

Rezansoff, William, Trooper (K-49065)



- William Nick Rezansoff was born on 10 August 1922 in Kamsack, Saskatchewan. He was 22 years old when he was killed in action on either the 13 or 14 October 1944 in the Netherlands.
- On 6 January 1943, he enlisted at the recruiting depot in Vancouver, British Columbia and attended basic training. He was then sent to the Canadian Armoured Corps armoured training centre in Bordon, Ontario, where he qualified as a driver and mechanic for wheeled and tracked vehicles. He was sent overseas in August 1943 and assigned to the 1st Canadian Armoured Corps Reinforcement Unit. On 9 October 1943, he was transferred to the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars). On 15 July he deployed to France with his sub-unit, possibly "C" Squadron, Headquarters Squadron or Regiment Headquarters.
- On 26 March 1943, before leaving Canada, he was granted permission to marry Stella Boyko of 205 Abbott Street, Vancouver, British Columbia. After William was deployed, she moved to 1914 Halifax Street, Regina, Saskatchewan, possibly to be close to William's parents. On or about 5 July Stella gave birth to daughter Lorraine Helen.
- William had no military experience prior to enlisting. Prior to enlisting, he was employed as a farmer, and before that, for 12 months as a mechanic's helper at Prairie Garage.
- He attended school up to age 15 and completed grade 8 at Bonnybank Public School, a one-room rural school. Like his parents, he also spoke Russian.
- According to his medical examination, he was 5 foot 11 inches tall and weighed 169 pounds. He had blue eyes. He was found fit for category A-1.
- At the time of his enlistment, he lived at 1842 Parker Street, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- His parents, Nick, and Laura Rezansoff, who lived at 1627 Victoria Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan, were Russian at birth. His father, Nick, was employed as a moulder. They had two other children, Thomas, and Mary. After William's death, his parents, his wife, and daughter all seem to have taken up residence at the same place: 248 Fenton Street, New Westminster, British Columbia.
- The sole beneficiary of William's will was his mother.
- His body is buried in the Adegem Canadian War Cemetery, Maldegem, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium. (Ref: VIII. A. 8.)(plot, row, grave)

Context

- On 3 October 1944, when the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment arrived in the Scheldt area from Calais, France, the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division had just been tasked with clearing the low-lying lands south of the Scheldt Estuary of enemy forces so that the Allied Forces could start to use the recently captured deep-water port of Antwerp. However, the enemy was determined to hold these lands and deprive the Allied Forces of access to the port. An initial attempt was made by the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade, with "A" Squadron of the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment in support, to cross the Leopold Canal and advance north. This initiative bogged down very quickly in the face of fierce resistance. A second more-successful attempt by the 9th Canadian Infantry Brigade was made by performing a right-flanking operation from Terneuzen across Braakman inlet. Then to augment the 9th Brigade, on 11 October, the members of 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment were deployed into the landing area as infantry soldiers. The 9th Brigade was able to push south, and the Highland Light Infantry captured Biervliet. On 12 October, The 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment used its antitank guns, flamethrowers, and mortars to push south to form a front line between Biervliet and the Braakman Inlet. During this advance, it captured 170 enemy soldiers.



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- Then, on 13 October, the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment was then reassigned to the 8th Brigade. The North Shore Regiment of the 8th Brigade, which was to push south to the head waters of the Braakman inlet, moved through the front lines, thus freeing up "A" and "C" Squadrons for other tasks. "C" Squadron was switched over to the north-western sector of the front to fill in the gap between the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders and the North Nova Scotia Highlanders. At 1500 hours, under heavy mortar fire, they moved into their new positions just north of 'Driewegen', about 3 to 5 kilometres north-west of Biervliet. According to the Regiment's war diary, they suffered three casualties, one fatal. "A" Squadron moved into reserve while "B" Squadron continued the advance south and then west alongside the North Shore Regiment.
- Trooper William Rezanoff was killed in action in one of these operations, possibly during the bombardment of "C" Squadron, either on the 13 or 14 October 1944.