

## Sheehy, Patrick. Rifleman

5-E-7



Born: April 10, 1925 in St-Dominique Jonquière, Québec,  
Son of James (Jim) and Alice Sheehy.

Patrick had 2 brothers and a sister. Other sources reported: six brothers and 2 sisters. However, these are not listed in his military passport. The French-speaking family was Roman Catholic.

When he registered on June 30, 1943, he stated his occupation being a "journalist".

No specific skill has been identified from further reports.

His schooling wasn't great. He first left school at the age of eleven but later, he completed another four years.

His medical report stated that he was approximately 1.66 m tall, weighed 64 kg and that he had brown eyes and brown hair.

Special feature: a scar on the right hand.

Patrick's first military experiences were at the district depot in Quebec.

After a month, mid-July 1943, he was transferred to the infantry training center known as "A-13" in Valcartier-Quebec.

At the end of October 1943, he was granted six days' leave.

At the beginning of December 1943, Patrick was transferred again. According to his service records to No.1 Training Brigade in Debert-Nova Scotia.

Patrick was granted three days' leave at Christmas 1943. He extended it, on his own initiative, by three days. On December 29, 1943, he reported back to the unit just after eight in the evening.

The punishment was: seven days of "Confined to Barracks".

It also cost Patrick 4 days' pay.

Patrick embarked for the United Kingdom on February 16, 1944 and he arrived on February 25, 1944.

Assigned to a reinforcement unit until mid-March 1945.

Patrick, as a French speaker with a limited knowledge of English, was taken on strength by Le Régiment de Maisonneuve on March 20, 1944.

Patrick set foot on mainland Western Europe on July 7, 1944.

For the remainder of 1944, information must come from the regiment's war diaries. His service records barely provide any information about that.

The "Battle Honors" provide more clarity.

The regiment first saw action on July 17, 1944. The losses immediately amounted to 17 men. At that time the regiment moved together with the Calgary Highlanders.

Objective: to capture the village of La Chesnaie, south of Caen (Normandy, France).

Le Régiment de Maisonneuve changed plans, ignored La Chesnaie and advanced further. Deployed at Caen, especially mentioned is Faubourg de Vaucelles. The regiment also played a role at Falaise.

On Belgian territory, the regiment played a role crossing Antwerp-Turnhout canal. In the south-west of the Netherlands, the regiment was severely challenged in the autumn of 1944. The fighting's during the Battle of the Scheldt in November 1944. Woensdrecht, South-Beveland and the Walcheren Causeway for instance. Heavy losses were suffered.

Winter 1944/1945 brought a period of reduced fighting in anticipation of the push over the Rhine River in the new year.

The regiment was brought to strength.

Everything in the run-up to the Rhineland offensive, which started for them on February 8, 1945 with Operation Veritable.



*Support Company of Le  
Régiment de Maisonneuve in  
the line near Nijmegen,  
Holland, 8 February 1945.*

*Photo by M.M. Dewar; NAC PA 153088*

During these large-scale actions on German territory, they were deployed, among others, in the Reichswald, the Hochwald and at Xanten.

To clarify:

*"After the largely failure of Operation Market-Garden, an enormous Canadian/British force was built up in the winter of 1944/1945 in the Nijmegen/Groesbeek region: approximately 400,000 men and approximately 35,000 vehicles.*

*A comparable American force was gathered near Roermond. The aim is to push the German units back behind the Rhine.*

*On February 8, the Canadians and British started their attack with Operation Veritable. The advance through the Reichswald was the bloodiest battle ever in Germany.*

*On March 10, the western bank of the Rhine was virtually cleared of German troops.*

*Almost all bridges over the Rhine have been blown up, only the railway bridge at Remagen falls into American hands. On the night of March 23 and 24, the Allies crossed the Rhine near Wesel with amphibious vehicles. On March 24, another 16,000 paratroopers landed on the east side of the Rhine. The largest one-day airborne operation ever. On March 29, the Rhine crossing was completed and the Rhineland was in Allied hands.*

*The Rhineland Offensive took a high toll: about 25,000 Allied victims and more than 60,000 German ones."*

April 1945: The regiment crossed the German-Dutch border in the area of Emmerik for the advance through the eastern part of the Netherlands up to the coast of the Wadden Sea in the north.

Their route went through Terborg, Doetinchem, Hummelo and Zutphen towards the Twente Canal near Almen.

Patrick was appointed acting sergeant at the end of March 1945.

His position as Acting/Sergeant was tested very soon.

After crossing the canal, during the fighting for Laren Gelderland, the regiment suffered heavy losses on the night of April 4 to 5, 1945.

In one night it lost 23 men, killed and wounded.

The Maisonneuves also had to overcome heavy resistance during the liberation of the city of Holten, especially the crossing of the Schipbeek Canal.

Once that was broken, they could march towards the city of Rijssen.

The photo of the men near Holten, on their way to Rijssen, is well known.

Another heavy deployment awaited Patrick and the rest of the regiment.

The liberation of the city of Groningen.

Heavily defended by the Germans.



The house-to-house fight was a completely new experience for many.

The battle in and around the city cost the lives of a total of 43 liberators.

One of these was Patrick Sheehy of Le Régiment de Maisonneuve.

He was killed on April 15, 1945, just after his twentieth birthday.

He was given a temporary grave in Groningen and a permanent one in Holten.  
Grave reference: 5-E-7.

He was awarded:

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

