

Private Duncan Brown[©]
Regimental number: 820417
8th Battalion, Canadian Infantry

born: 18 November 1871–died: 1 October 1918

Private Duncan Brown was born on 18 November 1871 in Hepworth, near Shallow Lake in Grey County, Ontario.¹ Both of Duncan's parents were born in Scotland and came to Canada as children—Archibald was born in about 1838 and came to Canada in 1840 and Catharine, born in about 1842, came in 1851.² They married on 29 January 1864 in Derby Township, Grey County³ and probably had seven children of their own:

- Mary Ann (born on 24 November 1863),⁴
- Sarah (born on 17 May 1866),⁵
- Duncan,
- Phoebe Catharine (born on 1 October 1874),⁶
- Flora (born on 5 September 1877),⁷
- Archibald Cormack (born on 10 October 1880)⁸ and
- George Norman (born on 24 September 1881).⁹

In addition, they adopted a son, Albert E., who was born in England on 6 March 1885. He came to Canada in 1890, when he was just 5 years old.¹⁰ The circumstances of his arrival in Canada and adoption are not known.

The first record of this Presbyterian family in the Ontario census records appears in 1891, in the Township of Keppel in Grey County, where Archibald was a farmer.¹¹ They remained there until at least 1911.¹²

It is not known where Duncan was after 1891. When he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he indicated that he had served in the Northwest Mounted Police in Regina, Saskatchewan, from 1889 to 1904.¹³ However, no record of his service was found.

He enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) on 21 March 1916 in Fort Frances, Ontario. He was a millhand, 6' tall and had a fresh complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair. He remained in Canada until May 1917. While he was still in Northern Ontario with the 141st Battalion, he was convicted of being drunk and incapable in a public place on 16 February 1917. He was convicted by a Justice of the Peace in Port Arthur and fined \$10 plus \$3 costs. The following day, he was convicted by the army of being absent without leave and was confined to barracks for three days and fined two days' pay.

On 7 May 1917, he sailed in England on the SS *Olympic* and went to the Canadian camp at Shorncliffe. Four months later, he went to France with the 8th Battalion. On 9 November 1917, he was injured and transported to 44th Casualty Clearing Station and then to No. 3 General Hospital in Le Tréport, on the Atlantic coast in France. He had received a gunshot wound that penetrated his left ribs. On 27 December, he went to the 1st Birmingham War Hospital in Rednal, south of Birmingham. In January 1918, he went to the Manor Hospital, in Epsom, and then to a convalescent hospital in Woodcote Park, Epsom. He was discharged on 8 February 1918 but remained on convalescence at the 1st Canadian Convalescent Depot until he transferred to the Manitoba Regimental Depot on 7 May.

He went back to his unit at the Front on 9 September 1918 but sadly, just three weeks later he was injured again—this time fatally. On 25 September, his battalion moved to Hendecourt, 17 kilometres southeast of Arras, in northern France, to be part of the Canadian Corps' contribution to the Bourlon Wood operations.¹⁴ The attack continued for three days and, while the attack was successful, it caused heavy casualties, particularly among officers, non-commissioned officers and specialists. However, there was also an impact on other ranks—59 killed and 272 wounded. Duncan was one of them.

During the Bourlon Wood operations on the Cambrai Front on September 29, 1918, this soldier was severely wounded by an enemy machine gun bullet in the body. He was evacuated to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, succumbing to his wounds two days later.¹⁵

He was admitted to the clearing station with gunshot wounds to his left leg and to his right leg and thigh. He died on 1 October and was buried the next day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 8, Row A, Grave 38) with the Canadian chaplain A. D. Reid presiding.¹⁶

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, France. The first burials in the cemetery took place in March 1917.¹⁷ No. 1 CCCS arrived at the beginning of September 1918 and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.¹⁸ As a result of the serious and urgent nature of the cases admitted to No. 1 CCCS, the death rate was high in October—a total of 83 deaths during the month.¹⁹

Duncan was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).

One of Duncan's brothers also served in the CEF and gave his life. Archibald Jr. was a machinist, living in Sharon, Pennsylvania, when he enlisted as a private (regimental number 850478) in St. Catharines, Ontario.²⁰ He enlisted on 15 April 1916, just a month after Duncan, but the two brothers went to England on the same day and ship. He went to France in early March 1918 with the 116th Battalion and was killed in action on 8 August 1918—about three months before Duncan died. He was "... instantly killed by enemy shell fire, on the morning of August 8th, when advancing towards Hamon Wood, near the objective."²¹ He is buried in Hourges Orchard Cemetery, near Moreuil, France.²² Like his brother, he was awarded posthumously the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Both brothers are remembered on the Shallow Lake war memorial.²³

Duncan's father Archibald died just before his two sons went to Europe. He died on 15 February 1917 of an oedema of the lungs, as a result of cardiac dilation that he had had for two years.²⁴ After the war, his wife Catherine moved from the farm into town and was living on Princess Street in the village of Shallow Lake, Grey County, with her unmarried daughter Mary Ann.²⁵

Mary Ann married in 1926, at the age of 61. She wed James Molison Bothwell on 6 September 1926 in Grey County.²⁶ After their marriage, they moved to Cadillac, Michigan, where James was a real estate salesman.²⁷ Mary Ann continued to live in the States until her death on 18 May 1950.²⁸ She died in Detroit, Michigan,²⁹ but is remembered on the gravestone of her sister Sarah in Shallow Lake.³⁰

Sarah married Alfred Harrington, a mechanic, on 21 August 1890 in Perth, Ontario.³¹ In 1921, they were living on the same street as Sarah's mother—Princess Street in Shallow Lake.³² She died on 17

September 1945³³ of an intestinal obstruction due to an impacted gallstone and was buried in Boyd Cemetery, Shallow Lake, with her husband, who had died four years earlier.³⁴

Phoebe Catharine probably died of consumption on 30 March 1892, at the age of 18, in Bruce County.

Flora married Ross McKeen on 15 June 1911 in York County, Ontario.³⁵ In 1921, they were living with their children in Owen Sound, Ontario, where Ross was a salesman.³⁶ They had a son, Duncan Cormack, born in 1919 and likely named after his two uncles who died in the Great War. Flora died in 1971 and was buried in Leith United Church Cemetery, in Leith, Grey County.³⁷

Very little is known about **George Norman**. He does not appear to have served in the CEF. He may have died on 17 November 1946 in Toronto, Ontario. It was a rough death; he died of a fracture of the base of his skull and a massive subdural hemorrhage and laceration of the brain. He was a labourer and his death was reported by a friend, who did not know who George's parents were.

Albert (known then as Bert) married Emmaline Masterson in Bruce County on 12 Sep 1906.³⁸ Emmaline died in 1939 and Birt died sometime after that.³⁹

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¹ "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>; accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Brown, Duncan, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1133 - 25, Item number: 67883, Digitized service file - PDF format: B1133-S025

² "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Catherine Brown, Province: Ontario, District: Grey (North/Nord), District number: 65, Sub-district: Keppel, Sub-district number: 9

³ "Ontario, Canada, County Marriage Registers, 1858-1869," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 3 March 2020), entry for Archibald Brown, Microfilm roll: 1030056

⁴ "Michigan, Death Records, 1867-1952," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 26 February 2020), entry for Mary Bothwell, File number: 410194

⁵ "Global, Find a Grave Index for Burials at Sea and Other Select Burial Locations, 1300s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Sarah Harrington

⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858-1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 March 2020), entry for Phoebe Catharine Brown

⁷ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858-1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 March 2020), entry for Jilora [*sic*] Brown

⁸ "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>; accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Brown, Archibald, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 1124 - 2, Item number: 67352, Digitized service file - PDF format: B1124-S002

⁹ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858-1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 17 March 2020), entry for George Norman Brown

¹⁰ "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry*, entry for Catherine Brown

¹¹ "1891 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 9 October 2020), entry for Duncan Brown, Division number: 2 a, Enumeration District: 46

¹² "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Catherine Brown, Province: Ontario, District: Grey (North/Nord), District number: 65, Sub-district: Keppel, Sub-district number: 9; "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Catherine Brown, Province: Ontario, District: Grey North, District number: 73, Sub-district: 13 - Keppel, Sub-district number: 13

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- ¹³ "Personnel Records of the First World War," entry for Brown, Duncan. Unless otherwise noted, all information about Duncan's military service comes from this source.
- ¹⁴ "War Diaries - 8th Battalion, Canadian Infantry," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://data4.collectionscanada.ca/>: accessed 16 March 2014), Date: 1917/11/01–1919/02/28, Reference: RG9-III-D-3, Volume/box number: 4918, File number: 371, Container: T-10711
- ¹⁵ "Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914–1948," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Duncan Brown, Service number: 820417
- ¹⁶ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 24 February 2020), entry for Brown, D.
- ¹⁷ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ¹⁸ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G: accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁹ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca>: accessed 26 March 2018)
- ²⁰ "Personnel Records of the First World War," entry for Brown, Archibald. Unless otherwise noted, all information about Archibald's military service comes from this source.
- ²¹ "Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914–1948," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 March 2020), entry for Archibald Cormack Brown, Service number: 850478
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ *Ontario War Memorials* (<http://ontariowarmemorials.blogspot.com/2015/06/shallow-lake.html>: accessed 19 March 2020)
- ²⁴ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 March 2020), entry for Archibald Brown
- ²⁵ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Sarah Harrington, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Grey North, District number: 83, Sub-District: Owen Sound (Town), Sub-district number: 43, City, Town or Village: City of Owen Sound River Ward
- ²⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Mary Ann Brown
- ²⁷ "Michigan Passenger and Crew Lists, 1903–1965," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Mary Bothwell
- ²⁸ "1930 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 October 2020), entry for Mary Bothwell; "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Mary A. Bothwell, Publication Title: Cadillac, Michigan, City Directory, 1946
- ²⁹ "Michigan, Death Records, 1867–1952," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Mary Bothwell, File Number: 41019
- ³⁰ "Global, Find a Grave Index for Burials at Sea and Other Select Burial Locations, 1300s–Current," *Ancestry*, entry for Sarah Harrington
- ³¹ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Sarah Brown
- ³² "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Sarah Harrington, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Grey North, District number: 83, Sub-district: Shallow Lake (Village), Sub-district number: 48, City, town or village: Shallow Lake Village
- ³³ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Sarah Harrington

³⁴ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Sarah Harrington, Certificate number: 054273, Reference number: RG 80-08-0-2422

³⁵ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Flora Brown

³⁶ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2020), entry for Flora McKeeon, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Grey North, District number: 83, Sub-district: Owen Sound (Town), Sub-district number: 43, City, town or village: City of Owen Sound River Ward

³⁷ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 March 2020), entry for Flora McKeen

³⁸ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 17 March 2020), entry for Bert Brown

³⁹ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 13 March 2020), entry for Emmeline Brown, Certificate number: 026794, Reference number: 80-8