

The Canadian Military

The average age of the military person is 19 years. They are a short haired, tight-muscled kid who, under normal circumstances is considered by society as a kid. Not yet dry behind the ears, not old enough to buy a beer, but old enough to die for our country. They never really cared much for work and they would rather wax their own car than wash their parents, but they have never collected unemployment either.



They are a recent High School graduate; they were probably an average student, pursued some form of sport activities, drives a ten year old jalopy, and has a steady girlfriend/boyfriend that either broke up with him/her when they left, or swears to be waiting when they returns from half a world away. They listen to rock and roll or hip-hop or rap or jazz or swing and a 155mm howitzer.

They are 10 or 15 pounds lighter now than when they were at home because they are working or fighting from before dawn to well after dusk. They have trouble spelling, thus letter writing is a pain for them, but they can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less time in the dark.

They can recite to you the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively if they must. They dig foxholes, latrines and can apply first aid like a professional. They can march until they are told to stop, or stop until they are told to march. They obey orders instantly and without hesitation, but they are not without spirit or individual dignity. They are self-sufficient.



Jon Mills - Pool / AP

They have two sets of fatigues: they wash one and wear the other. They keep their canteens full and their feet dry. They sometimes forget to brush their teeth, but never to clean their rifle. They can cook their own meals, mend their own clothes, and fix their own hurts. If you're thirsty, they share their water with you; if you are hungry, their food. They even split their ammunition with you in the midst of battle when you run low.



Joe Faedle / Getty Images

They have learned to use their hands like weapons and weapons like they were their hands. They can save your life - or take it, because that is their job. They will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half the pay, and still find ironic humour in it all. They have seen more suffering and death than they should have in their short lifetime.

They have wept in public and in private, for friends who have fallen in combat and are unashamed. They feel every note of the National Anthem vibrate through their body while at rigid attention, while tempering the burning desire to 'square-away ' those around them who haven't bothered to stand, remove their hat, or even stop talking. In an odd twist, day in and day out, far from home, they defend their right to be disrespectful. Just as their family members did before, they are paying the price for our freedom. They are the **CANADIAN MILITARY** that has kept this country free for over 100 years. They have asked nothing in return, except our friendship and understanding.



Remember them, always, for they have earned our respect and admiration with their blood.