



Naam: Segriff, William Corbie
B157551

Reg.nr:

William was born on November 28, 1924, in Toronto, Ontario, in the East York borough.

His father is Ernest Albert (62), his mother is Ella (58). They were both born in Toronto and married there on December 10, 2010. Together they had 12 children:

Ernest James (34), George Henry (32), Ellen Lorraine (30), William Alan (28), Majorie Christina (27), Gordon Frederick (25), Jean Stewart (23), William Corbie, Eileen May (18), Albert Clifford (17), David Constable (14), Violet Doreen (13).

Father Ernest is a horticulturist.

William names his sister Ellen Lorraine as his heiress.

William goes to school from the age of 5 to 13 and gets grade 7. After that, his help is needed in his father's market garden.

He worked in his father's market garden for 2 years. He then worked as a concrete pourer for 1/2 year and the last 2 1/2 he worked as a farmhand.

On January 5, 1944, William volunteered for the Canadian Army. He does so in Toronto, at #2 District Depot.

William is 1.72 m tall and weighs 66 kg. He has brown eyes and brown hair.

William is into ice skating and boxing. He is described as a healthy, well-built man, who comes across as mature and decisive. In other plays, too, he is described as a nice person, pleasant to deal with. He can drive a car. On the PULHEMS he scores a 2 on Mental. His abilities are estimated to be low-average.

William was rejected by the Canadian Air Force and then reported to #2 District Depot in Toronto. He would like to serve with a tank regiment, but as the need for infantry was greater, he was posted to No. 60 Canadian Army (Basic) Training Centre in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on 24 January 1944 and on 23 March 1944 at A11 Canadian Infantry Training Centre in

Camp Borden, Ontario. There he first joined the vocational training section and on 19 June 1944 he joined the training for machine guns.

On 5 July 1944 it is noted that William is ready for overseas as a machine gunner. On 18 July 1944, he was assigned to 6 CIRU, a reserve unit of the infantry.

Between 20 and 27 July 1944 he made the boat trip to England, where he reported back to 6 CIRU on 28 July 1944.

On August 12, William arrives in France. On 14 August 1944 he was assigned to the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

October 13, 1944 is known as "Black Friday". Lieutenant Colonel Withaker calls it in his book (see citation) "the day of betrayal of the "civilian in uniform", the young volunteer of the Black Watch who had enthusiastically enlisted for the Canadian army".

The Black Watch had already suffered heavy losses. The 1st Battalion suffered more casualties than any other Canadian infantry battalion in Northwest Europe. Disasters seemed to follow the Regiment almost in every battle.

During the Battle of Verrières Ridge on July 25, 1944, there were 97% casualties. Of the 325 men who left the starting line, only 15 came back into their own lines. The others were killed or wounded and, a company of 90 men, numbered only four survivors.

There were another 40% casualties 10 days later in Operation Totalize. A month before Operation Angus, they lost 60 men in 36 hours from 12-14 September. In October, the Regiment expected to be fully manned and supplied, but this was not to be. The regiment, which had lost many trained men in recent months, was supplemented by inexperienced infantrymen and was still below its original strength.

The attack was ordered by Major General Foulkes, commander of the 2nd Canadian Army Corps, who knew the situation of the Black Watch.

Lieutenant Colonel Ritchie, commander of the Black Watch of Canada, and brigade commander Megill, commander of the 5th Canadian Infantry Brigade, had their doubts about Angus' success, but the order had been given.

The attack turned into a great drama. The intelligence was not good, the Germans in the area were well organized, were on the offensive, well dug in, and belonged to elite troops. The Black Watch was ill-prepared. The attack was during the day, in an area where the foliage of the beets provided the only cover. Support from tanks etc. was not possible because of the swampy ground.

In the morning hours, B and C companies attacked the Germans. The starting point was the Grindweg in Woensdrecht, the goal was the railway embankment on the Kreekrakdam. The attack started at 6:15 a.m. Within a short time, the attack came to a halt due to heavy casualties. The men fell like pins on a bowling alley. A smokescreen could not improve the

situation. A number of men of C Company managed to reach the railway embankment, they were taken prisoner.

25 men returned from C Company, 41 from B Company. Normally, a company consists of 130 men.

The companies lost many executives. At 17:00 the attack was resumed by A Company, supported from the flank by D Company and the remainder of B Company. In an hour's time, A Company lost almost 70 men, 9 men returned unharmed. D Company also lost a few dozen soldiers. The Black Watch no longer had any company commanders. The losses of the Black Watch are the highest losses on 1 day of the battle of the Canadians in the Netherlands. The Black Watch of Canada suffered 145 casualties, 56 men killed, 62 men wounded and 27 men taken prisoner of war.

William belonged to A Company on that day. He was killed in action on 13 October 1944, killed in action, aged 19. Initially, he was reported missing.

On 24 October, the Calgary Highlanders found dozens of missing men of the Black Watch during their march to the Caterspolder.

William was temporarily buried on 27 October 1944 in Ossendrecht in the temporary cemetery at the current Burgemeester Voetenweg, near the war monument of Ossendrecht, plot 2, row 1 grave 9.

A reburial followed on 16 May 1945. William is buried in the Canadian cemetery in Bergen op Zoom, plot 2, row E, grave 10.

William is onderscheiden met de 1939-1945 Star, de French-German Star, de Defence Medal, de War Medal en de Canadian Volunteer Service Medal met clasp.





Bronvermelding:

[Ancestry.com - Canada, World War II Records and Service Files of War Dead, 1939-1947](https://www.ancestry.com/canada/world-war-ii-records-and-service-files-of-war-dead-1939-1947)

[Private William Segriff \(Onbekend-1944\) - Find a Grave-gedenkplek](https://www.findagrave.com/obituary/Private-William-Segriff-(Onbekend-1944)-Find-a-Grave-gedenkplek)

https://web.archive.org/web/20010712105529/http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/laird.niven/public_html/Ossendrecht.htm

https://web.archive.org/web/20010709165059/http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/laird.niven/public_html/oct_44.htm#burial

De Eerste Dam, De gevechten voor de toegang tot Zeeland van Merksem naar Woensdrecht, pagina 351. Auteur Robert Catsburg.

Slag om Woensdrecht: bevrijding van de Zuidwesthoek red: J. van Doorn, J.S. Bos. ISBN 90-802126-2-8

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Zuehlke, M - Terrible Victory ISBN 978-1-77162-030-7