

Valiquet, Jean Louis

Sergeant

9-E-7



Joseph Robert Jean Louis, nicknamed Jean Valiquet, was born in Hull, Gatineau, Quebec, on February 20, 1913.

He is the son of Armand Valiquet and Alberta (Bertha) Valiquet, née Larin.

The Valiquet family has two other sons and three daughters.

The parents had already lost three children at a young age.

The family is Roman Catholic; at home the official language is French.

Jean enlisted in the Canadian Army in July 1941.

He states that he left school at 16, after completing eight years and then started to work.

He has already gained extensive work experience.

First, he worked for six years as a messenger boy for the telephone/telegraph company.

After that, he worked for two years in the mines as a driller, hard work at the time, but well-paid, \$50 a week.

Jean then switched and was a driver for a few years, and for about two years, he worked as a service technician at a garage in Montreal.

He developed his technical skills through practical experience.

Jean's medical report states that he is 5'3" tall and weighs 123 lbs.

Characteristics on the form mention a tattoo on his right arm and a scar on his back. His right eye has sustained some damage in the past, and his vision is somewhat limited. He is declared 'fit for service'.

Jean's wish to take the paratrooper training is not granted, he is not considered suitable for it.

He is interested in hockey and softball when it comes to sports.

Jean already had some military experience. In 1928, he served from July to December in the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, (RCCS) assigned to a reserve unit.

Jean's military service in 1941 started in Farnham, he remained there until the end of 1941. He was granted leave the second week of December, but spent Christmas and New Year's in the barracks.

At the end of January 1942, he was sent to Woodstock, Ontario, for training and education. The Advanced Driving & Maintenance School was located there.

Here, the men were trained to drive and repair military vehicles such as armored personnel carriers, field artillery tractors, motorcycles, trucks, and so on.

The school also had several training areas outside the city, with conditions designed to simulate the European landscape, including water, mud, gravel, hills, and wooded areas.



Vehicle training out in the field at the Woodstock Advanced Driving & Maintenance School—1940s.

At the end of February 1942, Jean reported back to Farnham. He had successfully completed the instructor course for trucks, motorcycles, and carriers. He was promoted to be a Lance/Corporal.

In March, he requested permission to marry.

This was granted, and on April 22, 1942, he married Irene Paiement. She was born on March 13, 1918, and was Protestant.

In an assessment report, Jean is described as:

"An intelligent, bilingual individual, recommended for a higher rank. He has given instructional lessons in English and French and will be able to perform excellently in a leadership role 'in the field.'"

In May 1942, he was promoted to corporal.

Jean's file then takes a significant leap forward in time.

WRITE PLAINLY WITH INK. Every item of information should be carefully supplied. This form must be maintained. All information asked for is to be given including full Christian or given names and surname of all parties and if for any reason this is impossible, the reason for the omission must be stated.

This form if placed in an envelope, marked "Dominion Statistics - Free, penalty for improper use \$300", and properly addressed will pass through the Mail "FREE"

FORM E PROVINCE OF QUEBEC—MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE
STATISTICAL RETURN OF MARRIAGE

1. PLACE OF MARRIAGE—*Montreal* County of *Montreal* Civil Municipality of *Montreal*
(Municipal county) (Write name and state whether city, town, village or rural municipality)

BRIDEGROOM		BRIDE	
2. Full name <i>Joseph Robert Jean Louis Valiquet</i>	12. Full name <i>Irene Paiement</i>	3. Occupation <i>Soldier</i>	13. Occupation <i>Mercenary</i>
4. Bachelor, Widower or Divorced <i>Single</i>	14. Spinster, Widow or Divorced <i>Single</i>	5. Age <i>27</i>	15. Age <i>24</i>
6. Religious denomination <i>Catholic</i>	16. Religious denomination <i>Protestant</i>	7. Residence <i>762 1st Ave. Verdun</i>	17. Residence <i>626 3^e Ave. des Colonnes</i>
8. Place of birth <i>Montreal</i>	18. Place of birth <i>Montreal</i>	9. Place of birth of father <i>Montreal</i>	19. Place of birth of father <i>Montreal</i>
10. Can bridegroom read? <i>yes</i>	20. Can bride read? <i>yes</i>	11. Can bridegroom write? <i>yes</i>	21. Can bride write? <i>yes</i>
22. Date of marriage <i>April 22nd 1942</i>	23. By license or banns <i>Banns</i>	24. PLACE OF REGISTRATION OF THIS MARRIAGE—	
(a) Name of Parish or Church <i>St. Albans</i>		(b) Civil Municipality of <i>Montreal</i>	
(c) Date <i>April 22nd 1942</i>		(d) County (Municipal) <i>Montreal</i>	
25. Name of clergyman in charge of Registers of Civil Status in which registration of this marriage was made <i>Cher. J. G. H. H. H. H.</i>			
Any person other than a clergyman registering this marriage will sign here (VOIR L'AUTRE CÔTÉ POUR LE FRANÇAIS)			

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The next entry is from 1943. Farnham would have been his base until then.

In mid-September 1943, he was assigned to 6 CIRU, a French-speaking reinforcement unit which was to deploy to the United Kingdom (UK).

On September 19, Jean and the other members of this unit, arrived in the UK.

In November 1943, Jean was assigned to Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal (FMR).

He was awarded the Voluntary Service Medal (CVSM) with the overseas service bar that same month.

The next entry in his record is December 19, 1943: the birth of daughter Marie Joyce.

Jean's file notes that he spent a few days in the hospital in March 1944; no reason is given. Because he is bilingual, Jean was briefly assigned to an interpreter pool in July 1944.

On September 2, 1944, Jean landed in Normandy.

In October, he was added to the X-4 list Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal.

(An X-4 list mentions the names of the reinforcement troops belonging to a specific unit or corps)

Jean was officially assigned to the FMR on November 5, '44.

Jean's file then takes again a significant leap forward in time.

The next and final entry is from April 12, 1945: "Killed in Action."

Following the FMR's actions in Western Europe, Jean must have experienced many of them.

In broad terms:

The advance through Northern France and Belgium to the southwest of the Netherlands. Jean must also have witnessed the Battle for the Scheldt, where the FMR suffered heavy losses. A monument commemorating the FMR stands in Waarde, in the municipality of Reimerswaal.

The aim of the battles for the Scheldt was to clear both sides of the harbour entrance to Antwerp of enemy troops so that the port of Antwerp could be used for the supply of troops and equipment.

This was followed by a period of relative calm for the FMR during the winter months. On February 8, 1945, the Rhineland Offensive began. Jean would also have witnessed these actions.

To clarify:

The Rhineland Offensive consisted of several phases. After the partial failure of Operation Market-Garden, the German units were to be pushed back behind the Rhine. The offensive had three phases. "Operation Veritable" began on February 8, 1945, with the attack on the Reichswald.

After the capture of Kleve and Goch, the offensive was restarted with "Operation Blockbuster" and "Operation Grenade." Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal were tasked with clearing the road to Xanten. The fighting continued until the Rhine was crossed with amphibious vehicles at Wesel and Rees during the night of March 23-24.

In support, 16,000 paratroopers landed on the eastern bank of the Rhine. This was the largest airborne operation in a single day. The Rhine crossing was completed on March 29, 1945. The toll: approximately 25,000 Allied casualties and an estimated 60,000 German casualties.

Jean must have endured these battles without being injured or otherwise encountering problems. Entries of this would have been included in his file.

On March 31, 1945, the FMR crossed the German-Dutch border and advanced towards Gendringen. The advance continued: on April 4, they are near Zutphen-Lochem; on April 7/8, they were deployed at the crossing of the Schipbeek between Laren (Gelderland) and Holten.

After Holten, the advance proceeded smoothly. They continued their displacement throughout the night of April 9-10, 1944, and on April 10, the FMR arrived in the Beilen region. There, they made contact with several French paratroopers who had been dropped in the area a week earlier during Operation Amherst.

The FMR approached Beilen from the north. According to the war diary, the Oranje Canal was crossed during the night of April 11-12, 1945, and the attack on Beilen was launched. The lead carrier was hit by a bazooka grenade and knocked out.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
HOLLAND SHEET M-1 GRONINGEN MR 158739	12 Apr 45		During the night the infantry crossed the canal and reached the main road to BEILEN MR 164744 (M-1) and at 0700 hrs advanced toward BEILEN outflanking it by the north. Enemy occupied houses covering the road at the entrance of the village with MG and Bazookas. The first carrier of the assault column was knocked out by a bazooka - then the flame throwers took over. House to house fighting lasted for 2 hours. Some 200PoW were taken including one officer.

On April 12, 1945, two members of the FMR were killed.
One of them was Sergeant Jean Louis Valiquet.

The Fusiliers Mont Royal lost the following men:

1. VALIQUET, Sergeant, JEAN LOUIS, April 12, 1945, Age 32, HOLTEN CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY IX. E. 7.
2. BEAUSOLEIL, Private, ALBERT, April 12, 1945, Age 24, HOLTEN CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY IX. E. 4.

Given his training and assignment to the support company, he would have been in the forward carrier with a gunner.

He was given a temporary grave near or in Beilen.

On March 21, 1946, Sergeant Jean Louis Valiquet was finally buried at the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten.

The grave reference is: 9-E-7.

He was awarded:

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

The family had the following inscription placed on his headstone:

You are always in our hearts
Even though we are far apart



Sources:

www.cwgc.org; www.ancestry.com; www.canada.ca/library-archives; project '44.