

## Magee, Gerald Norman, Sergeant

7-C-9



Gerald was born in Toronto on August 21, 1921, the son of George Henry (Irish) and Mary Elizabeth Magee, nee Johnston, of Toronto.

They were married on August 16, 1913 in Norwood Manitoba and later divorced.

He had three brothers, George, Arnold and Herbert, as well as three sisters: Florence, Vera and Helen.

However, he lived with his mother and a younger sister.

Information about school and education is limited; He had attended 4 years of high school but did not graduate.

It was clearly stated that he was a silkscreen printer and worked at Brigden's Ltd. Engravers in Toronto.

In July 1940 he had joined the 2nd Battalion of the 48th Highlanders. He enlisted on December 28, 1940 with the Argyll's at the Chippewa Barracks in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

The personal selection forms read:

the young Baptist was: almost 6 feet tall, 126 pounds, with "green-brown" eyes and brown hair.

Magee's first years as a soldier ranged from guard duties on the Niagara Peninsula to training at Camp Nanaimo (BC) until August 1941.

The Regiment then proceeded to garrison at Kingston, Jamaica,

Of course, with Gerald Magee in the ranks.

He returned to Niagara Camp in May 1943, followed by a 10-day leave in June.



Jamaica

Then overseas to Great Britain where he arrived on July 23, 1943.

Magee served as a soldier in B Company but he rose in ranks.

Initially as acting corporal in August, conformed to a corporal on November 4, 1943.

Next step: acting sergeant on March 25, 1944 at Uckfield, Sussex.

In early 1944 he joined the Scout Platoon commanded by Lieutenant John Lloyd Johnston. He had been given command of this group on March 8, 1944.

The Scouts attracted the more ardent and adventurous Argyll's.

The training of the Scout Platoon was stepped up a notch in preparation for the planned landing in France.

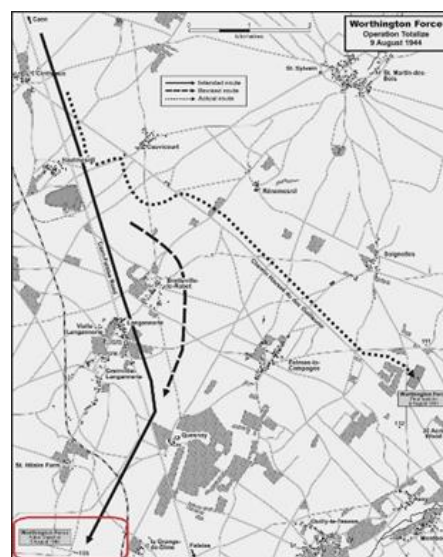
On July 22, 1944, the Scouts, with Magee, set foot on French soil. The Scouts were constantly involved in the fighting in early August and often at night.

The Scouts particularly distinguished themselves in the action at Hill 195. This was a formidable German obstacle on the route to Falaise.

Lt. Col. Dave Stewart, the commanding officer and Johnston took the Scouts up the slope, leaving pickets to mark the way.

Later, Stewart led the four rifle companies, single file in the dark, up the hill, infiltrating the German lines in the dead of night on 10-11 August 1944.

A clear success - a brilliantly unorthodox, battalion-scale infiltration of the hitherto unassailable enemy strongpoint. The road was "open" to Falaise and beyond.



Hill 195 was actually a Worthington Force target

From September 8 to 10 the A company and the Scouts fought a diversionary attack at Moerbrugge, Belgium.

The crossing of the Bruges-Gent canal was a tough one.

The Argylls suffered 7 dead and 22 wounded. One of those injured was Gerald Magee, already on the first day.

He received "multiple minor splinter" wounds to his left hand and to his legs.

After receiving first aid by a medical officer and then admitted to 15<sup>th</sup> Canadian Field Ambulance. From there he was transported to 12<sup>th</sup> Field Dressing Station, where he was treated.

On September 15, 1944 he was discharged.

| Additional Notes by Unit M.O. and Field Ambulance.    |  |  |  | Army Form W3118<br>R.A.F. Form 3118,<br>Naval Form M204. |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Morphia—  | A.T. Serum—  | FIELD MEDICAL CARD.  |  |  |  |
| Dose, Time and date given—                            | Dose and date given—   | * No. <u>B46535</u> Rank <u>Cpl.</u>   |  |  |  |
| <u>ACE 73 SERVICE 47</u>                              | <u>47 25 1830</u>  | Name <u>Magee, G.N.</u>  |  |  |  |
| Date of Wound or onset of illness                     | Religion—  | Unit <u>A Coy. 1st</u>   |  |  |  |
| <u>8 Sept 44</u>                                      | <u>Bapt.</u>   | * In case of Enemy Prisoners of War serial number allotted by A.F.W. 1000.   |  |  |  |
| Sulphanilamide. Dose in grammes. Time and date given. | Battle Casualty. <u>Accidentally Wounded—Sick</u><br>(Strike out descriptions which does not apply.) |  |  |  |  |
| <u>2.5 gms Sulphathiazole 1830 hrs</u>                | Diagnosis of Unit M.O.— <u>multiple minor splinter wound legs &amp; left hand</u>                    |  |  |  |  |
| Disease*  | Microscopic Diagnosis*   | Date seen by him— <u>G. BARRIE CAPT 20 Sept 44</u>                           |  |  |  |
| Malaria   | B.T. M.T. Q. Clin.   | No. of Field Ambulance— <u>15 C 6 21 Amb</u>                                 |  |  |  |
| Dysentery   | B. Ex. E. hyst. Indef. Ex.   | Date of admission— <u>1800 8 Sept 44</u>                                     |  |  |  |
|   |  | Field Ambulance diagnosis— <u>shell wound (L.H.) CR.</u>                     |  |  |  |
|   |  | <u>Both Leg - left hand</u> <u>2 K&amp;H 144</u>                             |  |  |  |
|   |  | F.D.S., C.C.S. or M.C.S. diagnosis (if altered from above)— <u>As above.</u> |  |  |  |
|   |  | General or other Hospital diagnosis (alterations or additions)—              |  |  |  |
|   |  | Wt. 57 1/2/1944. 1.000m. 4'43. D.P.W. 51-660a.                               |  |  |  |

NOTES.

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His father had been informed by telegrams on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of September. He returned to his unit on October 3, 1944.

His commander, John Lloyd Johnston had lost his life on the 14<sup>th</sup>

September and Magee's protégé, private Paul Cole, on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Gerald Norman Magee was a stalwart of the Scouts over the months to come.

His record is spotless, not a single infraction, which is a rarity. Magee was a different kind.

Gerald Magee survived the fighting of October and early November 1944; the cold winter break on the Maas.

The battle for Kapelsche Veer and the battle on German soil via the Hochwald to Veen.



Gerald Magee was awarded the CVSM with bar on January 15, 1945.

The fighting from mid-April to early May 1945 in the northwest of Germany resulted in heavy losses for the regiment.

Gerald Norman Magee was one of them; he was killed on April 18, 1945 at the Küsten Canal.

Major Hugh MacLean, commander of the Support Company, who himself had been in the thick of the fighting, later wrote:

*"The C-Company had just crossed the Küsten Canal and was still digging in when the Germans attacked. The enemy was not noticed until they were about 100 yards away, due to the early morning mist. The attack was repulsed with great difficulty, and the bridgehead was held. But at the expense of high losses."*

Between April 15 and 18, 1945, the Regiment lost 9 soldiers, 38 were wounded and 2 men were taken prisoners of war by the enemy.

One of the fallen was Gerald Norman Magee.

He was given a temporary grave just outside Friesoythe beside the road at the village entrance.

In March 1946 he got his final resting place in Holten.

He served with the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders of Canada.

