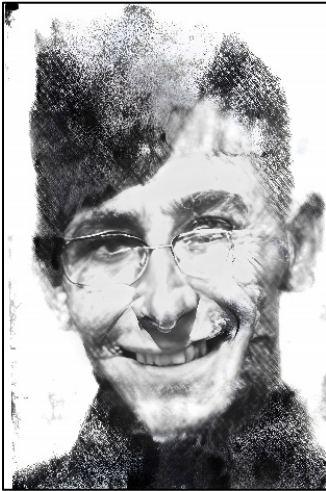




Robert Jeffery Lockhart—known as Robert—is born in Peterborough, Ontario, on February 2, 1925. He is the son of Stanley Robert Lockhart and Catherine Elizabeth Lockhart (née Jeffery). Robert's mother is born in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, England, while his father is born in Peterborough, Ontario.

It is unclear when Robert's mother emigrated to Canada. However, it is certain that Robert's parents married in Peterborough, Ontario, on September 19, 1923.

Robert's father was a First World War veteran. The family attended the Church of England, and English was the language spoken at home.

According to 1931 census data, Robert remains their only child. After seven years of primary education, Robert attends high school for another four years. In addition to English, he also has a good command of French.

On August 17, 1943, Robert enlists for active service in the Canadian Army in Montreal. At the time, the family is living in Joliette, Quebec. Robert has previously worked for several months at the Fernhill Company, a local textile mill.

The company "Fernhill Limited" was established in 1940. It initially specialized in the production of clothing for men, women, and children. To support the war effort, production shifted to a new sector, manufacturing fabrics for the Allied armed forces.

In 1943, prior to enlisting, Robert spends six months taking the Canadian Officers Training Corps course offered by the university in Quebec. After a week at the district depot in Montreal, he is transferred to St. Johns, Quebec, the site of the infantry basic training camp.

The army command kept up a fast pace for Robert. By September 1943, he is back in Montreal, undergoing training at No. 4 Vocational Training School (V.T.S.).

These schools were established to train military personnel and technical staff in essential technical skills (such as mechanics, logistics, and metalworking). No. 4 V.T.S. was specifically located in Westmount (Montreal), Quebec. It was a unique unit because, at the time, technical training there was conducted entirely in French for French-Canadian soldiers.

Robert is on leave during the Christmas and New Year period. In mid-January 1944, Robert is posted to McGill University in Montreal for a few weeks to attend a 'Duty and Discipline' course. It likely deemed necessary to instill in him a better understanding of these matters.

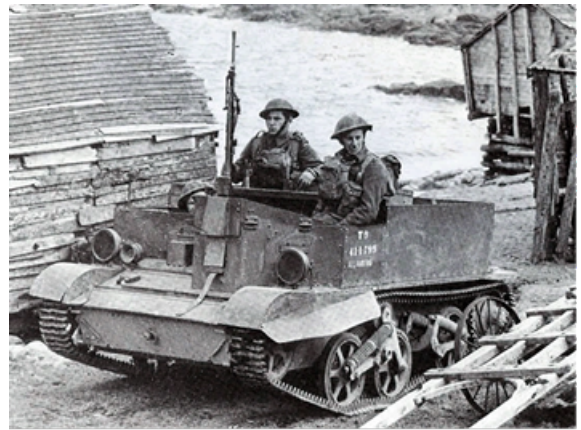
In early February 1944, Robert is posted to the training center for reconnaissance units in Dundurn, Saskatchewan.

Here, his skills are further developed. His file notes that he is on leave during the first half of August 1944.

The next entry records that, in late August 1944, Robert qualified as an 'Operator Group C' (a role involving the maintenance and operation of vehicles within reconnaissance units).



Lynx Mk II



Universal Carrier Mk II

Canadian reconnaissance units in World War II played a crucial role as the "eyes" of the Allies. They primarily used specific Canadian armored vehicles, such as the Fox, Otter, and Lynx (a Canadian Daimler Dingo), as well as tracked vehicles like the Universal Carrier.

For Robert, the crossing to the United Kingdom (UK) is then imminent.

He debarks in the UK on September 5, 1944.

He is assigned to a reinforcement unit, and his training for special reconnaissance duties continue.

Robert's file then jumps to January 1945.

He is put on the reserve list of the 8th RECCE, operating as part of the 14th Canadian Hussars.

A 'RECCE' (short for reconnaissance) is a military unit dedicated to operational reconnaissance—in this specific instance, for military purposes.

During an advance, they move ahead of the regular troops to scout and observe the area, gathering intelligence on the enemy's strength, capabilities, and positions.

On January 23, 1945, Robert arrives on the mainland of Western Europe. The harsh reality of the war now becomes very immediate for him.

His assignment to the 8th RECCE was now finalized.

As is the case with many files, contemporary notes regarding combat operations are extremely scarce. Robert's file, too, contains only a single line: "Killed in Action," April 27, 1945.

The War Diary of the 8th RECCE give al little information of what Robert experiences during those months in 1945.

During the first three months of 1945, he sees action in the German Hochwald.

Following "Operation Plunder" (the Allied crossing of the Rhine), the unit is granted a rest period.

On March 30, 1945, they cross the German-Dutch border near Netterden, in the eastern part of the Netherlands.

On April 8, 1945, after crossing the Schipbeek Canal between Laren and Holten, 8th RECCE forms the vanguard of the advance towards Holten.

'B' and 'C' Squadrons liberated Camp Westerbork on April 12, 1945.

On April 20, 1945, the bulk of the unit departs from Zuidlaren (south of the city of Groningen) and crosses the Dutch-German border.

By that very evening, they had reached Höltinghausen in the Cloppenburg region. Up to that point, Robert Lockhart has apparently encountered no major difficulties. There is nothing in his file to suggest otherwise.

April 27, 1945, is the fatal day for him.

On April 26, 1945, the 5th Infantry Brigade launches a large-scale attack on Bookholzberg. Heavy fighting ensues, particularly on the southern outskirts of the village.

"E" Squadron has been bumping enemy all morning, and have so far taken 21 prisoners. One heavy car was lost by 2 troop by bazooka fire. One man killed and one wounded. J. Zate Lawrence was luckily out of the car at the time. Major Bult-Francis received the award of the Croix de Guerre with Gilt Star for his achievements in France. Sjt Leishman J.D. (now in hospital) was also awarded the Croix de Guerre with Bronze Star. Wounded to-day were Tpr Machum and Tpr Hodder. Killed was Tpr Lockhart. Also wounded when Mortar landed too close were Lieut. Billingsley and Martin, and Sjt Ketter

Robert Jeffery Lockhart is 'Killed in Action' during these engagements.

The War Diary reads:

He is given a temporary grave in the grass plot near the local fire station.

On June 23, 1946, Trooper Robert Jeffery Lockhart is laid to rest at the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten: Plot 11, Row H, Grave 10.

He is awarded:

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

The inscription on his headstone reads:

**Dear one, sleep well
in this beautiful land.
Far from home,
Mother and Dad.**



Sources:

www.cwgc.org; www.ancestry.com; www.canada.ca/library-archives; Wikipedia.wartimesproject.com; *War Diary of the 14th Canadian Hussars*.