

Philip Laforte

Rifleman

1-B-12



Philip was born on September 12, 1911 in Lac du Bonnet Manitoba, the son of Lafallen Laforte (died 1944) and Mrs. Laforte, (deceased long before 1945), both French Canadians from Fort Alexander Manitoba. Philip was first married on February 5, 1933 to Sarah Louise Bird, from this relationship son Leon J. (February 11, 1933) was born. Since Sarah was unable to do so, the child was raised by Philip's grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Daniels, treaty Indians from Fort Alexander Reserve.

Philip earned a living as a trapper and fisherman. The marriage to Sarah was unsuccessful and Philip remarried the very young Eva Jane Daniels from Pine Falls, Manitoba on June 4, 1940 in Fort Alexander. Their son Felix Joseph was born on July 8, 1940 and their youngest son Donald Philip was born on August 11, 1941. Since Philip had enlisted in the army on July 31, 1941, Eva Jane was left alone to raise the boys. She couldn't, she sought refuge in contact with other men and drink. The upbringing of the two boys was increasingly compromised, they were eventually taken care of and raised by Eva Jane's parents.

Philip's mother was of Native American (First Nation) descent, so he was a Métis soldier. In addition to his native Cree language he spoke English and French.

After enlisting in Winnipeg, Philip then went overseas to the United Kingdom on December 23, 1941. His military grade reports state that he has poor development and a bad attitude when he enters, but later on he works hard and try very hard. During his training in England he was seriously injured on 21 August 1943 by an exploding mortar during a training exercise in the field. In that accident, another soldier is killed and two other soldiers were also injured. His logbook states that on May 23, 1944, a truck ran over his foot, causing Philip to fracture. On September 1, 1944, he left for the front in France and was assigned to the Royal Winnipeg Rifles regiment.

During the advance in Belgium there is another serious incident involving Philip. The property of citizens is destroyed, as a punishment his payment are withheld for a long period.

Philip was killed in action on Saturday 7 April 1945 at the age of 33 during the battle of Deventer. He was temporarily buried in Oxe before being

reburied in Holten on December 19, 1945. His grave was adopted after the war by the Flim family from Rijssen.

The following medals have been awarded to him: 1939-45 Star; France Germany Star; Defense Medal; war medal; CVSM & Clasp.

Laforte Creek, not far from Hudson Bay in Manitoba's Middle East, was named after Philip in 1964.

