



Germain Houle was born in Saint-Guthbert, Quebec, on October 31, 1914.

His father, Régis Tancrede Houle, died in April 1919.

His mother, Marie Anna Houle, née Berard, cared for Germain, his two brothers, and his two sisters.

The family was Roman Catholic, and the official language was French.

Germain had already left school at the age of 11. No records of his work prior to his enlisting on September 28, 1942, can be found.

When he signed, he stated that he had worked a while for Steel & Iron Foundry in Joliette, where the family lived at the time.

Fishing was Germain's hobby.



Joliette Steel & Iron Foundry

Germain married Fleurette Comtois on April 19, 1941. On the day of his enlistment, they had one son.

Germain was conscripted according to the 1940 N.R.M.A.

To clarify:

The National Resources Mobilization Act was passed 21 June 1940 by Parliament. It represented the government's response to the public clamour for a more effective Canadian war effort that arose in the wake of the stunning German victories in Belgium and France. The Act enabled the government to requisition the property and services of Canadians for home defence. An earlier promise made by PM Mackenzie King in 1939 not to introduce conscription for overseas service was honoured, but it was reversed in August 1942 following the national plebiscite of April 1942. The amended NRMA permitted the sending of conscripts overseas in addition to the existing regular volunteer forces. The NRMA was important politically as it attested to the government's determination to intensify the war effort. It tended to appease the conscriptionists without antagonizing the anti-conscriptionists. In military affairs the Act created a duality in Canada's military that was to last until the war's end. It also resulted in the training of a large body of men for military duty. From 1940 to 1944 close to 60 000 NRMA soldiers ("zombies") volunteered for general service, and several thousand more were sent to the front after the use of conscripts for overseas service actually began late in 1944.

Germain most likely did not volunteer.

After his death, he was not awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal.

His medical report stated that he was 1.65 m tall and weighed 60 kg.

He had a scar on his right arm, gray eyes, and brown hair.

At first, in October 1942, Germain was assigned to the training center in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Mid-December 1942, Germain was transferred to the infantry training center at Camp Farnham, Quebec.

Germain's next transfer was in January 1943. He was attached to Le Régiment de Maisonneuve and transferred to Valcartier, Quebec.

His second son was born on March 30, 1943.

Germain spent the first half of April 1943 on leave.

Germain continued his training in Valcartier, but in a unit specifically set up for reservists.

Germain's army file stated that he was assigned to the 1st Battalion, Le Régiment de Québec, with a posting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in November 1943.

He was on leave at the turn of the year 1943/44.

In January 1944, he was assigned to an air defense unit in Halifax, Le Régiment de Châteauguay.

On April 23, 1944, Germain's third son was born.

He was appointed a Lance Corporal on June 1, 1944. A month later, he was transferred within the air defense unit, to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, on July 1, 1944. There, Germain started with a two-weeks leave.

He also was allowed Christmas leave, which he extended himself.

The "Absent Without Leave" annotation confirms that he reported back late.

The Châteauguay Regiment was called on active service and Germain left for the United Kingdom in January 1945. He arrived there on January 17, 1945.

Germain was downgraded to "private."

Initially assigned to a reinforcement unit, Germain was taken on strength by Le Régiment de Maisonneuve on April 5, 1945.

His death was reported on April 14, 1945 during the fighting for the city of Groningen. The battle for the city was fierce.

The Canadians suffered a total of 43 dead and 166 wounded.

The Maisonneuves suffered two casualties, one of whom was Germain Houle.

After being temporary buried in Groningen, Germain was laid to rest at the CWGC Canadian Cemetery in Holten. Plot 5, row E, grave 6.

He was awarded:

the 1939-1945 Star; the France-Germany Star; and the 1939-1945 War Medal.

