

Private Quincey Randolph Sutherland
Regimental number: A2402, 402402
34th and 3rd Battalion, Canadian Infantry

born: 17 October 1896 - died: 5 March 1918

Quincey Randolph Sutherland was just 18 years old when he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 23 January 1915 in Woodstock, Ontario.¹

Quincey had grown up on his father's farm in nearby West Zorra Township, Oxford County, where he was surrounded by Sutherland relatives. West Zorra lies 40 kilometres northeast of London, Ontario. Nearby was the town of Embro, which became a centre for the community. Quincey's family were among the pioneers who homesteaded in the area early in the 1830s. They were part of a large group of settlers from Sutherland in the Scottish highlands. Needless to say, Sutherland was a common name in the neighbourhood.

When Quincey was born his family had already lived in Oxford County for at least three generations.² Quincey's brother Clifford also farmed the family's land in Zorra, thus continuing the tradition of farming there into the fourth generation.

Quincey had light and sandy hair, a fair complexion and blue eyes. He was 5 feet 11 inches tall and his Attestation form lists his religion as Wesleyan, his occupation as farmer and his age as 18 years and 3 months.³

He parents were John Matheson (b. 1863) and Annie Almeda (née Elliott) Sutherland (b. 1866).⁴ The family farm was located at Lot 2, Concession 1 of West Zorra Township.⁵ Quincey had one brother and two sisters:

- Irene Catherine Sutherland McDiarmid, (1892–1977);
- Clifford Carl Sutherland (1898–1978);
- Roberta Jean Sutherland, (1907–1979).⁶

As previously noted, West Zorra Township was settled in the 1830s. The first shipload of settlers from Sutherland came to the area in 1829, and by 1832 they had built the Old Log Church, situated east of the village on the 7th Line.⁷

Quincey's grandfather, John Sutherland, would have been in his teens when he arrived in Canada West with his parents and the rest of their family. In 1846 John married a local girl named



Private Quincey Randolph Sutherland
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Catherine Gunn in Brock, Ontario.⁸ Catherine was born in Canada West. Her Gunn family were also pioneers from Scotland who settled Zorra Township around the same time as the Sutherlands.

The 1861 Census of Canada West shows 80-year-old Lachlan Sutherland living with John and his family.⁹ Although this was not stated in the census return, Lachlan could have been John's father. At that time the family attended the Presbyterian Free Church.

In March 1866, John, then aged 48, joined No. 2 Company of the 22nd Battalion, Oxford Rifles. This company had previously been the Embro and West Zorra Highland Rifle company. It was reorganized early in 1866 to respond to the Fenian Raids and this is probably why John decided to join them.

Fifty-five sons of Zorra marched to Beachville, then on to Woodstock, from where they were taken by train to Windsor and stationed at Sandwich. They remained there until late in June. Perhaps it was the inspiring sight of these men which prompted an aged female resident of Zorra to utter: "The Fenians may tak' Toronto, and they may tak' Hamilton, and they may tak' Woodstock, but they'll no tak' Zorra."¹⁰

In 1912, John Sutherland collected a \$100.00 grant for his service under the *Fenian Raid Volunteer Bounty Act*.¹¹

Quincey's grandmother, Catherine, was left with her children to work the farm until his return from his time in the militia.¹²

Quincey's father John and mother Annie (1866–1907),¹³ both grew up on their families' farms. His mother grew up on Lot 7, Concession 1 of West Zorra, just down the road from the Sutherland farm on Concession 2. Although they probably knew one another growing up, John was 29 when he married 25-year-old Annie in the summer of 1891. Annie's family were Methodist, and after their marriage John and Annie attended the Methodist church.¹⁴

Annie's father, Samuel Elliott (1826–1908),¹⁵ was just 17 years old in 1843 when he arrived in Canada from Hartland, Devon. Sometime later he married Mary Ann Walker, a local Ontario girl, and they settled down to life in West Zorra. Samuel established the Elliott Home Cheese Factory that was later renamed the Red Star Cheese Factory. He sold this business to Thomas Brown in 1889 but continued to farm in the area.¹⁶ Today the cheese industry, started by Samuel over one hundred years ago, still thrives in the area.

John and Annie farmed in Zorra and raised their family until Annie died on 25 June 1907, aged 42.¹⁷ She died a little over a month after the birth of her daughter Roberta Jean.¹⁸ When Annie died her three other children were all 15 or younger: Irene was 15, Clifford was 13 and Quincey was just 10 years old. John was left with four children to raise alone.

Twenty World War I veterans from West Zorra bearing the name Sutherland are commemorated on the *Heroes of Zorra* website. Quincey is one of them. Additional information was found on this site relating to Quincey's life and service. Thanks to the website's administrators, permission was received to reproduce the photograph shown in this article, along with a letter written by Quincey to his brother Clifford in 1916 and the death certificate the family received.¹⁹

Quincey enlisted in early 1915 and went overseas with the second draft of the 24th Battalion. He spent his first Christmas in England in East Sandling, Kent.²⁰ On 19 January 1916 Quincey was transferred to France, where he joined the 3rd Canadian Battalion. Once at the Front with his unit "they dug a lot of trenches."²¹

On 23 April 1916, Quincey reported to No. 7 General Hospital at St. Omer, France, with a case of measles. By the end of the month, Quincey was seriously ill with complications. His measles developed into pneumonia. His treatment at that time included being "confined to bed for four weeks."

He was transferred to a number of different hospitals and ended up at Bushey Park in Epsom, Surrey. He was out of commission for the next six months, after which he was given duties with the Canadian Casualty Assembly Centre and at the Canadian Convalescent Depot in Hastings, East Sussex. He was to remain in England for much of the next year until he was fully recovered.²²

In December 1916, Quincey wrote his brother Clifford from Hastings, advising him of his experiences but not mentioning his illness. Clifford saved his letter, which is reproduced here, spelling mistakes and all. As you will note, Quincey was learning to type:²³

1st Canadian Casualty Training Battalion
Hasting, Sussex, England

December 5, 1916

Dear Clifford:-

How are you getting along. Have not heard from you for some time. Whats the matter are you too busy to write or are the girls too many for you. I heard from more than one that you were getting to be a wild fellow.

Never mind who told me news travels fast. I have not saw anything of the tobbaeco yet but suppose it is on the road trying to find me like the last letter I got. Do not forget to send the tobbaeco for you cannot get anything worth smoking in this country for love or money. If I keep on at this rate I will have to ask you for an allowance for my pay dont last me anytime and I am drawing anywhere from ten to fifteen dollars a week and staying in most of the time now. I do not know what I would do if I went out every evening. If I was like you I could find alot to do for theres a lot of nice girls around here.

It handly seems a year since I had Xmas dinner at Sandling. It wont be long befor I sit down to Xmas dinner here. I dont know what it will be like. I'll think of you and the dinner you will have. If you go away and Annie is there give her a good for my sake if for no one elses. At the last one two years ago I hardly thought I would be here now. I thought I would be home long befor this. By the looks of things I wont be home befor a year from now and be lucky if I get home then. We will have to liven things up if I am away much longer to make up for things and the time Ive lost. I will have to get married to have something to hold me down or else I will run away and take everything with me. I want you to keep the shack in working order for I will want somewhere to use some of the language I am in habit of using and it would not do to use it around there.

They are used to a little, but I use a lot.

This is a cold place at the best of times but its rotten after nine oclock at night. Sometimes I stay when I donot want to and sometimes I stay when I have to. I am staying tonight because I want to get this letter off. I wrote it sometime ago but did not have the stamps to send it so as I was looking in my writing pad today I found it so I thought I would send but type it out this time.

I am getting quite handy with one now except for the mistakes I sometimes make. If I owned one myself I would type all my letters out. It is quicker than writing. You might not think so. Seeing that I am not a green horn at the game. YOU will see me at this game making a living at it yet. I do not know when.

Anything is better than going back to FRANCE this winter. I am trying to get the winter in in this country. I do not like to be up to my eyes in mud and muck to say nothing of the cold weather you would have to put up with. It is bad enough digging ditches in that country in daylight but when it comes to doing it at night when its pitch dark and raining and half way to your knees in mud then I draw a line. Do not think of going to that GOD forsaken country if you dont want to break my heart if I happen to have one.

I think I will have to close now. Will write again when I have more time and can get the typer for I am going to write a letter without making a mistake some job at present.

So long for this time. Write when you have the time which you will have in the near future.

Your brother

Q. R. Sutherland

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In early February 1917, Quincey became ill again, this time with acute bronchitis. He spent most of February and March back in hospital. He must have been relieved when he was finally discharged back to the 12th Reserve Battalion in East Sandling on 22 May 1917.²⁴ He remained there until 27 September, when he rejoined the 3rd Battalion in France.²⁵

Quincey was at the Front for the next five months, until 28 February 1918, when he was caught in some crossfire and dangerously wounded.²⁶

The war diaries for the 3rd Battalion at the end of February 1918 show that they were stationed in the left front line of the trenches at Hill 70.²⁷ Entries for 27 and 28 February 1918 state:

February 27

Enemy artillery exceptionally violent about 1000 yards to our left flank at 2.40 A.M. Night otherwise quiet. Our patrols were out during the night, but no very pleasing results could be obtained on account of the brightness of the moon. Posts carrying on generally with repairing and improving their posts. . . Our Artillery successfully shot up enemy "Pineapple" machine which has been causing us considerable trouble, in H.26.1. . . Message received at 11.00 P.M. that "enemy is expected to attack before

daylight". Everyone wondering whether the much-talked-of offensive has come to a head. Enemy very active with light trench mortars on "A" Company front between 9.00 P.M. and 11.00 P.M.

February 28

Patrols active throughout the night, enemy attack not taking place. Shell exploded at "D" Company's advanced Headquarters at 11.00 A.M., 5 O.R. (other ranks) being shell-shocked, 3 O.R. (other ranks) of whom were evacuated. Stokes mortars put over a salvo of 50 rounds from each gun at 8.30 P.M., very little enemy retaliation. Weather - Fine.

Quincey may have been one of the "other ranks" mentioned above.

He was taken to No.1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station suffering from severe shrapnel wounds and compound fractures to his skull and both legs. By 3 March an infection had developed and the doctors were forced to amputate his right leg in an attempt to save his life. Unfortunately, they were not successful; Quincey succumbed to his injuries and died two days later. He was just 22 years old.²⁸



Death Certificate for Private Quincey Randolph Sutherland
Used with permission of *Heroes of Zorra* website

Chaplin R. K. Lambert wrote to inform Quincey's father of the circumstances of his death and official confirmation was sent on 4 July 1918.²⁹ Quincey Randolph Sutherland's sacrifice is commemorated on page 509 of the *First World War Book of Remembrance*³⁰ along with the *Heroes of Zorra* website.³¹

Quincey was buried on 6 March 1918 in Plot 2, Row E, Grave No. 8 of the Barlin Communal Cemetery in Pas-de-Calais, France. His father John received his plaque and scroll and his brother Clifford, his medals and decorations in 1921.³²

Quincey was survived by his father John Matheson Sutherland (1861–1943), his brother Clifford C. (1898–1978) and sisters Irene (1892–1977) and Roberta Jean (1907–1979).

Quincey's father John died in 1943 after falling in his bedroom and breaking his hip. He was 81.³³

Clifford continued to farm in the area and married Alice May Pounds in 1921.³⁴ They had 1 son and 1 daughter, 8 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Clifford died in 1978. His wife Alice outlived him, dying in Ingersoll in 2008 in her 99th year.³⁵ Clifford always kept and treasured his correspondence from his brother Quincey.

Irene married a widower, Frederic Edward McDiarmid, in 1922.³⁶ She and Frederic also continued to live nearby. She died in 1977 in Ingersoll, Ontario, aged 84.³⁷

Roberta graduated with a degree in Library Science from Western University in 1930.³⁸

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¹ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental number: A2502, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9437-47, Item number: 259551, Digitized service file - PDF format: B9437-S047

² *Pioneer Life in Zorra*, published 1899, By MacKay, William Alexander (1842–1906). "Local History, Oxford County Places," *Oxford County Library*, (<http://www.ocl.net/Genealogy/Oxford-County-Historical-Links>: accessed 22 April 2017), ebook in the public domain

³ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental Number: A2502

⁴ "Ontario, Canada Births, 1869–1912, Archives of Ontario," *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 22 April 2017) entry for Quincy Sutherland, 1895, birth certificate number: 035122, West James, Oxford, Ontario, Canada

⁵ *Heroes of Zorra: Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WW I

⁶ "Sutherland Family Tree," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com>: accessed 30 July 2018) entry for James Thomas Hanson. This information is unsourced.

⁷ "History of Embro," *Heroes of Zorra: Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/about-the-project/2013-08-09-15-12-46/history-of-embro>: accessed 30 August 2016)

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- ⁸ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928, 1933–1934," Archives of Ontario, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 August 2016) entry for John Sutherland and Catherine, 18 September 1846, Series MS248: Reel: 1
- ⁹ "1961 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 August 2016) entry for John Sutherland, West Zorra, Ontario, Library & Archives Canada, Roll: C-1061-1062
- ¹⁰ "History of Embro," *Heroes of Zorra: Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/about-the-project/2013-08-09-15-12-46/history-of-embro>: accessed 30 August 2016)
- ¹¹ "Canada, Fenian Raids Bounty Applications, 1866–1871," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 13 October 2017) entry for John Sutherland, Sandwich, Ontario, No. 2 Company Oxford Rifles
- ¹² "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1869–1927, Archives of Ontario," *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 13 October 2017) entry for John M. Sutherland and Annie Elliott, 24 June 1891, certificate number: 008935
- ¹³ Ibid. and "Ontario, Canada Deaths, 1869–1938, 1943, and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," Archives of Ontario, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 229 August 2016) entry for Annie Sutherland, Oxford, Ontario, 1907, Death certificate number: 023306
- ¹⁴ "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 August 2016) entry for Quincy R. Sutherland, West Zorra, Oxford, Ontario, Page 7, Family No. 65, Library & Archives Canada, Microfilm Reel: T-428 to T-6556; and
- "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 August 2016) entry for Leving Sutherland, Zorra West, Oxford North, Ontario, Page 4, Family No. 36, Library and Archives Canada, RG31-C 1, Microfilm reels T-20326 to T-20450
- ¹⁵ "Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 13 October 2017) entry for Samuel Elliott, 11 January 1908, Woodstock, Ontario
- ¹⁶ "Annual Report, Ontario, Department of Agriculture and Food for the Province of Ontario, 1891," *Google Books*, (https://books.google.ca/books?id=SIANAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA74&lpg=PA74&dq=elliott+red+star+cheese+factory&source=bl&ots=b4tmWjFv_y&sig=csZAarraKrGt-3otp7jVMqIPdDs&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi1mJyuhriTAhVhw4MKHQqAAAtwQ6AEIUdAJ#v=onepage&q=elliott%20red%20star%20cheese%20factory&f=false: accessed 22 April 2017), C.C. James, Secretary, Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries, Province of Ontario: W. H. Sutherland, Page 74
- ¹⁷ "Ontario, Canada Deaths, 1869–1938, 1943, and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," Archives of Ontario, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 229 August 2016) entry for Annie Sutherland, Oxford, Ontario, 1907, Death certificate number: 023306
- ¹⁸ "Ontario, Canada Births, 1869–1911," Archives of Ontario, *FamilySearch* (familysearch.org: accessed 29 August 2016) entry for Roberta Jean Sutherland, 1907, birth certificate number: 035122, West Zorra, Oxford, Ontario, Canada
- ¹⁹ *Heroes of Zorra; Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WWI
- ²⁰ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018), entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental Number: A2502
- ²¹ *Heroes of Zorra: Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WWI
- ²² "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental number: A2502

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- ²³ *Heroes of Zorra; Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WWI
- ²⁴ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental number: A2502
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ "WWI War Diaries, 3rd Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force," *The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada Regimental Museum and Archives* (<https://qormuseum.org/history/timeline-1900-1924/the-first-world-war/perpetuated-battalions/3rd-toronto-battalion-canadian-expeditionary-force/3rd-battalion-war-diaries-1918/>: accessed 13 September 2018) entries for February 27 and 28, 1918
- ²⁸ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, Regimental Number: A2502
- ²⁹ "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 25 August 2016) entry for Private Q.R. Sutherland, Chaplain's diary, Record No: 375
- ³⁰ "Canadian Virtual War Memorial," *Veterans Affairs Canada* (<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/470570>: accessed 25 August 2018), entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland
- ³¹ *Heroes of Zorra; Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WWI
- ³² "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station Record," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa Website* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 25 August 2016) entry for Private Q.R. Sutherland, Chaplain's Diary, Record No: 375
- ³³ *Heroes of Zorra; Honoring Our Military* (<http://www.heroesofzorra.ca/index.php/veterans/embro/item/sutherland-quincey-randolph>: accessed 30 August 2016), death certificate entry for Quincey Randolph Sutherland, WWI
- ³⁴ "Transcription of Obituary for Sutherland, Alice May (née POUNDS) published 2008-07-02" *London Free Press*, (https://www.ogs.on.ca/ogspi_pages/2008/08bro004.htm: accessed 15 September 2018) entry listed under BROWN at
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928, 1933–1934, Archives of Ontario," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 August 2016) entry for Irene Catharine Sutherland and Frederic Edgar McDiarmid, 2 December 1922, Oxford, Ontario, Certificate number: 016831
- ³⁷ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600–Current" *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com>: accessed 13 September 2018) entry for Frederic Edgar McDiarmid
- ³⁸ "Canada, Selected School Yearbooks, 1901–2010," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 August 2016) entry for Roberta Jean Sutherland, University of Western Ontario, 1930