

KLAEHN, Percy Carl



Percy Carl Klaehn, O.B.E., was born in Valleyfield, Quebec in 1896, and moved west with his family as a child.

He served with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during the First World War, and was wounded at Vimy Ridge in 1917. Enlisting as a Private in 1916, he worked his way through the ranks, obtaining the rank of Lieutenant by the end of the war. He returned home in 1919.

Between wars he taught in elementary schools and high schools in Saskatoon, North Battleford and Weyburn.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, he immediately re-enlisted, and went overseas as a Captain in the Saskatoon Light Infantry.

He was appointed Commander of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa, and was with the Canadian forces that landed on the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944. In the fall of 1944, he commanded the 8th Brigade along the Scheldt River in Belgium, when the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions and the 4th Canadian Armoured Division attacked and defeated entrenched German forces holding the approaches to the Port of Antwerp.

He was promoted to Colonel and sent to England to command the Canadian School of Infantry, before returning to Saskatoon in the fall of 1945, where he was appointed Regional Administrator for the Department of Veterans Affairs. In 1946, he was promoted to Brigadier and appointed to the command of the 17th Infantry Brigade, and later the 21st Militia out of Saskatoon.

In 1958, he retired from the army; however, he was appointed Honourary Lieutenant Colonel of the North Saskatchewan Regiment in 1959.

In 1958, he was elected to City Council, and in November, 1963, he was elected Mayor, resigning his post as Regional Administrator for the Department of Veterans Affairs (as he had promised during the campaign) before accepting the post.

Percy Klaehn died in Saskatoon on May 8, 1984, at the age of 88. He was survived by his wife Helen, who passed away in 1997. His gravesite is located at Block 60A, Lot 50.



Information and photograph of P.C. Klaehn, courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives