ability, and confidence in his ability to perform well in this field. In fact, Lieut. Toombs notes this recruit, "Should be a competent and dependable worker and soldier and is anxious to get as much work in this field as possible. Potential N.C.O."



Private EMMS, Herbert D. Fourth row, right end (Not yet a Trooper)

With that rousing endorsement officially recorded and filed, and after the obligatory basic training in Regina, the army seized on his obvious mechanical ability, believed there was nothing else for it but to send him off to Camp Borden and become the latest recruit in the by then well oiled, up and functioning, Canadian Armoured Corps. On June 16, 1943, he became - Trooper Herbert Emms, L 105501.

While at Borden his training concentrated on driving. By September he was qualified as a Driver Class III Wheeled followed quickly as Class III Tracked. These accomplishments were awarded by seeing his income rocket up from \$1.40 per diem to \$1.50. In November 1943 he rose to his designated

Armoured Corps pinnacle by becoming a qualified - Driver Mechanic (DM) Group "C" (Track). He was finally a tank crewman and might have expected to be sent overseas as a recruit for an armoured regiment. Well not quite.



*The sad reality: The Canadian Armoured Corps in 1939 had no tanks. These WWI Renault tanks were bought from the USA as scrap metal. Not a bad description. The most one could boast was – better than none at all.*

Reading his record for the next year, December 1943 to November 1944, he functioned as an instructor of D/M at Camp Borden (no pay increase), followed by a stint of more mechanical training at the Canadian Army Training School in Hamilton, then over to advance training with No. 15 Coy RCEME. (Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers)



**RCEME motor mechanic training**



On November 24, 1944, he sailed away to Britain with a new designation - Motor Mechanic Group "B" - and a pay increase (amount not indicated). He arrived overseas on December 6 and was assigned to a recruiting unit, # 3 C.A.C.R.U. (Canadian Armoured Corps Recruiting Unit).

Before embarkation, he was allowed some two weeks leave, an interval he must have enjoyed, as one learns from the record that the army gave him \$.50 per diem spending money. One would doubt that the combined \$2.00 per

diem or more, could be considered “mad money” since, during leave, away from the free, tasty army food, he had to feed himself, didn’t he?

The one memory of his sea journey he passed on to his family in later years was a tale of discomfort and smell. He thought the ship might have been a cattle boat not long before. He whiled away his time after most meals by quickly feeding the fishes over the rail. The North Atlantic in winter can be one hell of a place. To add to his misery, they were held aboard ship and didn’t disembark for almost a week.



**Willems Barracks, 1850 era**

From this December ‘44 date to March 6, 1945, the record is unclear as to his duties or training. One can be sure he was actively engaged in doing something; the army hates to pay a man to do nothing. When we learn of his later unique tank assignment, we might get a clue.

Perhaps as a two-day-old birthday present, he was finally shipped across the Channel on March 6. More significantly as far as this account is concerned, he was Taken On Strength (TOS) with the 6<sup>th</sup> Canadian Armoured Regiment (1st Hussars), more commonly seen as 6(CAR). That date was April 17, 1945. His real war was about to begin.

Lest anyone considering Trooper Emms’s late insertion into battle, with the First Hussars then rounding out their eleventh and final month in battle, think for him it was a walk in the park, pray review some pertinent facts before making any wrong assertion.

To get the correct impression of conditions encountered by Emms in April, a survey of the casualty lists recorded in the *Gallant Hussars*, the regiment’s last written history, compiled 2004, were scanned. In there, we learn that from March 1, 1945 (his date selected because the enemy had its back to the Rhine and their homeland; it was a last ditch fight to the bitter end), with the British crossing



the river on March 24/25 (the Hussars assisting in floating Duplex Drive Shermans) and the cease fire at 0:800 hrs May 5, 1945, the obvious fact is that peace was elusive, the battle raged on.



In the *Gallant Hussars* these facts are recorded:

PoW = Prisoner of War, WIA = Wounded in Action:

Total for entire period: 44. Total for April to May 5<sup>th</sup>: 34

KIA = Killed in Action, DoW = Died of Wounds:

Total for entire period: 13. Total for April to May 5<sup>th</sup>: 11

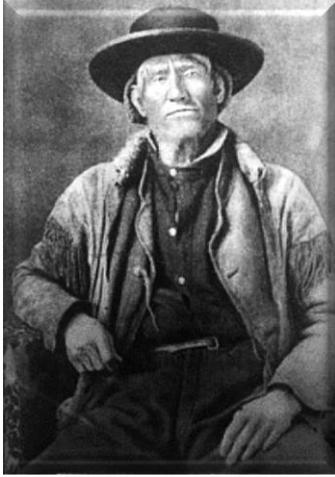
This brief examination illustrates in dramatic terms, tragic terms in some cases, the extreme danger that Emms was suddenly exposed to. With so many troops of all ranks taken out of action, the regiment was desperate to receive replacements. There were many instances over the preceding eleven months of combat when the regiment was thrown into the deep end without warning. On that April 17th day, Trooper Herbert Emms jumped in for a quick emersion of his own.

Upon arriving in England in December 1944 and for the next four and a half months before reaching the front, Emms was trained to drive a Sherman tank which he may not have seen back in Canada. We don't know? One thing for sure is that at home he never saw the type of Sherman he would operate in the theatre of war – a Sherman M4A Bulldozer Tank.



In today's world, the sight of a bulldozer is a common occurrence. You see them on construction sites everywhere. In fact, they were only invented in the

early twentieth century, which means throughout WWII, while they were in great numbers as civilian equipment, they were not as yet widely found in the military combat theatre.



The origin of the bulldozer's name helps to understand the transference to this type of equipment. In the United States, around 1876, the name labelled bullies, men who would beat someone mercilessly, with total cruelty. They were said "to bull doze" that person. Eventually the term morphed into an expression meaning "to get the job done." With the invention of a machine which could uproot, overturn and totally destroy anything in its path, it became a - bulldozer.

Its military début was in North Africa in 1940-41 as the British battled Erwin Rommel and his Afrika Korps. The Brits found an armoured bulldozer a relatively safe method of mine clearing, boosting them out of the ground behind a protective shield of armour plate. Other uses followed as we might expect, copying their civilian usage, only at war they were under deadly fire as they went about their work. They were often sitting ducks.

The concept caught on with the Americans who, drawing upon their can-do attitude, predictably turned this small, somewhat novel weapon, into a well-designed offensive weapon produced in greater numbers. It was this Sherman Bulldozer Tank that Trooper Emms found himself driving.



A brief outline of the regiment's actions around this time is informative when trying to visualise what Emms was experiencing.

The First Hussars equipped again with DD type floating tanks, crossed the Rhine on April 2 then turned north into Holland to face another river crossing, the Ijssel River. It was at these river crossings where the Sherman Bulldozers proved their worth as they gouged out access to the river for amphibious vehicles to enter and cross. The enemy might have been reduced in numbers



but they were well equipped with anti tank guns, panzerfausts and mines, all of which took a toll on the beleaguered regiment. Emms's Sherman would have been most vulnerable to these weapons as they laboured on, often out in the open, to help make the situation a little

easier for the proper fighting squadrons. The contribution of the tank dozers has been overlooked in regimental histories, our own not exempted.

The final push in the war saw the regiment facing yet another water crossing (after all, they were in Holland) - the Kusten Canal. The enemy was not willing to capitulate. As they retreated, leaving behind destroyed roads and bridges, they offered up the bread and butter repair task for the



Sherman Bulldozer Tank. In one of these engagements Emms's tank fired upon a German tank, likely a big one, a Tiger perhaps, because he recalled years later that their puny 75mm round simply bounced off. Trooper Emms survived physically unscathed; the first phase of his post war life was about to begin.



With the war officially over on May 8, 1945, the business of cleaning up all the detritus of war began. Tanks, trucks, all the weapons of war regardless of which side it originated from, were gathered up, then lined up on fields throughout the European theatre. The regiment spent time in Germany, visiting

Berlin. It must have disturbed them to see the complete destruction caused by their own side, the victors. Herbert was likely there too. They could console themselves knowing they hadn't started the war. Bloody stupid – a war!

With some difficulty, we interpret his army records to learn he stayed in North West Europe until disembarking for the UK on December 3, 1945. There he had a ten-day paid leave in preparation for repatriation back to Canada on the Queen Elizabeth. The First Hussars arrived in New York on January 15, 1946, were denied leave in Manhattan (AWL a real possibility if they were let loose

on the unsuspecting American populace), then placed on a train to finally pull into the London CNR station the next day. Trooper Herbert D. Emms L 105501, received his army discharge in Regina on March 8, 1946, almost three years to the day since he joined. The interim two months he spent on leave, with pay.



**16 January 1946 London ON**

There was one incident aboard the Queen which no doubt made the trip going home - home to Mankota that is - even more enjoyable. As he was perched on a chair, enjoying the passage of time in some degree of luxury, some oaf kicked the chair out from under him. The someone was his brother Clifford, another Emms soldier, the third counting their brother George, who had survived the debacle of war and were now going home to start a new life.

Every veteran after the war was capable of telling terrible stories but they didn't, because to tell them was to relive them. They became repressed and secret. At home in peace time for the rest of their lives, each man or woman struggled under the weight of those memories. The combined horror of war and the fear of dying didn't discriminate; it grabbed everyone and lingered on. The lucky ones only suffered some sleepless nights with the occasional nightmare, witnessed by their sympathetic families with concern and understanding.

Herbert Emms's children recall seeing him at times in the middle of the night, sitting on the side of the bed with drooping head, apparently deep in thought. His grandson remembered a rare occasion of disclosure when Herbert chanced to tell him of one horrible moment he experienced in the short sixty days he was actively engaged in battle. Was it a large



calibre round from an anti tank gun or panzerfaust which struck his crew commander cutting him in half? The boy was only about age 10 but he recalled that this story culminated with more gore when Herbert, with some trepidation to be sure, dredged up the single detail for the by then wide-eyed lad, that such a horrible wound didn't produce as much blood as one might imagine.

One may assume that Emms wasn't more sensitive than anyone else in a war theatre under battle conditions. After witnessing his commander cut down so horribly, he scrounged around gathering up rum rations and secreted himself off alone to get drunk. The commander's death, coupled to all the death and destruction a war leaves behind, was temporarily drowned out, but never, ever forgotten.

Herbert Emms enjoyed a long life, dying at age 93. One wonders at the possibility if before that time, after some gentle probing at an interview, we might have been able to loosen and hear more of his repressed personal memories. In his absence are two stories from fellow Hussars which may give some clues as to how a man behaves under extreme stress. They are:

\*Some time after the D-Day landing in Normandy, Corporal Jim Fisher and best friend Chester "Chas" Neilands, huddled under a bridge for protection from exploding shells and falling bombs. Their combined purpose was to write letters home to their respective loved ones to make them aware, they imagined for the last time, how much they were loved and missed. Both men had, by this short time in combat, seen so much death and destruction they were convinced death was imminent, survival was a fleeting possibility. They exchanged these letters with the intention that the survivor, assuming one might while the other wouldn't, would deliver the letter once back home in Canada. The underlying feeling for eleven months was one of tension. They could never relax, not even when out of action, because a random artillery shell or sneak attack was always a possibility. They both survived.



**Chas & Jim**

\*Trooper John Potter arrived as a dispatch rider on a motorcycle, two days after the regiment on D-Day, June 6, a fact he would recall years later sheepishly adding that his demeanour that day was, "Excuse my French, I was full of piss and vinegar." He was finally in the fighting war and the enemy be damned. Within minutes a German fighter plane strafed him, the rounds hitting the ground on both sides as he sat startled on his bike, protecting himself from bits of stone and pavement gouged out, very, very close by. At that instant he became aware of his vulnerability. This was for real! Carrying on for the next eleven months, he rode with his head down and his eyes open, always tensely aware of danger and possible instant death. Dispatch riders were prime targets for snipers but John survived unscathed and forever grateful.



These two accounts are offered here because both are known to be true and personally related to this writer. Each can be regarded as special because personal experiences like these, under fire in a war zone, either died with the soldier on the field of battle or were repressed after the war. I feel honoured to be the recipient of privately-held memories finally given up by these two Gallant Hussars.

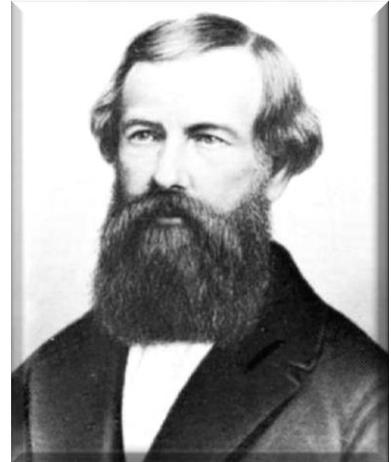
Perhaps in contradiction of the above recognition that at times Herbert Emms succumbed to his internal war scars, drowned in a bit of drink, after reviewing his post war life as a husband, father and provider, the evidence suggests he was a man of strong character. Life seldom runs smoothly for anyone and this pattern didn't escape him either.

As part of the discharge regimen in Regina, an interview is conducted with the aim of assessing the individual's civilian future. This time we read the words of Captain W.H. Durick who wrote that Herbert

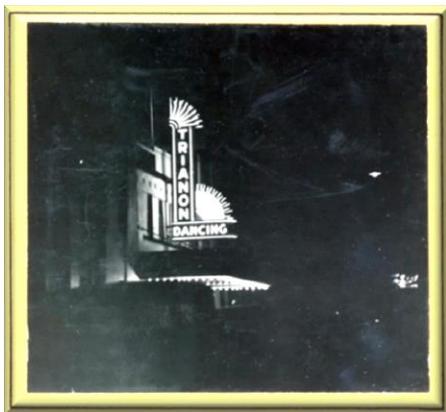


intended to become either a mechanic or “Cat” driver - read bulldozer. No mention of farming here; this follows his declaration upon enlistment with a firm “no” to his desire for that former life. Captain Durick’s recorded words as to his future are, “He is interested in qualifying as a journeyman mechanic and he believes he would require little time, if any, of service as an apprentice.”

No doubt about it, Herbert left the army fully intending to follow his declared intention of working as a mechanic. He had been well trained in the army, the best they could give him under the circumstances, they believing his posting as a tank repair man, or simply a driver, was a certainty. What happened next is unknown. Somehow, and probably to Herb’s good fortune, he was hired by Otis Elevators to install and repair elevators in western Canada. Part of his itinerary of stops took him to Regina where more good fortune found him out.



**Elisha Graves Otis**



**Regina 1949**

Dances are popular on the prairies, surpassing even curling. The small communities made it difficult to meet someone of the opposite sex who would be considered a likely companion in matrimony for the years to come. Sometime in 1949, Herbert was introduced at a dance to the attractive Mary Soparlo. She was working in the Province’s capital city as a stenographer for a local newspaper, perhaps in a building with an elevator? While dancing cheek-to-cheek, as

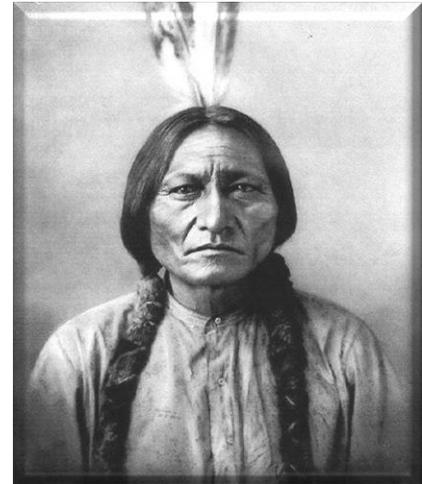
they say – it was love at first sight. With a prairie winter coming on, the prairie-wise couple were married on October 30, 1949.

Mary Soparlo was born near Wood Mountain, Saskatchewan on May 10, 1923. Her family, of Romanian stock, had answered the entreaties from the Canadian Government and CPR and came to Canada



prior to WWI. They definitely built, and initially lived in, a sod house until land could be cleared, grain grown, and enough money earned to improve living conditions. People like the Soparlos from the Russian Steppes, were exactly the types needed to withstand the early hardships of the Canadian prairies.

Wood Mountain is about 35 miles east of Mantoka, along highway #18. Today, the nearby Grasslands Park helps both towns' reputation as a tourist destination. At an earlier time, the abundance of poplar, water and rugged terrain was a draw for a more desperate group than the Emms and Soparlo families. In 1877, American Indians fleeing from the US Cavalry, moved north and settled for a time nearby. They were led by Sitting Bull, who in 1876, slaughtered the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry led by the vainglorious Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. Sitting Bull was a Hunkpapa Lakota leader, much respected by his own people, and grudgingly, by the whites whose increasing numbers drove his tribe from their traditional lands. In 1881, the Indians returned to the United States. Sitting Bull was murdered in 1890 during a struggle with Indian agents. He's buried in South Dakota.



After marriage, the years passed with the family moving about. The most noticeable change came in the form of children, six in fact, four girls and two boys in that order.

*Seen here: Karen Donna Myra Carol Bradley Robert*

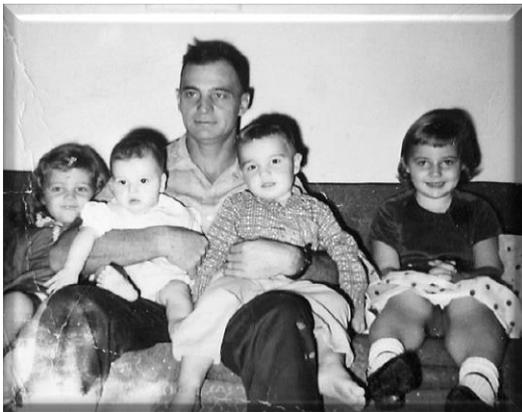


In 1969 while Herb was working in Vancouver for Otis, he received word from Mankota that Mary was sick and needed hospital care. The family was temporarily living back in Saskatchewan because accommodations for their by then rather large family, were both hard to find and afford in the big metropolis.

Ruminating on the assumption that Mary would be hospitalised for some time, Herb decided to ask Otis for a transfer to Edmonton, a city he knew had elevator work. In Saskatchewan where typically a tall building was generally a mere low cloud scraping height of three or four floors, and everyone thought only in terms of grain elevators, a move out of province was necessary. With that plan settled, the six children were bundled together, along with whatever seven humans of various ages might need, and away they went. Edmonton or bust!



It's not uncommon for a family to have only one care giver, but invariably that one person is the mother or certainly a woman, relative or not. Herb was an exception. Earlier in this story, this one time young lad of the prairie, was complimented as being "a resourceful, responsible, determined young man." These qualities were not diminished with age. As a single parent he managed to juggle his job with domestic chores. Cooking, cleaning, wiping snotty noses, administering parental discipline and love for his children's well being and benefit, were all in a day's extra work.



A weaker man would have folded. He didn't. Yes, when it became too much, his mother Kate came to lend a hand and aid which was gratefully accepted. Nevertheless, the success of holding his family of six children together as one unit is attributable solely to Herb. Good on Herb!

While survival in Edmonton was paramount, wife and mother Mary in hospital back in Saskatchewan wasn't forgotten. It's a long eight-hour drive from Edmonton to North Battleford. Given the work load Herb was enduring at home and job, all to keep body and soul together, made the round trip seem longer and harder. He drove it more than once,

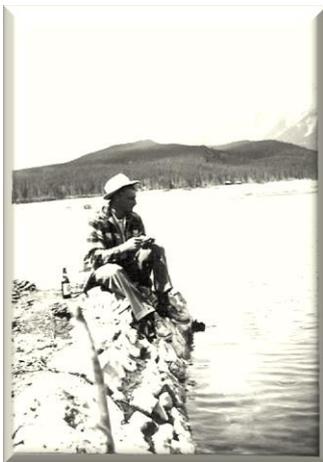


sometimes with the children, to enjoy an all together family visit at the hospital.

Eventually good news arrived that Mary had recovered and normal family life for the complete family resumed in Edmonton. Mary assumed the normal role of wife and mother and Herb the bread winner. Together, both parents watched their children develop into young adults, become fledglings anxious to fly the coop, to strike out on their own.

It never rains but it pours. In the early 1980's Mary developed terminal cancer. It seems when the call went out, Herbert Emms answered. People who knew him best said "he never walked away." To become a full time care giver, he in 1983, after 35 years with Otis, retired and spent the next number of months nursing his ailing wife who died at home in July 1983.

A man who has worked on his own since age 14, and before on the farm, can't be expected to do nothing. Herb wanted to keep working. To that end, he utilised both his mechanical and electrical elevator talents to continue working for another year at various locations in Canada.



The next big development in the Emms family, was heralded by a sigh of relief in 1984 as Herb's children learned that dad was retiring. As he settled into his well-earned retirement at age 62, his children were delighted to witness him finally enjoying himself, unencumbered, free as a bird, having a ball. Eventually he bought his parents' old house in Mankota, spruced it up and settled in. He had confidence in his future, nurturing a new sense of satisfaction and contentment. He played cards, planted a garden, definitely went fishing (his real passion), made beer, did renovations, sold water-distilling equipment, and - as if that wasn't enough - he dated two nice local women. ( one after the other, one assumes).

Time comes a cropper. It brings old age, and along with it, poor eyesight, arthritis and lack of mobility, to name but a few ailments. To lighten his load, the aging Herbert for a time moved into a smaller house, still in Mankota. Finally, when he found it too difficult to drive the hour into Assiniboia for supplies, the need for a bigger change was realised. To that end, he moved

back to a city he knew and a place where help was more readily available – Edmonton, or more properly St. Albert, to live with his daughter Myra.

Father and daughter discovered a new bond, allowing Herb's temporary arrangement to last a little longer than planned. As more time caught up to Herb, he moved into a seniors' retirement home, followed by a stay in a nursing home. It was here on September 19, 2015, that he died, age 93. A great guy, good worker, noble loving husband and father and lastly - a **GALLANT HUSSAR** - always.

### Herbert Douglas Emms 1922 - 2015



## Medals and Decorations:

1939 – 45 Star

France and Germany Star

Defence Medal

Canadian Volunteer Service Medal

War Medal 1939 – 45



**HODIE NON CRAS**

(Today Not Tomorrow)