

**Brown, Albert**  
**Sapper**  
**Royal Canadian Engineers**  
**11<sup>th</sup> (Lambton) Field Company**  
**C-42753**



Albert Brown born on 28 June 1913 in Oxbridge, ON. He was the son of Henry and Elizabeth Brown. His mother had died about 20 years before he enlisted and his father was quite senior and died in August 1944 at age 83 while Albert was overseas. Albert had a sister Charlotte but her whereabouts appeared to be unknown. The family was Protestant (Methodist).

Albert was living in Pontypool, Ontario when he enlisted in Petawawa, Ontario on 15 September 1940 with No 3 District Depot that was based in Kingston, Ontario. Albert was single at the time of his enlistment and had previous service for two years in the Non-Permanent Active Militia and he had joined the Prince of Wales Regiment in July 1940.

Albert had left school age 14 after Grade 8 had been working at J. C. Wood in Peterborough, Ontario as a Sawyer for eight years. During his enlistment interview, he indicated that he would like to work in a machine shop. Albert named his father as his sole beneficiary but, as he was ailing, he changed his Next of Kin in February 1944 to Ms. Mae Highland whom he identified as his fiancée. Upon the death of his father, Albert inherited the family house and property in Uxbridge.

Albert was posted to No 32 Canadian Army Basic Training Center in Peterborough on 10 July 1941 to undergo Basic Training. After completing this training, he was reallocated from the General Service category to Royal Canadian Engineers on 21 December 1942 and given the rank of Sapper. He arrived at A5 Canadian Engineer Training Center in Camp Petawawa in February 1943 to begin his sapper training. Albert was qualified as a Sapper on 18 October 1943 and had also been qualified as a Blacksmith Group "B" on 9 August 1943 during his sapper training.

Albert embarked for the United Kingdom as an individual reinforcement on 23 October 1943 and was taken on strength No 1 Canadian Engineer Reinforcement Unit on 31 October 1943 upon arrival in the UK. He was transferred to 11<sup>th</sup> Field Company on 24 February 1944 when the unit was in its final preparations for its role in the Invasion of the Continent.



Albert embarked for France with his unit on 5 July and, four days later, disembarked on 9 July. After the heavy action in Caen, the Canadians were readying for the break-out. Mines were being lifted, debris cleared, protective minefields were being supervised, roads were repaired and water-points were set up.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Field Company supported the Allied advance in France and then through Belgium, Holland, and eventually into Germany. Among its operations, the company participated in the Battle of Falaise, The Scheldt, The Rhineland, and The Rhine. By the end of February 1945, the unit had arrived in Germany as the Allied forces continued to push back the enemy.

On 16 March, 11<sup>th</sup> Field Company began to check a stretch of ground near Cleve for mines in order to make it safe for occupancy by The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. By the next evening, the mine-clearing parties had found a number of German Riegelmine 43 anti-tank mines that they safely lifted and stored in two dumps.

The next day, at 1300 hrs, Lt O. H. Taylor, Sergeant C. V. Richards and seven Sappers set out to destroy the mine dumps. A half-hour later, something went terribly wrong. There was a terrific explosion and all were killed. No evidence was ever found to indicate why the tragedy had occurred.

There were no survivors in that group of Sappers. They are all buried in graves found in plot V Row D of the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery.

The members of 11<sup>th</sup> Field Company, RCE, who perished in that explosion were :

Sapper Erik Frederik Rask Anderson  
Sapper Howard Clifford Inkpen  
Sapper Urban Mayo  
Sapper Donald Angus McLellan  
Sergeant Charles Valentine Richards  
Sapper Neil Truman Spongale  
Sapper Alphonse Anthony John Steffler  
Lieutenant Owen Howard Taylor.

Sapper Albert Brown was Killed in Action at age 37 on 18 March 1945.

OFFICIAL CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS CASUALTY NOTIFICATION			
NUMBER	G.42753	RANK	Sapper
NAME		BROWN, Albert	
DATE OF BIRTH	DAY 28th	MONTH June	YEAR 1913
MARITAL STATUS		Single	
RELIGION		Methodist	
NAME OF THE PERSON ON WHOM THE BENEFIT IS TO BE PAID	NAME		Miss Mae Hyland,
ADDRESS	ADDRESS		
FRIEND		Pony Pool, Ontario.	
ADDITIONAL PERSON TO BE NOTIFIED		ADDRESS	
PARENTS NAME		ADDRESS	
IF DECEASED (MARKED OVERWHEAT)			
AUTHORITY CAS NO. 40	7374A	H.Q.	405-B-19,298
CASUALTY DETAILS	Killed in action.		DATE 18-3-45
WESTERN EUROPEAN THEATRE OF WAR.			
O/S with R.C.E.			
DATE	29-3-45		
OFFICER I.C. RECORDS			
5 COPY FOR C.R. FILE			

*His fiancée received a telegram that he got Killed in Action*

He was buried in the Canadian Temporary Cemetery at Bedberg, Germany and later moved to his final resting place in the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, near Nijmegen, grave reference **V. D. 10.**

For his service to Canada, Sapper Brown was awarded the:

- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp
- 1939-45 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal and War Medal



*Photo courtesy of Frans van Cappelen*



## FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian  
War Graves Groesbeek

Biography by LCol Ken Holmes (Ret'd) for Faces to Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

TO BE COMPLETED IN DUPLICATE

Read the whole form and instructions on other side before commencing to complete.

**WILL**

(1) I, **ALBERT HIRSH** of the **Village** **Fontypool** in the County of **BRIDGWATER** Province of **ONTARIO** **SAW MILL EMPLOYEE** Registered No. **C 48715** Do hereby make and declare this to be my **LAST WILL**.

(2) I Give, Devise and Bequeath unto:  
**Miss Mae Hyland (fiancee)**  
**Fontypool Ont. Canada**

**All my estate both real and personal.**

(3) I Give, Devise and Bequeath of the rest and residue of my estate, both real and personal, of whatsoever kind and whatsoever situate unto:

(4) I appoint **Mr. Frank Max Hyland Fontypool Ont. Canada** **Executor** of this my Last Will.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand this **28** day of **April** 1944.

Signed and acknowledged by the Testator as and for his last will in the presence of my present of the date here upon in the presence of the persons and in the presence of such other bona fide witnesses (subscribed and taken as witnesses):

**Albert Brown** (Signature of Testator)

(5) Signature **J. B. Macdonald**  
Civil Address **165 Bank St. Ottawa Ont.**  
Civil Occupation **Civil Servant**

Signature **Robert Vincent Knight**  
Civil Address **72 Queen Street Kingston Ont.**  
Civil Occupation **Accountant**

(Witnesses are not to be formalized.)

*On 28 April 1944 Albert changed his will and left all his estate, both real and personal to his fiancee Mae Hyland.*

Near the end of WWII, the Chief Engineer of the First Canadian Army tasked all the Royal Canadian Engineer units to produce a shield or plaque that would represent their unit's activities during the war. This is the crest that 11 Field Company designed and produced.



\* If you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)