



**Ronald S. Middleton, O.L.S., P.Eng. M.C.I.P.  
August 28<sup>th</sup> 1920 – March 11<sup>th</sup> 2005**

**Written with love by his wife and children**

Ron was born in Edgware, London, England to Albert John Middleton and Sarah Ann Middleton (nee Bird). In 1931 he was enrolled in Orange Hill Grammar School, Abbots Road, Edgware.

At a relatively young age, he was accepted into medical school at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, founded in 1123. Three years into his medical training he felt he could no longer ignore the growing threat of war posed against England and joined the Royal Air Force. His unit of recruits was posted to Alabama for pre-flight training and then, to the Riddle Aeronautical Institute, Carlstrom Field in Arcadia, Florida for flight training. Following the successful completion of his flight training, on secondment with the United States Air Force, Ron was kept on as instructor in the advanced flying school. Ron was sent to Brantford, Ontario in late 1942 to recuperate after being diagnosed with Tuberculosis. At the Brantford Sanatorium, Ron met Mary Thornton, a stenographer, and more life changing events were to occur. Ron was sent back to England in 1944 where he was invalided out of his military service. Ron then faced a choice, to stay in England and return to medical school or to return to Canada..... and Mary. He chose Mary, and with her, Brantford. They were married in 1945. His initial job was with the Shirley King surveying firm. His credentials were earned, in turn, by studying every night throughout the year except Christmas Eve, from 6:00 p.m. until 12:00 a.m. Each spring he would go to Toronto to write his exams. He joined the staff of City Hall in 1954 as a surveyor. In 1960 he was named works commissioner and, in 1963, he took over as city engineer – a post he held until his retirement in 1985. An article in the local Brantford Expositor of December 27<sup>th</sup> 1980 wrote, "he is the object of speculation as supporters and detractors consider the scope of his influence. His image is that of the Wellington Square mandarin who, through subtle tuggings on the reigns of power, manages to direct events along a course of his choosing."

In 1991, Brantford City councillors named a street in a new industrial subdivision Middleton Street in honour of Ron. Ron was proud of his efforts, along with two other Brantford citizens, to have Dr. James Hillier, co-inventor of the electron microscope, named to the Order of Canada in July of 1997. At the time, only citizens of Canada were eligible for the Order of Canada. Dr. Hillier, although born and educated in Canada, had left Canada in 1940 to head up the research department at RCA in Princeton, New Jersey and became an American citizen. Ex-patriots were eligible to become honorary officers but that provision was not acted upon until Dr. Hillier was appointed. In that same year, John Kenneth Galbraith was also honoured. Ron was pleased to attend the ceremony later that year in the presence of Governor General Romeo LeBlanc.

Ron kept busy before his retirement and after with hobbies such as gardening. For years, he had worried about landfills becoming overwhelmed with paper and worked in a lab in his basement on the biological decomposition of cellulose. He never achieved the breakthrough that he hoped for, but his accomplishment and triumph was in the trying. He meticulously constructed detailed models of each of the two homes he lived in and then dreamed up and made many possible additions. When the family made a final choice with him, of course, as tiebreaker, he would almost single-handedly complete all phases of construction.

Ron enjoyed many memorable trips back to England over the years with all of his family, starting in 1974 and ending with a final trip in 2000.

Since coming to Canada, Ron had a lifetime of devotion to Farringdon Independent Church; the church where Mary was born in 1923. Ron's retirement from the City of Brantford in 1985 led him straight to Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Farringdon. His leadership included land purchases for the cemetery, surveying new gravesites, development of a columbaria site, rebuilding of roadbeds and drainage, and computerization of records. His conservative financial management will ensure the cemetery will remain viable in perpetuity. Ron only resigned his position in January of 2005 after nineteen years of devoted service.

In late January, Ron submitted to various medical tests, which revealed the advanced stages of colon, bladder and liver cancer. As a family, we were privileged to gather around him and make his last weeks as comfortable and dignified as possible and thank God to have known him as husband, father and grandfather.

Ronald Stanhope Middleton is the beloved husband of Mary Middleton (nee Thornton), loving father of Chris (Roland, predeceased) Carrier, John (Marcia) Middleton, Valerie (Larry) Tansley and much loved grandfather of Adam and Ryan Carrier, Rayna Middleton and Alex and Hilary Tansley.

"Grieve not that he is no more, but rejoice that he was."