

Veteran of the Week 5 (August 29-September 4th, 2021)
Lieutenant Colonel Percy John Philpott MC, DSC, OBE
46th Battalion (South Saskatchewan) AKA the Suicide Battalion
Canadian Expeditionary Force & Canadian Army
First World War & Second World War (WW1 & WW2)



Lieutenant Colonel Percy John Philpott of Rouleau, Saskatchewan, was born on the 15th of December 1896 in Bromyard, Herefordshire, England. Philpott was a clerk by trade. He enlisted in the 46th (South Saskatchewan) Overseas Battalion on the 15th of January 1915 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan as an enlisted member (Private No. 426372) but quickly rose up the ranks, which eventually led to gaining a commission. On the 21st of October 1915 he was appointed to acting Sergeant and was confirmed to the rank of Sergeant on the 1st of November that year.

He sailed to England from Halifax, Nova Scotia on the 21st of October 1915 (the same day he was appointed SGT) and arrived in Devonport, England on the 2nd of November 1915. From England, with his unit he proceeded to France on the 10th of August 1916. They landed at the French port of Havre on the 11th of August. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal on the 10th of January 1917 for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. Philpott and a small party of others rescued 3 wounded men who were under heavy fire and on another occasion, he assumed command of and handled his platoon with great courage and determination.

On the 9th of April 1917 he received a promotion to temporary Lieutenant in the 46th Battalion. Lt. Philpott was then wounded in action (the first time of several -3x to be exact) on the 3rd of May 1917 – a gunshot wound to his left wrist. He returned to duty from this wound on the 12th of May that year. Lt. Philpott would again be wounded this time much more severely as he would have to be invalided back to England for treatment. This wound- a gunshot wound to his right thigh occurred on the 20th of October 1917 and he was invalided to England on the 3rd of

November. He would return to his unit the 46th Battalion on the 21st of June 1918. Three months later he would be wounded again this time with a gunshot wound to his left arm on the 28th of September 1918. He would again be invalided back to England for treatment of this wound but returned to duty with the 46th in France on 26th of February 1919.

Just prior to his return, on the 1st of February 1919 Lt. Philpott was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty for his actions at Dury, Ecourt-St. Quentin, and Canal Du Nord (2nd -4th September 1918). In the citation for his award in the London Gazette it mentions Lt. Philpott as leading his platoon brilliantly during the assault, capturing over 100 prisoners and inflicting severe casualties on the enemy. Then after having accomplished the objective, he rescued a wounded fellow officer who was under heavy fire and carried him to safety. On the 3rd of September he conducted a daring and difficult recon of the enemy positions at Canal du Nord which resulted in gaining invaluable information.

After returning to his unit Lt. Philpott proceeded back to England in April of 1919 and from there back to Canada. He was discharged via General Demobilization on the 10th of June 1919. While he was discharged it would not be end of Philpott's military career as he enlisted again during the Second World War on the 18th of March 1940 and would serve in Canada, the United Kingdom, the Central Mediterranean and continental Europe during the war. After the Second World War he returned to reserve status.

Lt.-Col Philpott's decorations are:

Officer of the Order of the British Empire, The Military Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, The British War Medal, Victory Medal, 39-45 Star, Italy Star, France and Germany Star, The Defense Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, The War Medal 39-45, King George V Silver Jubilee, King George VI Coronation, and the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation.

Legion Medals: 1936 Vimy Pilgrimage, Past Branch President- Saskatoon Branch, and Past Provincial President – Saskatchewan Command.

This week we honour the incredible service of Lt.-Col Percy John Philpott of Rouleau, Saskatchewan who is the great uncle of comrade Jim Spencer, a member of our branch – branch 56. Thank you for your service, Lt.-Col Percy John Philpott.

His decorations are on display at the Saskatchewan Military Museum: [Saskatchewan Military Museum | Features](#) and he has a website dedicated to his service which can be viewed at: www.smms.ca/Philpott

