



James was born on December 18, 1920 in Samburg Saskatchewan, the son of George and Mary Kosowan. His parents came from Bukovina, a region that is now partly in Romania and partly in Ukraine. Many different ethnic groups lived in Bukovina in the nineteenth century. James' father was of Russian descent and his mother had Austrian roots. They immigrated to Canada with their parents in 1897 and were nationalized in 1900. In 1913, George and Mary were married in Gardenton, Manitoba. In addition to James, the couple became parents to: Sophie, Rosie, Nick, Ron, Wilma, John, Mike, Kate, David and Edward Kosowan. The family indicated in the 1921 census as Greek Orthodox. When registering, James states his religion as Roman Catholic.

James was an auto mechanic at the time of his enlistment and had worked at the O'Keefe Breweries in Toronto for two years. Due to his parents' ancestry, he spoke English, Russian, Polish and Ukrainian.

He enlisted in the NMRA in December 1942 and for active duty in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia in October 1943. After military training at Camp Debert, James then went overseas to the United Kingdom on September 2, 1944. A month later on October 9, 1944 he was deployed to Northwestern Europe. James was assigned to the Royal Winnipeg Rifles Regiment. With that regiment he subsequently took part in the liberation of Zeeland (Battle of the Scheldt) and the further Allied advance during the Rhineland Offensive. After the Nazis had been pushed back behind the Rhine in fierce fighting at the end of March 1945, the Royal Winnipeg Regiment crossed the Rhine at Emmerich. They moved north via the Achterhoek.

James was killed on Tuesday, April 10, 1945 at the age of 24 during fighting in and around Deventer. He was temporarily buried in Oxe, a hamlet near Deventer, before being reburied in Holten on December 17, 1945.

His medals are: 1939-45 Star; France Germany Star; War Medal; CVSM & Clasp. His mother and father were awarded The Memorial Bar on May 21, 1945

