

Reichelt, Albert Joseph. Private.

11-H-2



Buffalo, New York, USA, the place where Albert Joseph Reichelt is born on March 6, 1926. He is the son of Arthur Raymond Reichelt and Florence Reichelt, née Tisdall. His father is Canadian by birth; his mother was born in the USA.

There are already three older brothers in the family. After Albert, two more sons and a sister will be born. After that it becomes a 'mixed family'. Albert's father died in 1934; his mother remarried and she named herself Rowswell, her second husband's name.

Albert has a half-brother from the second marriage and a half-brother who died very young.

When Albert enlists for service in 1944, his stepfather had already died.

The family moves to Canada when Albert he is just over a month old. Recorded is their arriving in Bridgeburg, Ontario on April 10, 1926.

He left school at the age of 16 and went to work. His achievements are welcome.

When Albert registers in Toronto on October 11, 1944, he reports that he pays approximately \$60 per month at home. He has already worked at Fleet Aircraft Ltd for almost two years, at Fort Erie, Ontario.

In the 1940s, Fleet Aircraft in Fort Erie, Ontario, was a major Canadian manufacturer. They produced the Fleet Finch (Model 16B) as a primary training aircraft, of which more than 400 were delivered in 1941, and developed the Fleet 60K Fort (which first flew in 1940) as an intermediate training aircraft.



Fleet Finch 16B

His medical examination follows standard procedures. It is noted that he is 5'7" tall, weighed 145 lbs.

It is also recorded that he has blond hair and brown eyes. The test results are above average and it is declared fit for 'all functions'.

Albert's personal selection report states that three older brothers are already in service and that one of them was recently injured in France.

His sporting interests include baseball, hockey and softball. He is assessed as suitable to become a non-commissioned officer. This was later revoked because he had not demonstrated leadership qualities during his training.

Albert's first introduction to the military is at the Toronto District Depot.

Although he would have liked to join the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC), he is sent to the infantry training.

The overseas losses of the Canadian Army need to be replenished.

Before the end of 1944, he gets his basic infantry training in Chatham, Ontario and advanced training at Camp Ipperwash, Ontario.

During New Year's Eve 1944/'45, Albert took a few days' leave.

In mid-February 1945 he ended up in hospital in Ipperwash for about three weeks. The reasons for this cannot be found in his file.

Albert is allowed a few more days of embarkation leave before boarding a troop ship that will take him to the United Kingdom (UK).

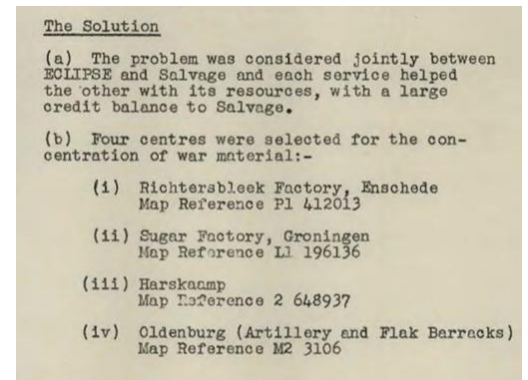
On March 27, 1945 he arrives in the UK.

The first assignment for him is a reinforcement unit for the 48th Highlanders of Canada. Subsequently he is taken on strength by the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

Strangely enough, it has not been recorded when Albert arrived on the mainland of Western Europe. After the German surrender on May 8, 1945 (Victory Europe Day) he remained in Germany and was assigned to the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps of the Canadian Occupation Forces. This corps is tasked with collecting, inspecting and, if necessary and possible, returning equipment to Canada.

Albert's file states that he was deployed to the 2nd Canadian Demolition Depot in Oldenburg in the spring of 1946. One of the four depots designated as a collection point.

On July 19, 1946, the day of his death, he was on his way in a jeep from Oldenburg to Antwerp. He is the driver of Lt. A.M. White, the convoy commander that day.



On the way, they stop at a broken-down vehicle. After inspection, Lt. White takes the wheel and 'hurries' to rejoin the convoy.

The lieutenant overlooks a priority sign on the Ringbaan-West in Tilburg, at the intersection with the Bredaseweg.

A truck cannot avoid a collision. Both men are thrown from the jeep. Witnesses are concerned about both and ensure that they are taken to St. Elisabeth hospital in Tilburg. Lieutenant White is slightly injured, Private Albert Joseph Reichelt dies from his injuries.

He was given a temporary grave in Greven, Germany and reburied on July 22, 1946 at the CWGC Canadian Cemetery in Holten.

The grave registration is: plot 11, row H, grave 2.

He is awarded:

War Medal 1939-1945 and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp.

Sources:

www.cwgc.org; www.ancestry.com; www.canada.ca/library-archives; wikipedia, project '44, war diaries Queen's Own Rifles of Canada.

