

Aadland, Richard
Rifleman
Regina Rifle Regiment
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
L/106876



Richard (Dick) Aadland Son of Govert Mandius Aadland and Gjertrud Malene Pedersen Aadland, was born in Ferkingstad, Norway on September 5, 1904. Within 10 years, his parents had moved to Saskatchewan and were naturalized in 1914. Richard, then a minor, automatically became a Canadian along with his five brothers, Theodore, Tommy, Clarence, Peter, Leslie and four sisters Hazel, Agnes, Garda, Joslie. They lived in Chambery, Saskatchewan, a region of mainly Norwegian immigrants.



Norwegian Saskatchewan

Regardless, almost 30 years later, Richard's Norwegian heritage followed him when he enlisted in the Second World War. Norway was occupied by Nazi Germany at the time and considered to be an ally of the Axis powers. The German troops had initially hoped to capture the King of Norway, but their advance was delayed, giving the royal family time to escape. Haakon VII established a government in exile in London, while Norwegians across the country resisted the Nazi occupation. In Canada, however, Richard Aadland was listed as an "enemy alien" by the Department of National Defence.

How much or little this affected his time in the army is impossible to say. He was still recruited as a soldier, and he was described by officers as, among other things, friendly, conscientious and reliable.

Training was difficult for Richard. He had enlisted two days before his 39th birthday, and although he was a diligent worker, marching and drills were painful because of his bad back. He could handle a weapon, but he was extremely nervous in doing so. After all, up until then, he had only been a farm labourer in Saskatchewan.

Richard's parents were farmers. So was his brother, Peter. Richard himself hoped to farm his own land after the war. Agriculture and mechanics were where his ambitions lay. But he also loved to read. And his army examiner, Lieutenant Shore, wrote that his hobby was "music." Whether Richard liked to sing, play or simply listen is not recorded.

Richard's talents in the army were fieldcraft and first aid, and he had a background of truck and tractor maintenance. As a result, army recruiters recommended he be put in an infantry support unit's motor section.


Despite this, Richard wound up in the Regina Rifle Regiment. In 1944, he was sent overseas.

Seven months later, on February 12, 1945, Rifleman Aadland B-Coy, was killed because of heavy bomb shelling North-West of Kleve, Germany. His father was the only beneficiary in his will. Richard was never married and had no children. His personal effects were sent to his parents that December. Among them were letters, snapshots, a leather writing case, six souvenir coins and a copy of the New Testament.

Richard was temporarily buried on 13th February 1945 by Captain Padre Ball, in Nütterden, Germany. His place hastily recorded as the "3rd grave from the road on the north side of the cemetery."



Nütterden Cemetery today

No. L.106876 Rank Rifleman Name AADLAND, Richard
 Unit Regina Rifle Regt. Date of death 12th Feb., 1945
 Died at Germany
 Cause Killed in action
 Death occurred on strength of Forces H.Q. 405-A-10,802
 N/K Mrs. Malena Aadland, Relationship Mother
 Address General Delivery, Chambery, Sask.
 Remains buried in Nutterden, MR 84565615 3rd grave from Cemetery
 rd. N. side of civil cem
 Grave location  OVER

In 1946, a letter was sent to his mother informing her that Richard was officially reburied in the Nijmegen Canadian Military Cemetery in the Netherlands. A map was enclosed, along with a promise that the burial ground would receive care and maintenance in perpetuity.

Richard died on 12 Feb 1945, he was 40 years old.

Rifleman Richard Aadland is reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XXV. C. 13.**

On his headstone is the following text:

HE GAVE HIS ALL
 THAT THE WORLD
 MIGHT BE A BETTER
 PLACE TO LIVE IN



Richard Aadland received the following awards:

- 1939 – 1945 Star
- France & Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939 – 1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp

Saskatchewan honoured him with a Geographic Name, Aadland Lake.



Life story: Bernhard Deeterink, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Consulted sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Library and Archives Canada
- Library and archives Canada Facebook
- Saskatchewan Names Search
- Kathy Collins – Shaunavon, Saskatchewan
- Beth Parsons – Melrose SK
- Sheldon Carson-Beechy SK

* If you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact info@facestograves.nl