

THE CANADIAN VETERANS



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By Tom Dykes © 2008

On September 1st, 1939
European peace is broken again.
Old grievances and hatreds arose
Just two decades after so much pain.
Britain declared war, on the third,
asked support from Commonwealth, all.
Canada debated, and on the 10th day,
declared, once again, the answer the call.

The Forties came in,
we were all in a trance.
The Battle of Britain
after the fall of France.
And then came Pearl Harbor
on that 7th day.
The Axis would now feel
the wrath of the U.S. of A.

In the Battle of Britain,
there were those who just knew
that the Island's future
was in the hands of a few.
Churchill's words to the nation
gave us strength and the power.
Generations will remember,
it was our "Finest Hour."

Across the Atlantic,
from Halifax to Liverpool,
RCN protected convoys
In a battle where U-Boats rule.
The longest battle of the war
is won, but with many regrets,
by brave sailors in merchantmen,
destroyers and corvettes.

Canadians of Bomber Command,
over German skies they flew.
The task was full of dangers
for pilots and their crew.
In a raid on Dieppe, Canadians lost
the surprise, and many brave men.
A lesson was learned, and soon
Allies were preparing to go in again.

Canadians fought battles in Italy,
from Sicily landings in '43.
The Liri Valley, gothic Line, and
Ortona on the Adriatic sea.
Acquitted with valour,
Harry Crerar's Canadian Corp.
Then transferred to northern Europe
In the latter part of '44.

They stormed ashore at Juno Beach
on that memorable June 6, D-Day.
The allied drive to free Europe
was now really well underway.
Holland's gratitude to Canadians
Was lasting and deeply heartfelt.
Liberated from the Nazi rule
In fierce battles like the Scheldt.

Stalingrad, Alamein, Normandy,
brought closure closer in the west.
Allied armies closed in on the Reich,
But still met a terrible test.
Then on that 8th day of May, '45,
Canadians celebrated across the nation.
The surrender was signed in Berlin.
V.E. Day it was by proclamation.

Still, the conflict was not over,
Allied nations could not rest.
In the Islands of the Pacific
US Marines would face the test.
The world finally found peace
on one sad August day,
through awesome atomic power
delivered by Enola Gay.

At Nuremburg, full accounting
of Germany's Nazi evolution,
which introduced mankind to
its Master Race and Final Solution.
But, with memories short,
and a world to rebuild,
we paid only token homage
to the millions who were killed.

World War II now was over,
but the future, uncertain,
because 'cross this world
would fall an Iron Curtain.
Yesterday's enemy now was a friend,
Soviet power wanted much more.
Eye to eye with America,
the world is faced with Cold war.

Canada lost more than 40,000 dead
in that terrible world wide tumult.
But emerging with honour and pride,
a new global role would result.
Six decades have past since
their unselfish sacrifice.
Thank you, Canada's veterans,
I hope we were worth the price.

