

Duguay, Arthur Joseph. Lance Corporal

5-E-1



Born: April 27, 1912 in Pokemouche, New Brunswick

Son of Sylvestre and Marie H. Duguay, born Landry.
A Roman Catholic, French-speaking family.

When Arthur joined the army, he had four brothers and six sisters. Two brothers and two sisters had previously died young.
His medical report stated that he was 1.80 m tall and weighed approximately 77 kg. He had gray eyes and brown hair.

Arthur had left school when he was 16 years old.

He knew how to tackle things because he had already worked for "Canadian Pulp & Paper" for more than 10 years. An additional note reads that he had worked as a lumberjack. Partly in the summer and but also in the winter.

Soldier Qualification Card	
Unit	No. 2 CDR. F.M.R. CONFIDENTIAL
1 Corps	F.M.R. 515 NAB
25 Second Most Important Occupation: Description:	Lumberjack
Duration (from-to)	Winter season 1925-28-29
Employer's Name and Address	International Paper Mill, Toronto, Ont. P. Qui.
Estimate of skill	Good
Weekly Wage	29.00
26 Third Most Important Occupation:	
Duration (from-to)	
Employer's Name and Address	
Estimate of skill	
Weekly Wage	
Trade Union or Professional Society	

So, it was not surprising that, when he registered on November 24, 1941, he had expressed his preference for the "Forestry Corps".

To clarify:

The Canadian Forestry Corps was a corps of the Canadian Army with specific missions, its own insignia and traditions. Its task was to provide the Allied armies with the necessary wood during the First World War in Europe.

The Canadian Forestry Corps was disbanded in 1920. It was founded again in 1940 and disbanded again in 1945.

He had also reported that his job was 'Mechanic Diesel & Gas Engine Operator'. Probably learned that in practice.

To start with, Arthur received basic infantry training in No.45 Sorel-Québec.

He would stay there until mid-March 1942.

Arthur's further training was in Farnham-Quebec, known as Camp A12. Training for general purposes, was mentioned.
While awaiting shipment, Arthur was given a week's leave in April 1942 and was assigned to a reinforcement unit.



Farnham

On May 2, he embarked from Halifax for the United Kingdom, where he arrived on May 12, 1942.

The months to come would be filled with exercises, exercises and exercises.

Because Arthur had only a moderate command of the English language, he was assigned to a French-speaking regiment, in his case Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal. He was taken on strength on August 21, 1942.

Apparently he was noticed positively because as of December 1, 1942 he was appointed Lance-Corporal.

There was hardly anything to be found in his service records from 1943.

He was granted a "good conduct" badge in November 1943. The annotation: "at his own request".



Arthur was demoted in rank, at his own request, to be a "Private" on January 19, 1944.

He was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp for his voluntary and overseas service.

He was again promoted to be a Lance-Corporal on June 10, 1944, a few weeks before the crossing to Normandy.

Arthur arrived in France on July 6, 1944.

There are no specific notes in Arthur's service records about the remaining months of 1944. Undoubtedly he took part in the entire advance of the regiment.

Through northern France, Belgium, the southern part of the Netherlands including the Battle for the Scheldt.

Checking the Battle Honours of the Regiment we will get some idea of the route of advance.

1944: *St. André-sur-Orne; Verrières Ridge; Tilly-la-Campagne; Falaise; Dunkirk; Antwerp-Turnhout Canal; The Scheldt; Woensdrecht; South Beveland.*

1945: *The Rhineland; The Hochwald; Xanten; The Rhine; Groningen; Oldenburg.*

During the cold and wet winter months in the Dutch river area, patrols were carried out and the time was spent as pleasantly as possible. There was time for trips to Nijmegen, movies and other entertainment.

For sure Arthur witnessed, in the first months of 1945, that a huge force was built up in the area around Groesbeek. In the run-up to the Rhineland offensive.

To clarify:

The Rhineland Offensive was a series of allied offensive operations by 21st Army Group commanded by Bernard Montgomery from 8 February 1945 to 25 March 1945, at the end of the Second World War. The operations were aimed at occupying the Rhineland and securing a passage over the Rhine river.

It was part of General Dwight D. Eisenhower's "broad front" strategy to occupy the entire west bank of the Rhine before its crossing. The Rhineland Offensive encompassed Operation Veritable, Operation Grenade, Operation Blockbuster, Operation Plunder and Operation Varsity.

Starting with Operation Veritable on February 8, 1945.

Operation Veritable (also known as the Battle of the Reichswald) was the northern part of an Allied pincer movement that took place between 8 February and 11 March 1945 during the final stages of the Second World War. The operation was conducted by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery's Anglo-Canadian 21st Army Group, primarily consisting of the First Canadian Army under Lieutenant-General Harry Crerar and the British XXX Corps under Lieutenant-general Brian Horrocks.

The first entry in Arthur's records after July 1944 dates from March 26, 1945. It reads a 9-day leave he spent in England. On April 7, 1945 he was back with his unit.

Then some notes from the War Diary of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal which undoubtedly also apply to Arthur Duguay.

April 7, 1945 is a remarkable date for Holten residents and the surrounding areas. The fighting to cross the Schipbeek Canal was in full swing.

On April 8, a bridgehead was established on the north side (Holten) and the advance could be continued.

On April 9, late afternoon, the infantrymen were transported to the woods north of Holten to occupy the discovered V1 launchers.

Then the regiment was quickly moved north to Beilen, already on April 10, 1945 they reached that area. A fierce struggle followed.

On April 12, 1945, Beilen was also free. A few days of rest, opportunity for the troops to shower and to carry out maintenance on weapons and vehicles.

On the night of April 14 to 15, 1945, the regiment moved to the southern exterior of the city of Groningen to take over the positions of the Essex Scottish Regiment.

A difficult battle followed.

Street fighting in the city on such a large scale was completely new to the Fusiliers Mont-Royal, according to the diary.

A separate report was made of the death of Major G. Bergeron.

The word "moderate" was used for the other losses.

16 Apr 45 Weather good. Visibility good.
The D.R. accompanying the CO's carrier was killed by a sniper
At approximately 1200 hrs 2 German adjutants with white flags walked in our lines
After being interrogated they revealed that the commander of Groningen did not
want to surrender but that his officers and men were fed up and would gladly
give themselves up. Our C.O. Col V A Dextraze decided to go at the German com-
mander's Hq. Accompanied by the 2 adjutants and his interpreter Sgt WTH van
Werkum, Col Dextraze drove into the enemy lines. The adjutants directed our
C.O. to the garrison commander. After some discussion the German colonel accepted
to surrender his garrison to our battalion commander. He requested that while walking
his troops to our lines no civilians would be allowed to stand in the streets.
Some 300 offrs and men were sent to the PoW cage. Soon after people hoisted
flags and cheered their liberators.
At 2000 hrs a church parade was held. H/Capt M Plante celebrated mass.
The moral of all was very high.
Lt R. Lussier was taken on strength.

For Arthur Joseph Duguay, April 16, 1945 was mentioned as the day he was killed. He got a temporary grave in Eelderwolde, just south of the city of Groningen. His final resting place is in Holten, reference: 5-E-1.

His awards:

1939-1945 Star; France-Germany Star; Defence Medal; War Medal 1939-1945 and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.

