



Gehue, James Alexander

Reg.nr: F2468

James was born on December 19, 1920 in Three Miles Plains, Windsor, Nova Scotia. He later lives in the Shubenacadie Indian Agency, Hants, Nova Scotia. He belongs to the indigenous people of the Mi'kmaq, in Shubenacadie in Nova Scotia, First Nations of Canada.

His father is Frank G. (69, or deceased), his mother is Clara (43).

According to his mother's information, he has 2 brothers: William (22) and Stephen (13) and 2 sisters Annie (17) and Lucien (11). His military passport contains: Steve, Lewis, William and Annie.

In brackets are the ages as on 6 January 1945.

The parents were married in Windsor, Ontario on October 13, 1919.

Fathers no longer live with the family. His place of residence or whereabouts is not known. The parents are French-Canadians. James speaks English. The family is Roman Catholic.

On 18 January 1943 it is noted that James supports the family financially, he is the only son who can work.

James is a school dropout at the age of 16, grade 5. James did not attend the school regularly.

According to the statement, James has worked in the timber industry for 5 years and has been a farmhand for 8 years, on a rental basis. That's a total of 13 years, dropping out of school at 16, then James would be 29 before he enlisted. But he was 21 years old at the time.

On April 7, 1942, James enlisted in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, under the National Resources Mobilization Act of 1940.

On 17 January 1943 he entered active service in Halifax, Nova Scotia. James is 1.67m tall and weighs 71kg. He has brown eyes and black hair. He is familiar with nasal congestion, the airways in his nose are narrow. He has a small scar on his eyelid and left corner of his mouth.

He will first be posted at the 6 NRMA Depot and will enter training camp 60 in Yarmouth on 9 April. On March 10, 1932, James is reported to be a negative person. He is quiet, submissive, has a mature appearance. James has language problems. He says he has an upset stomach, a sharp pain in the abdomen that lasts for 2 to 3 days. In the training camp, he was hospitalized for 12 days because of measles. The progress in the training sessions is sufficient, but he is behind due to the lost time. James doesn't expect to have to go into active duty.

On July 16, 1942, he went to the A2 training camp in Petawawa, Ontario. On 5 November 1942 he was transferred to Halifax where James was assigned to 21 AA regiment (anti-aircraft artillery) where he joined the 1 AA S/L battery, the battery with the searchlights.

On 3 April 1943 he went to Hamilton for advanced training, until June 1943. He was defeated in Halifax on 7 July with 21 AA Regiment for Engine Hand. It may be that he had to operate the generator for the searchlights.

On 17 January 1944 he was transferred to a Transit Camp in Windsor, and on 13 February 1944 he arrived at Yarmouth, training camp 60.

On 8 April 1944 he left there and on 9 April 1944 he arrived at the A4 infantry training centre in Aldershot, Nova Scotia.

On 3 July 1944, James arrived in England, where he was assigned to 4 CIRU, a reserve unit of the infantry.

On 25 July 1944 he went to France, where on 27 July 1944 he was posted to the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (RHLI), part of the 4th Infantry Brigade of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division, which in turn was part of the 1st Canadian Army.

In early October 1944, the army advanced from Antwerp towards Korteven and Zuid-Beveland, to the Woensdrecht / Hoogerheide area. The Canadian army then faces a number of problems:

- War supplies still went to Montgomery's troops.

- How could they get enough troops in the middle of the world in a short period of time?

region? There was a severe shortage of infantry, 2 artillery units were disbanded and deployed as infantry and anti-tank units. Tanks and armoured vehicles had to drive back and forth along the right flank as much as possible to give the impression that a strong Canadian force was ready.

Although Canada had conscription in World War II, no conscripts were sent to Europe against their will. It was not until the end of 1944, when there were too few volunteers to replace the fallen or discharged soldiers, that the Canadian government decided, despite heavy political opposition, to send conscripts to Europe, without them having volunteered.

The RHLI's war diary on 17 October 1944 states that the majority of the men in the battalion had not had much infantry training at this point, but had been transformed from other branches of the service.

On 2 October 1944, the RHLIs were ordered to advance north of the port of Antwerp to a place north of Oorderen. The Germans had thoroughly fortified the marshalling yards there. There were machine gun positions throughout the area, buried under freight cars and in concrete bunkers. The only chance of success for the Canadians was a surprise attack, simulating a frontal attack, while C Company would inconspicuously attack the unsecured western flank.

On 3 October 05.45h. the attack began with an artillery bombardment, with C Company following the firing waltz. One of the guns was short of fire, but the attack continued. At 6:30 a.m. the signal came that the attack had succeeded. C Company counted 4 dead and 21 wounded. The cannon, which was set to the wrong coordinates, had not hit a single Canadian. All had been killed or wounded by small arms, mostly snipers. These snipers were chased away, or silenced by B Company, which then became entangled in a minefield while they were heading back to Oorderen. They were Schützenmijnen (S-mines), which first jumped up 1 meter and then exploded. B Company counted 2 dead and 12 wounded.

James was wounded on 3 October 1944 during skirmishes in the port area of Antwerp. As a result of these fights, 5 soldiers lost their lives, James died of wounds in the field hospital, aged 23.

James' death report states that he was seriously injured in his chest and right leg. Information addressed to the next of kin states that this is due to shrapnel.

James is given a temporary grave in the cemetery in Candoncklaerhoef. Candoncklaer is a parish in Wommelgem, southeast of Antwerp. There was a Canadian field hospital there. A reburial followed on 28 August 1945 at the Canadian cemetery in Bergen op Zoom. James is buried in Plot 8, Row E, Grave 8.

James has been awarded the 1939-1945 Star, the French-German Star, the War Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.



On March 31, 1950, the medals were presented to mother.





Bronvermelding:

<https://nl.findagrave.com/memorial/12724298/james-alexander-gehue>

https://www.ancestry.ca/interactive/9145/44485_83024005549_0247-00432?pid=14255&treeid=&personid=&rc=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=YKh2&_phstart=successSource

<https://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2641735/gehue,-james-alexander/>

De EERSTE DAM, De gevechten voor de toegang tot Zeeland van Merksem naar Woensdrecht 92-27 oktober 1944), auteur Robert Catsburg, pagina 83

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