

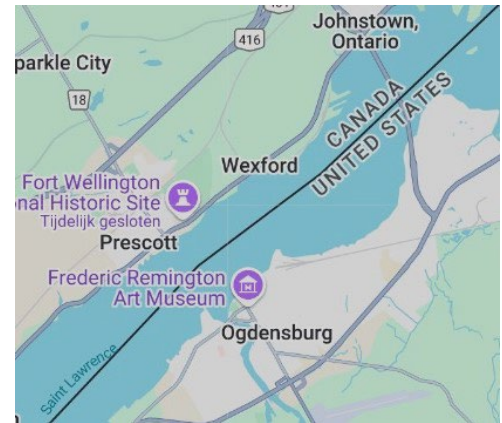
Wilson, James (Jimmy) Richardson. Private.

6-C-5



Ogdensburg, in the state of New York (USA) on the banks of the St. Lawrence River, which forms the border with Canada there.

That is the place where James Richardson Wilson was born on April 25, 1915.



On August 17, 1943, James enlisted in Toronto. He had married Erma Bell Stewart in September 1938 and they had two sons: Stewart Royce born April 10, 1940 and James Irwin born July 18, 1942.

His occupation was noted as: self-employed as a farmer and he also earned some extra money as a gun assembler.

He reported "United Church" as his religion.

Why a married, self-employed man, married with two young children, signed up for the army is difficult to explain. Probably because of the economic situation at the time, in which many had difficulty making ends meet.

James was assigned to the district depot in Toronto, where he was given a few days' leave after a short time to take care of some business at home.

Instead of reporting back on August 31, 1943, he did not show up until September 2. The first entry for "Absent Without Leave" (AWL) was a fact.

His pay was withheld for three days.

In mid-September 1943, James was transferred to the training center in Brantford, Ontario and two months later, mid-October 1943, sent on to training camp Borden in Ontario.

He was on leave during Christmas 1943, but James experienced New Year's Eve in Borden. It is not clear whether he celebrated New Year's Day properly, but it is clear that he was again "AWL" on January 2, 1944,.

Consequences: three days "Confined to Barracks" (CB) and one day's pay; at that time \$1.40 per day.

Borden was the place where James would stay until May 1944.

In mid-May 1944, he was transferred to Debert, Nova Scotia, to embark for the United Kingdom on June 18, 1944.

After arriving, James was assigned to a reinforcement battalion.

His stay in the U.K. lasted only a month; on July 17, he left for the battlefield in Italy.

In September 1944, James was assigned to the Perth Regiment, which had already seen many actions.

To clarify:

The liberation activities of the Perth Regiment in Europe began on November 8, 1943 in Italy as part of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division.

On October 26, 1943 the regiment had embarked in Liverpool on board of the "John Ericsson". This ship left on October 27, 1943 in the morning hours. On October 28, when the last traces of Ireland were behind the horizon, Lieutenant Colonel Rutherford informed the regiment that it would not go to Northern Ireland, (as the men had been told), but to North Africa.

On the way, on November 5, 1943, the landing site was changed to Naples, Italy.

After the deployment in Italy, the regiment was moved to the South of France in February 1945.

By train from Marseille and via Belgium (Mons), this military unit pushed through to the Netherlands. It fought in the vicinity of Nijmegen, Arnhem, Doesburg and Harderwijk. At the end of April 1945, the Perth Regiment was involved in the fighting in Northeast Groningen.

As already mentioned above, in the spring of 1945, the Canadian troops were withdrawn from Italy to be deployed on the Western Front.

James Richardson Wilson landed in Marseille, France, on February 22, 1945. The long journey overland to Belgium could begin.

The Perth Regiment first saw action in the Netherlands at Driel, Didam and Doesburg. After the crossing the river IJssel near Westervoort, they continued their advance: via Arnhem, Lunteren, Voorthuizen to Harderwijk, which was reached on April 18, 1945.

On April 21, 1945, James and the rest of his regiment made a larger move. Via Voorthuizen, Apeldoorn, Meppel, they headed for Assen.

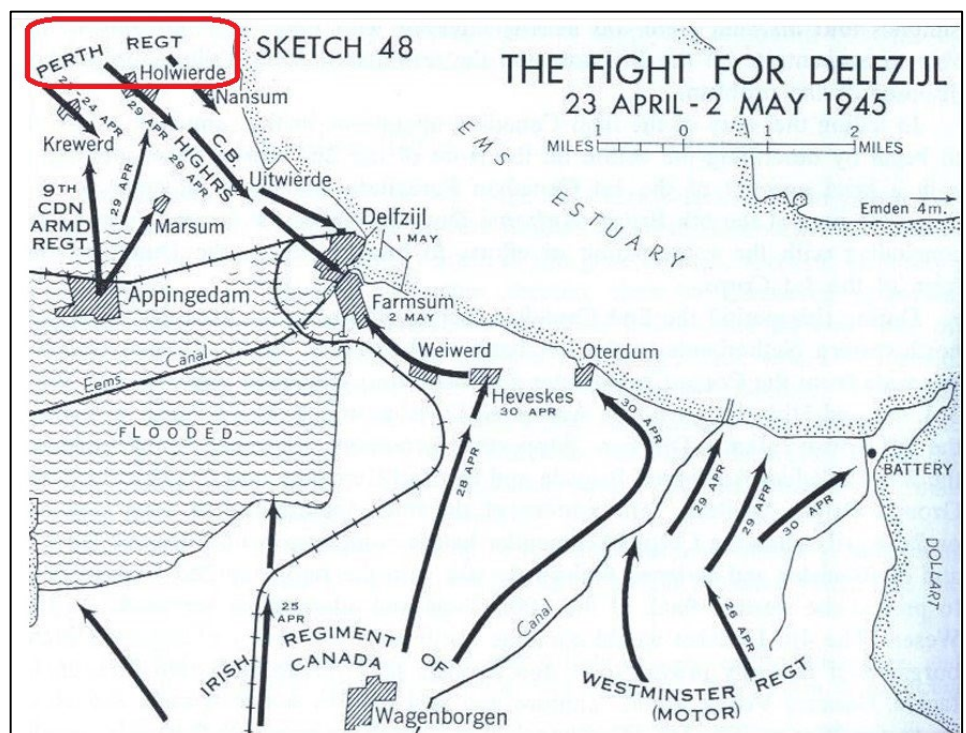
The battle continued in the Eems delta. The next displacement brought the men to Godlinze on April 22, their assignment for the next day: "advance in an easterly direction".

The reconnaissance unit and the tank hunters were ordered to capture the hamlet Krewerd.

On April 24, 1945 the other units of the Perth Regiment advanced to Holwierde, here they were heavily shelled.

At Holwierde, 7 men from the Perth Regiment were killed, 24 were wounded and one man was reported as "missing".

One of the fallen was James (Jimmy) Richardson Wilson.



In the church of Holwierde is a plaque, commemorating the fallen in the northern sector of the Delfzijl Pocket.

The number (50) of names on it, makes you speechless, so many victims in the last phase of the battle; from April 20 to May 1, 1945.

James (Jimmy) Richardson Wilson, like many others, was given a temporary grave in Wirdum, west of Appingedam.

The final resting place was the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten.
For James: VI-C-5.



The following medals were posthumously awarded to him:

1939-1945 Star; Italy Star; France-Germany Star; War Medal 1939-945 and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.

