



Lalonde, Lionel Wilfred

C 58738

Lionel was born on October 14, 1921 in Ottawa. His parents, Adele and Archibald, married in Ottawa in 1908. Father Archibald died on June 4, 1940, mother Adele on January 16, 1944. Lionel has 4 brothers and 3 sisters. Their names and ages in January 1945: brothers Archie (30), Laurier (27), Romeo (24), Eugene (20) and sisters: Celice (37), Paula (33), Jean (31) and Blanche (29) Caldwell. Laurier and Romeo serve in the Canadian army in Italy, Eugene serves in the Canadian army in Peterborough, Canada. The brothers and sisters are Lionel's heirs. Initially, his mother was the only heir, but she had already died in October 1944. Lionel is the second youngest of the family.

Lionel leaves school when he is 16 years old. He gets Grade 8. His hobbies are: boxing, weightlifting and baseball.

Lionel works in a dental laboratory of his uncle Jarvis. He stops training as a dental technician after 5 months. He also works for 5 months as a kitchen porter in the hospital of Ottawa. He does state when he registers that he is a dental technician.

On August 15, 1940 he reports to the Canadian army in Ottawa. His physical characteristics: he has brown eyes and brown hair. Height: 1.72 m, weight 69 kg. On his left forearm Lionel has

a tattoo "mother". Lionel is operated on his appendix in September 1941, which results in a scar.

On October 17, 1940 Lionel is placed with the infantry, Governor General's Foot Guards (GGFG). On January 26, 1942 this becomes a tank regiment, the 21st Canadian Armoured Regiment (21 CAR). Lionel follows basic training in camp Borden. After that he receives training as a gunner and loader, in June 1942.

On 24 September 1942 he arrives in England and continues his training there.

On 22 July 1944 the regiment goes to France, on 4 October 1944 Lionel is promoted to Lance Corporal.

During Operation Suitcase (October-November 1944) 21 CAR is deployed in the liberation of West-Brabant. The regiment fights at Putte, Wouwse Plantage, Heerle, Moerstraten and Steenberg.

23 0 October 1944: Parts of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division (4 CAD, armoured division) advance from Essen to Bergen op Zoom, via Wouwse Plantage. At 11.00 the Superiors and 21st CAR take over the attack. They are dealing with Kampfgruppe Dreyer, the left wing of Kampfgruppe Chill. The Canadians take the most direct route to Wouwse Plantage, the Mariabaan. Too bad for them, that is indeed the most logical choice but also exactly the place where Dreyer expects the attack. In a few minutes the leading carrier of the Superiors and the first 3 tanks of 21 CAR are knocked out by Sturmgeschütz, from an ambush. One tank after another of the rest of the squadron is hit.

An anti-tank grenade hits the rear tensioner of Smith's tank, the squadron leader, and the ball bearings spray in all directions. Arriving at the driveway of a farmyard, the command tanks turn in there and they spread out between the buildings, which offer little cover. With German artillery systematically shooting the buildings to pieces, the farm is not a safe place.

Despite the incoming fire, Smith decides to stay there with the other 2 tanks of his staff while the rest of No. 1 Squadron continues on the road.

At 15:30 all tanks of the squadron are knocked out.

On a farm on the Mariabaan, Major Smith, commander of No. 2 Squadron, follows the progress of the attack, via his radio. He decides to push on to the infantry. The tanks that were supposed to accompany the infantry are all knocked out. When the remaining 3 Shermans leave the yard, they come under fire from Sturmgeschütze. The tanks fire back. A shell pierces the gun turret of a Sherman and L/Corporal Lionel Lalonde and Private Joseph Bordeleau are both killed, KIA, Lionel is then 23 years old.

He is temporarily buried in Essen, at the Velodreef-Scherpheuvelstraat. On April 27, 1945, he was reburied at the Canadian cemetery near Bergen op Zoom on plot 1, row C, grave 11. Lionel Wifred Lalonde was awarded the

1939-1945 Star, the French-German Star, the Defence Medal, the War Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.



Sources:

<https://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2641935/lalonde,-lionel-wilfred/>

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