

My wife's mother had a sister Edna Brocklebank and she was a wonderful Aunt Edna to Ann. On my marriage to Ann, she became my Aunt Edna as well. On her death about 20 years ago, I became the executor of her estate. In that estate there were 2 medals that I did know how to handle. Subsequent to Tony Mancinone's presentation at the last year's Remembrance meeting, I took the medals to Tony for his help. He didn't know what the medals were for but he noted that there was a name engraved into the rim of each with a number – 213056 – Lance Corporal Frank Dalton Brocklebank – Canadian Mounted Rifles. The number was the key to enter the Government Canada of Website which revealed 52 pages of information on Frank Brocklebank that was really unbelievable. All I knew about Uncle Frank was that during World War I, he suffered in a gas attack and died young. But these 52 pages gave me a brand new look at this man whose death occurred 3 months after I was born.

He was born in Niagara Falls, Ontario in 1894, lived with his mother at 37 McKay Avenue in Windsor, was a plumber and enlisted November 11, 1915 in Windsor at age 21. He became a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force 99<sup>th</sup> Battalion which is perpetuated to-day by the Essex and Kent Scottish. On May 31, 1915 he left Halifax, arrived 9 days later in Liverpool. A month later he was transferred to the 35<sup>th</sup> Canadian Battalion and a month later transferred to the Canadian Mounted Rifles serving in France. On July 14, 1917, he was appointed Lance Corporal. Just a few months later – September 7, 1917, he was wounded with a gas shell in France. He was first attended to in an Australian field hospital and subsequently transferred to various hospitals in England for the next 15 months. On December 11, 1918 (one month after the Armistice had been signed), he disembarked for Canada and on February 14, 1915 he was discharged in London, ON.

For me, it was fascinating to read the records of his movements around France and England after his gassing and the records of his pay for service - \$20 a month always sent to his mother. 95% of these records are all in handwriting and the other 5% are type written. No computers 1918-1919. How they managed to keep all this material going and flowing so that we today could look back to events 100 years ago and see how they progressed is really remarkable.

Now let's deal with these 100 year old medals. There are 2 medals here that all Canadian ranks serving between August 5, 1914 and November 11, 1918 received. All ranks of the Allied forces received the Victory Medal. All ranks of the British military (and that included Canadians and others of the British Empire) received the British War medal.

A few weeks ago, I decided to do something with these that would perpetuate the recognition of Uncle Frank's service. I have made up this shadow box in which both medals are mounted, made an engraved inspection plate reading "Lest we forget, Frank Dalton Brocklebank, November 7, 1894 to August 26, 1939". In my research, I was directed to EBay where these medals can be purchased. I found a source asking for \$38.00 for both. To me and my family, they are priceless.

This World War I investigation has made me really rethink Remembrance Day. Over the years, I have attended at the cenotaph and also watched the TV service from Ottawa. At Kennedy Collegiate, the boy students were cadets and in grade 9, I joined the bugle band. For the last 3 years at Kennedy, I was sergeant bugler and played the Last Post & Reveille at remembrance services. While we have always paid respects to those who perished on a battlefield, I feel that I have not taken into my remembrances those who served but came back with scars and health issues that did not give them the life they enjoyed before they signed up. Uncle Frank was one of those. I am particularly pleased to hear that this year's Silver Cross mother's son was one who died due to injuries resulting from his service just like Uncle Frank.

We in Rotary are proud of being able to have as our motto Service Above Self. For the men and women who have signed up to serve us and protect us while they held a weapon or were facing a weapon have shown that they really mean service above self. We are indebted to them for their service and we take this day to give thanks for them in Remembrance.

Lest We Forget!