



John Sanders

*Story of a Royal Canadian
Infantry Veteran*

of

World War II





Lest We Forget

John Sanders

John was 20 years old when he enlisted at District Depot 2, in the Horse Palace at the Exhibition Grounds in Toronto, Ontario. He was a newlywed having married Marion just one month before. John was born in Oshawa, in a house where El Stavros Restaurant now stands.

He joined the Royal Canadian Infantry, Canadian Postal Corp. He went to Newmarket to do his Basic Training and then on to Ottawa for three months of extra training. His final assignment was in the Main Postal Depot in the Federal Building in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He was a Private on signing up and was discharged in 1945 as a Sergeant.

John's job was to sort the mail according to the different Regimental Headquarters both in Canada and overseas. He then supervised loading it onto the ships. The mail had to meet certain regulations. John was always amazed at the number of times things, such as whiskey in glass bottles, had to be held back from shipping. Unfortunately, the glass bottles had a tendency to break so could not be shipped. He remembers the mess made by one package which had whiskey and bread in it and, of course, the bottle broke leaking all over the rest of the mail.

John was also asked to help unload the trains coming in with food and supplies. These supplies had to get to the docks so the stevedores could load them onto the ships. Many of the big troop and supply ships came into port while he was stationed in Halifax. He saw the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mary and the Ile de France.

The story John shared was the time there was an explosion at the Naval Armament Base in Bedford near Halifax. It happened at night and because of all the destruction, the soldiers could not get back to their barracks. John had to spend the night in a '36 Dodge.



John feels every job, no matter how small, was important during war time. His job was to ensure the soldiers received their letters from home. He is sure the service men appreciated what he did.

John, we are sure if those service men were here today, they would thank you for keeping them in touch with their families. We thank you for the job you did, as communication, during this time, was so important, both to the soldiers away from home and those at home.