

William Stein

Private – H-105100

Queen's Own Cameron
Highlanders of Canada



William Stein

Personal Information:

William Stein was born 19th January 1924 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, the third child of the Jewish family Stein. His father Joseph, born 1891 came from Russia and his mother Esther, born 1899, from Rumania. William had two older sisters, Beatrice (1920) and Bella (1922); later came Selma born in 1934.. All the children were born in Winnipeg. Both parents had emigrated to Canada, father Joseph in 1909 and mother Esther in 1913. They married 8th May 1919 and subsequently moved house several times.



Norquay Elementary School 1926

The young William went first to the John Norgay Elementary School and later to the Marchray School, completing 8 years of education. He was 16 when he left school and went out to work, helping to support his family.

He joined the YMCA and later attended the orthodox synagogue at the 'Jewish Old Folks Home' in Winnipeg.

YMCA building Winnipeg, Manitoba



William liked to read the Readers Digest and was especially interested in the biographies of famous people in history. Another hobby was photography and this led him to an apprenticeship, first with Meyers Photo Studio and later again with the Winnipeg Photo Studio. There he was involved with the developing, printing and enlargement of photos.

In addition, William has worked for about 2 months as a purchasing assistant for cattle, at the meat processing plant ("Canada Packers").

Canada Packers stock yards, south-west corner of Keele Street and St.Clair Avenue West.



He was sportive and enjoyed playing football and rugby.

William Stein was not married and it is not known if he had a girlfriend.

Military Movements:

In June 1942 William became a part time soldier with the Royal Canadian Engineers in Winnipeg. According to his record he served two evenings a week as a driver.

He volunteered for the basic military training in May 1943 and this took place in Fort Portage La Prairie; here he was trained for permanent service should he be called up.

His company commander wrote of him, 6 July 1943 that William Stein did his best but that he had difficulty getting accustomed to army life. This officer asked his superiors if it would be possible for William to work in photography, given his three years of experience in that field.



Fort Portage La Prairie

This was turned down because William had little experience in the area of public relations.

From September 1943 William was under the NRMA (National Resources Mobilization Act) and joined 16th Coastal Regiment- 6th Heavy Battery, a unit of the Royal Canadian Artillery stationed in Halifax.

Around 16th February 1944 he was a gunner on active service. He was transferred the same year to No 1 Transit Camp on 22nd April in Windsor, Ontario.

Three months later, 18th July 1944, William embarked for the Atlantic crossing to Europe, joining 2nd CIRU (Canadian Infantry Regiment Unit). He arrived in Great Britain, 27th July and was placed with the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. It is not known where he was stationed in England.



On August 12, 1944, the Queens Own Camerons moved to the battle scene in France, arriving on August 13, 1944.

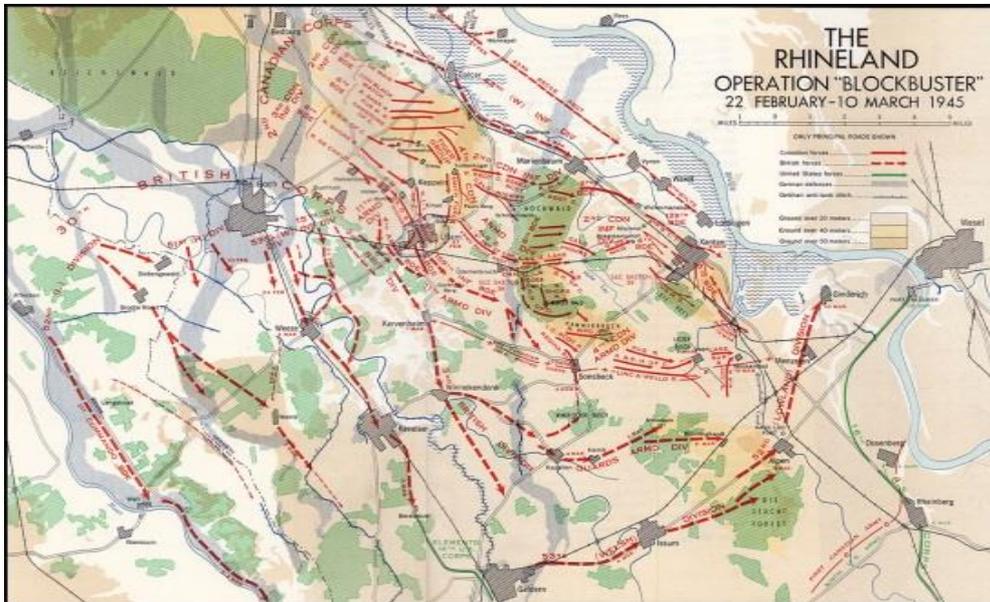
On the mainland of Europe William and his regiment travelled in the direction of the Netherlands taking part in the 1944 battles round the Falais Pocket (August), Dunkirk (September), Schelde October/November), Woensdrecht and Zuid Beverland (October). In February/ March 1945 the regiment had reached the Rhineland and on to Groningen in April.



Church in Woensdrecht

The Final Days:

The battle of the Rhine (Operations Veritable and Blockbuster) ended tragically for William. In February 1945 the Queens Own Cameron Highlanders regiment was involved in Operation Blockbuster.



It was at that time part of 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. Operation Blockbuster was the completion of the bigger Operation Veritable, the clearing of the Rhineland by the 1st Canadian Army, strengthened by XXX(30th) Corps of the British 2nd Army.

It lasted from 22 February to 10 March 1945. Operation Veritable had begun 8 February.

The Camerons were part of the second phase of Operation Blockbuster in the fight for Calcar Ridge, 26 February. All the objectives of the Battalion had been achieved but measures were taken against possible further German attacks. Around midday, the 6th Brigade had completed their task successfully, the first phase of Operation Blockbuster. This was very good for morale.



Churchill tanks in a destroyed street in Kleve - Germany

Lest We Forget:

26th

February is, alas, the day William Stein was killed, during the attack. This happened in a small village near Kalkar. The exact place where he died is not known.

In the report it is stated that William was killed in an attack and that when his body was discovered, nothing of value was found. Possibly he was robbed by the enemy after his death. His army box was also inspected but it only contained a few old letters.



After his death, William was buried in a temporary grave by a hedge; he was reburied 5th March 1946 in the Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek.

His grave: Plot 24, Row B, grave 12

Campaign Medals:



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. 1939 – 1946 Star
2. France & Germany Star 1939 – 1945 War Medal
3. Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp
4. Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp

**PRIVATE
WILLIAM STEIN**

PRIVATE WILLIAM STEIN, H-105100, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, of Winnipeg, was officially reported killed in action in Holland on February 26, 1945. He was buried in the Canadian Military Cemetery at Nijmegen, Holland.

Private Stein enlisted in 1942 and trained with the Winnipeg Light Infantry at Portage La Prairie. When he was sent to Halifax he was transferred to an anti-aircraft unit. Private Stein arrived overseas in August, 1944, and was transferred to the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. While in the service, Private Stein sought to assist the Jewish survivors of the Nazi massacres and was instrumental in establishing contact between some of them and their relatives in the U.S.

Born in Winnipeg on January 19, 1925, he was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Stein of 113 Selkirk Avenue. He attended Norquay and Machray Schools and was a member of the Y.M.H.A. He was associated with the orthodox synagogue of the Jewish Old Folks' Home in Winnipeg. Before his enlistment he was employed in the drug business and later in a photographic studio.

Newspaper clipping William killed in action

M.F.M. 227
1938-9-21 (1934)
H.Q. 1770-24-1031

**CANADIAN NATIONAL
TELEGRAPHS**

OD FILE H.Q. 408-8-31,595

CASUALTY (REPORT DELIVERY) OTTAWA 6 MARCH 1945

TO:-
MRS LESTER STEIN
113 SELKIRK AVE
WINNIPEG, MAN.
48886

REGRET DEEPLY H105100 PRIVATE WILLIAM STEIN HAS BEEN
OFFICIALLY REPORTED KILLED IN ACTION TWENTYSIXTH FEBRUARY 1945
STOP YOU SHOULD RECEIVE FURTHER DETAILS BY MAIL DIRECT FROM THE UNIT
IN THE THEATRE OF WAR STOP TO PREVENT POSSIBLE AID TO OUR ENEMIES
DO NOT DIVULGE DATE OF CASUALTY OR NAME OF UNIT

PREPAID DIRECTOR OF RECORDS

Message his family received after he got killed

Life story by Hennie Koster, Research Team Faces To Graves

Source: Canadian Library and Archives

Internet Sites:

<http://www.cwgc.org/>

<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>

<http://www.cjhn.ca/en/permalink/genealogy504>

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=39>

<http://www.thequeensowncameronhighlandersofcanada.net>

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/UN/Canada/CA/Victory/>

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca>

Wikipedia

