

## Lt. Col. HERBERT CLARENCE BURLEIGH, MD

Inducted 2006

Soldier, humanitarian, doctor, writer, friend, and devoted genealogist. These were words used to describe the late Dr. H.C. Burleigh. Herbert Clarence Burleigh was born at Hartington near Verona, Ontario in 1893, the son of John Wesley Burleigh (1856-1940) and Gertrude Mahala Percy (1862-1951). He attended elementary and secondary school in Sydenham, then attended Queens University in Kingston, Ontario where he graduated in 1926 with his Medical Degree. In September of 1927, he married Dorothy I. Howard. After graduation Dr. Burleigh spent a year at Albany Memorial Hospital, then moved to Newton Falls in northern New York State where he worked as medical officer in a large paper company. He set up a private practice in Theresa, NY where he remained for several years. In 1935 the family moved back to Canada, so his children could be raised in Canada, under the Monarchy. He chose the village of Bath as the site for his medical practice and he worked as a doctor there for over 40 years. His activities in town were not confined solely to the medical profession; he found time to participate in the Board of Trade for the village, and in 1937 became the first president of the Bath Historical Society. In later years he was involved with the Bath Planning Board. He served as a medical officer in both World Wars, retiring from the army with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and later worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs from 1946 to 1949.



Dr. Burleigh's pride in his loyalist roots in the Quinte area ran deep. His direct line was to the Loyalist family of John Burleigh (1768-1851) and Lydia Richmond (1775-1854). In addition, through maternal lines, he was a descendant of Loyalists George Galloway, John Percy, Daniel Walker and Weeden Walker, all of Ernestown, and Matthew VanOrder and William Howe of Kingston.

He became a member of the Toronto Branch UELAC, which was the only branch available for many years. He travelled frequently from Bath to Toronto for their meetings. In 1956 he assisted Eugene Claude Young and some other members of the Toronto Branch in establishing the Bay of Quinte Branch. He was appointed the charter genealogist for the newly established branch and held that position for nearly 20 years, the longest serving genealogist in the association. Within the first calendar year, due to a great extent to his research as genealogist, the branch membership grew to over 160 active members. For his contributions to the Bay of Quinte branch over many years he was honoured at the first branch banquet which was held in Bath in 1973 and was granted life membership in the association. In 1976 he was given the Most Honourable Order of Meritorious Heritage by Heritage Branch UEL in Montreal. Over the years he was a major contributor of short articles for the Dominion Loyalist Gazette which was edited by another Bay of Quinte branch founder, John Chard. Dr. Burleigh expanded his research work to include publishing several short pamphlets and books including *Loyalist Graves in the Bay of Quinte*, *Forgotten Leaves of Local History*, *The Romance of Fort Frontenac*, *Samuel Sherwood's Account Book*, and *Tales of Amherst Island*. In 1979 he presented and unveiled a monument to mark the site and importance of historic Finkle's Tavern in the village of Bath. His research which took place for many years amassed to over 800 files on families of UEL origin. This massive collection of over 40 banker boxes is now housed in the Archives of Queen's University, and should be a welcome resource to anyone doing UEL research for the Bay of Quinte. It is amazing to think that all of these records were done by hand during the 1930s, 40s and 50s without our modern aids of microfilm, internet and computers that we now take for granted.

Dr. Burleigh died in Bath on September 13, 1980. A long time member of our branch, Olive Hogan of Bath, wrote a poem in memory of the late Dr. H.C. Burleigh, later published in the Loyalist Gazette.

*THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS:  
The United Empire Loyalist History  
Was full recognized in Seventeen-Hundred and Eighty-Three  
Before and after this historic date  
They experienced the result of dreadful hate.  
When through Southern Colonies rebellion tore  
They made their way to the Northern Shore.  
Those loyal to Britain bravely fought.  
Great loss was suffered as freedom they sought.  
The confiscation lists steadily grew  
As they left behind to seek the new.  
To Shelburne, Quebec, Montreal, and Sorel  
Many reached a haven, although many fell.  
Families divided came to be  
As they struggled on foot to a new country.  
In Spring of 1783 Canada was truly blessed  
When a bateaux convoy headed to the west.  
Up the St. Lawrence River they made their way  
Along the shores of inlet and bay.  
They settled on land that must be cleared.  
Cabins to build; food to gather before winter appeared.  
Many trials in this virgin land they faced  
As by the British Government on lots they were placed.  
This rugged and brave people anew began  
To carve a life in a Northern Land.  
There are stories today yet to be told  
Of the suffering caused by hunger and cold.  
There are many of us who can proudly say  
We owe our heritage to such bravery.  
The roots go deep from this Family Tree  
And its branches reach from sea to sea.*

Herbert Clarence Burleigh was described at his funeral as "Very much a character, and a man of his own". He even wrote his own epitaph in one of his books stating "The satisfaction of a job well done is of more value than all the tea in China". It is indeed fitting that Dr. H. C. Burleigh was inducted into the Hall of Honour during the 50th anniversary of the Bay of Quinte Branch UEL that he was so fundamental in establishing.