

Hugh Alphonse McInnis - WW2 (KIA)



(Photo enhanced with AI technology)

Personal Profile

- Full Name: Hugh Alphonse MacInnis (MacInnis, ... p. 2).
- Date & Place of Birth: April 13, 1917, in Georgeville, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia (MacInnis, ... pp. 4, 6).
- Trade or Calling: Farmer and Fisherman (MacInnis, ... pp. 6, 16).
- Next-of-Kin: Mr. Dan Alex MacInnis (Father) (MacInnis, ... pp. 12, 22). His mother, Mrs. Martha MacInnis, passed away prior to his overseas deployment (MacInnis, ... pp. 3, 16).
- Regimental Number: F13284 (MacInnis, ... p. 2).

Units Served In

Private MacInnis served in both artillery and elite infantry units throughout his four years of service:

- 86th Heavy Battery / 86th Coast Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery (R.C.A.): Enlisted in this unit on October 7, 1940, at Aulds Cove, Nova Scotia (MacInnis, ... pp. 6, 22). He trained and served locally on home deployment in Nova Scotia as a Gunner and qualified as a Class III Military Transport Truck Driver (MacInnis, ... pp. 10, 16). He was promoted to Lance Bombardier (*L/Bdr*) on September 1, 1943 (MacInnis, ... p. 10).
- 16th Coast Regiment, R.C.A.: Transferred briefly during an artillery reorganization in late 1943 (MacInnis, ... p. 10).
- No. 1 Transit Camp (Windsor, N.S.): Attached on January 15, 1944, to prepare for overseas deployment (MacInnis, ... p. 10).
- No. 60 Canadian Infantry (Basic) Training Centre / A.14 Canadian Infantry Training Centre: Posted on February 12, 1944 (MacInnis, ... p. 10). Upon transferring to the infantry stream, he **reverted to his permanent rank of Private** (MacInnis, ... p. 10).

Based on the military regulations outlined in his file, Private MacInnis's rank was reverted because he voluntarily transferred from the Artillery branch to the Infantry branch (MacInnis, ... pp. 10, 37).

- 4th Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit (4 CIRU): Arrived overseas in the United Kingdom on July 3, 1944, to serve as immediate frontline reinforcement stock (MacInnis, ... p. 11).
- The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, 1st Battalion: Formally taken on strength in the field on July 26, 1944, as the regiment fought its way through mainland Normandy (MacInnis, ... pp. 23, 30).

The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada is the oldest highland infantry regiment in the Canadian Regular Army (13). Based at the Bleury Street Armoury in Montreal, Quebec, this storied regiment has participated in every major military campaign in Canadian history.

✂ Battles Fought In

- The Battle of Normandy (Campaign for Caen / South of Caen): Private MacInnis arrived in France on July 25, 1944, right as the Canadian forces were engaged in ferocious operations to break out from the Caen sector (MacInnis, ... p. 38).

The Battle of Normandy (codenamed Operation Overlord) was the massive Allied amphibious invasion of Nazi-occupied Western Europe during the Second World War. Fought between June 6 and August 30, 1944, it remains the largest seaborne invasion in world history and marked the beginning of the end for Nazi Germany on the Western Front.

The Campaign for Caen and the battles south of the city (spanning late June to August 1944) represent the most strategically brutal, heavily contested phase of the Battle of Normandy.

For the British and Canadian armies, this sector became a meat grinder designed to pin down the elite of the German military. It was during this intense breakout attempt that Private Hugh Alphonse MacInnis was killed in action on July 27, 1944—a date tightly bound to one of the most tragic and controversial operations in Canadian military history.

- July 27, 1944 (Killed in Action): Only one day after officially joining the Black Watch in the field, Private MacInnis was Killed in Action at the age of 27 (MacInnis, ... pp. 12, 20, 26). This aligns with the brutal fighting the Black Watch encountered directly following Operation Spring on the Verrières Ridge sector (MacInnis, ... p. 20).

Private Hugh Alphonse MacInnis and his battalion were engulfed in the Battle of Verrières Ridge (part of Operation Spring), which is recorded as one of the most tragic and bloody single-day disasters in Canadian military history.

Though official military paperwork frequently listed delayed casualties under July 27, 1944, the catastrophic assault took place in broad daylight on July 25, 1944, just south of Caen, France.

The scale of destruction was horrific. Of the roughly 325 men who walked onto the ridge that morning, 315 became casualties (killed, wounded, or captured) within just a few hours. Only 15 to 16 men successfully retreated back to Canadian lines. With 94% casualties, it was the heaviest loss sustained by any Canadian infantry battalion since the tragic 1942 Dieppe Raid.

Because the battalion was completely shattered and communications were totally severed, it took several days for the army to count the dead and process the paperwork. This is why Pvt. MacInnis—a former Nova Scotia farmer who had deliberately transferred from the artillery to the infantry "to see more action"—has his official date of death documented on July 27.

- He is permanently laid to rest at the Bretteville-sur-Laize Canadian Military Cemetery in France under grave reference VII.G.12. (MacInnis, ... p. 21).



Injuries & Medical History

The files document no active combat-inflicted injuries or survival wounds, as his first day of active frontline combat resulted in his immediate death (MacInnis, ... pp. 12, 20).