

Richard Kelso Kerr

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Richard was born on August 21, 1921 in Woodrow, Saskatchewan. He was son of Charles Denzil Kerr and Nellie Blanche Russell Kerr, who divorced before 1945.

Richard had two sisters and a brother.

He married Elizabeth Clark-Chandler of Port Arthur, Ontario, now part of present-day Thunder Bay, in May 1944.

Richard was a member of the Protestant United Church. He attended high school for 3 years and achieved grade 11. Before signing up for the army, he worked as an administrator in a food company for a year and a half.

On September 8, 1939, Richard enlisted in the Canadian Army in Weyburn, Sask. After basic training in Regina and Winnipeg, he was assigned to the South Saskatchewan regiment. As early as April 1941 he was sent overseas to the United Kingdom. On August 18, 1942, he was one of six thousand Allied soldiers who took part in the miserably failed attack on Dieppe, France (Raid on Dieppe). Fortunately, Richard was one of the two thousand men who were able to return to England uninjured. He had already been promoted to sergeant.

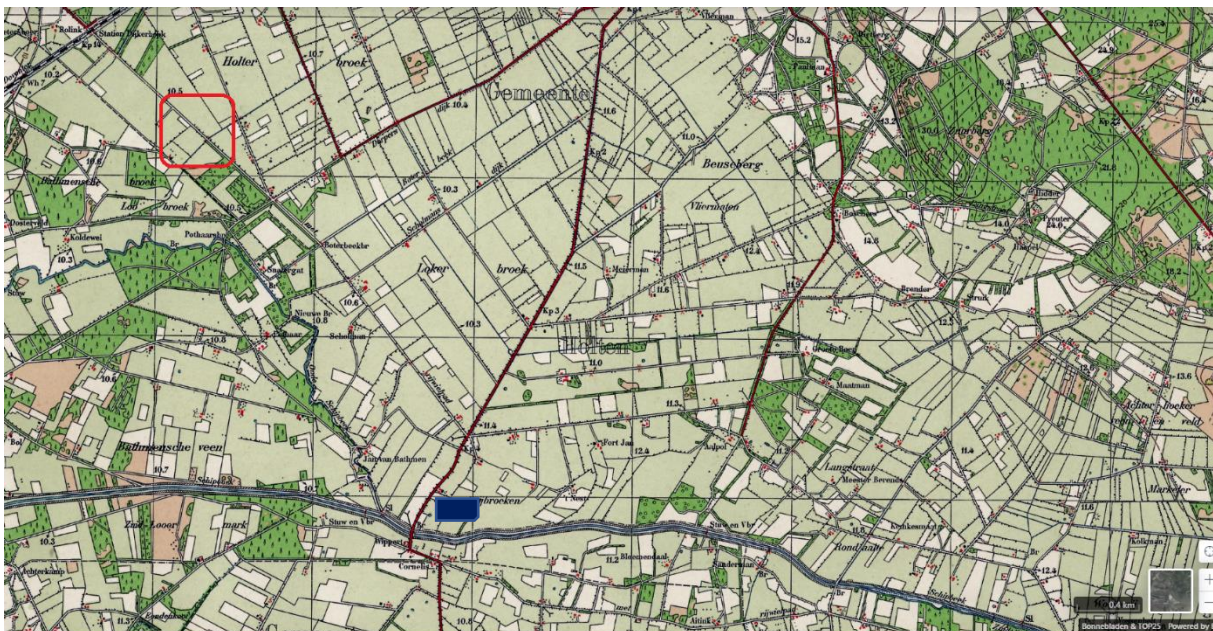
During further training in England, Richard performed well, with the result that he returned to Canada on August 2, 1943 for training as a lieutenant. After his appointment as lieutenant on November 12, 1943 in Brockville, he stayed in Canada for almost a year for further specialization. During that period he also married his great love Elizabeth.





However, the battle in Northwestern Europe needed him and on November 24, 1944 he was embarked for the journey to the United Kingdom and then sent to the still largely occupied Netherlands on January 20, 1945. In February and March the Canadian army was active in the Rhineland offensive with heavy fighting in the Reichswald and the Hochwald. During one of the operations on March 9, 1945, near Xanten (D), Richard distinguished himself as the leader of a company that successfully defended a German attack in extremely difficult conditions and took more than 80 German soldiers prisoner. For this, Richard was later posthumously awarded the Military Cross.



After the heavy fighting in the Rhineland offensive, Richard moved to the north of the Netherlands with his South Saskatchewan Regiment in early April. During that advance, the Nazis still offered fierce resistance, the bridges were blown up at every canal or river crossing and fighting took place. At the Schipbeek on the border of Gelderland and Overijssel his regiment lost 4 soldiers. A day later, April 8, 1945, they continued through Holterbroek. There were further confrontations with German units, during which Richard was seriously injured and died that same evening. Richard was 23 years old and was first buried in a temporary cemetery near Holten.



1945 "Topotijdreis"  tijdelijke begraafplaats  sneugelgebied

On December 16, 1945, Richard Kelso Kerr was reburied at the Canadian Cemetery in Holten in plot 1 row A grave 10. He lies there together with the men of his regiment who lost their lives in the battle for the Wipperts Bridge.

The government of Saskatchewan named a lake 37 km WSW of Denare Beach, in central Saskatchewan, after him: Kerr Lake

