



Welby Patterson was born July 10, 1922 in Ohsweken, a village of the "Six Nation of the Grand River" reserve in Brantford, Ontario. His parent were Thomas and Sarah Patterson. He was one of 10 children. When he enlisted in the army at age 18 they lived in the Mohawk reserve. His father had a farm there and Welby had until then worked there as well. He was a professional Lacrosse player for a while and had worked in the steel factories Republic Steel and Bethlehem Steel in Buffalo, New York. He enlisted on January 29, 1943. He completed his basic military training in Camp Borden, Ontario.

Welby was a very active guy, who loved hunting, swimming, fishing, hockey, basketball and of course Lacrosse. He spoke English, Mohawk and Tuscarora. He left a great impression on his recruiting officer, according to the entry in his file. He also regularly attended church and a member of the church choir. He and his brother owned a motorcycle together and he was a capable rider. The question why he wanted to join the army, he answered with "adventure".

In September 1943 he arrived in the United Kingdom. In October he was assigned to the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders of Canada. During a dance in Glasgow he met Thomasina (Ina). They fell in love and were planning to wed after the war.

July 21, 1944 he and his company made landfall in France and they were immediately deployed in the horrific struggle at Falaise.

Subsequently they liberated the northwest of France and Belgium. September 9 Welby and his comrades defended a bridgehead on the canal near Moerbrugge. It was a gruesome fight in sight of three German battalions. Due to his actions in that fight Welby was awarded the Military Medal of Valor. He was the first of the Six Nation Reserve receiving a decoration in the second world war. In that same month he was wounded and sent to the UK to recover.

In January 1945 he returned to his unit to be deployed in the Rheinland offensive. After repulsing the Nazis back behind the Rhine, Welby and the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders advanced to the north. April 16, 1945 they were in Friesoythe (G.). When they were building a emergency bridge on the river Soeste, Welby was fatally shot by a sniper. He was buried in a temporary grave at the site and was eventually transported to his last resting place in the Canadian War Cemetery, Holten.

While Ina technically wasn't a direct family member of Welby, she wasn't notified of the death of her fiancé. Ina, pregnant with his child, was contacted weeks later by one of Welby's sisters. She gave birth to their son later that year and named him Richard Welby, as his father would have wanted.

The boy was the spitting image of his father, both in looks, demeanor and interests. Welby's granddaughter, Wendy Johnson, contacted Welby's relatives in Canada and published a detailed biography in 2015.