

**Walsh, John Wilbert**

**Lance Sergeant**

**Queen's Own Rifles of Canada**

**B/117669**

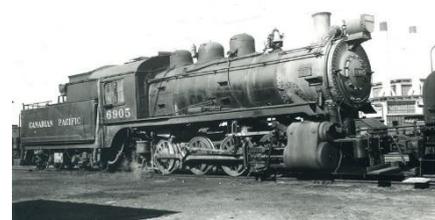


John Wilbert Walsh was born on January 29th 1918 in Uxbridge, Ontario, Canada. His parents, John Walsh and Zella Walsh Long were married in 1916 in Uxbridge.

John had a half-brother on his mother's side, Walter Russel Long, who was born in 1930 and a half-sister, Norma Mae Long, who was born in 1932.

He went to the Duke of York school in Toronto and loved running. He won several championships in athletics all-around with running and long jumping. John won the city of Toronto championship in 100 and 200 races in his division in 1934. John qualified for the British Commonwealth Games and would represent Canada there if the games hadn't been cancelled.

John loved to cook. He worked as a cook in a fastfood restaurant before he enroled in the army and he was also a fireman for the Canadian Pacific Railway.





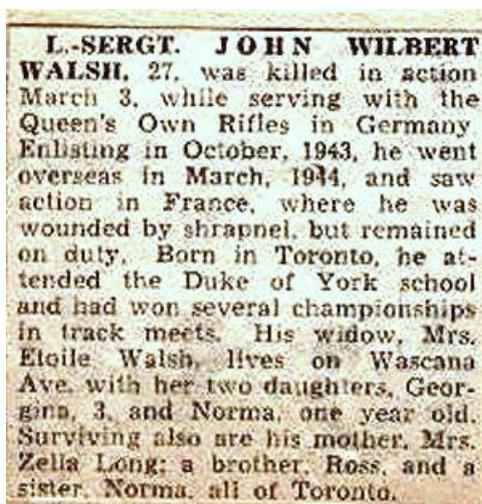
On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1944 he went overseas to England with the Queen's own rifles and in June he left for the Western-European mainland.

John Wilbert Walsh was killed in the battle for the Reichswald/Hochwald on the border between Germany and The Netherlands on March 3rd 1945.

The War Diary Queen's Own:

"While the 2nd Division was clearing the Hochwald of its stubborn defenders, the 3rd was pushing into the outskirts of the Balberger Wald. Here, as elsewhere, vehicles soon bogged down in the mud and minefields failed to reveal any recognizable pattern. Le Régiment de la Chaudière made a night attack against the northern annex of the Balberger known as the Tuschen Wald but were repulsed by "an overpowering artillery and mortar concentration". On the following day (2 March), after a further effort, the battalion succeeded in capturing this wood and then the Queen's Own and the North Shore Regiment passed through to clear the Balberger Wald. On 2 March also the 4th Canadian Armoured Division made a further thrust in the gap. Opposition here was as vicious as ever, and we lost many men without breaking clear through. The enemy continued his counter-attacks and not until the evening of 4 March could it be said that the great forest obstacle of the Hochwald and Balberger Wald was clear."

John is first buried in the temporary Military Cemetery in Bedburg, Germany, Section 1. Row 19. Grave 11.

A newspaper clipping with a yellowish, aged appearance. The text is in a bold, serif font. It reads: "L-SERGT. JOHN WILBERT WALSH, 27, was killed in action March 3, while serving with the Queen's Own Rifles in Germany. Enlisting in October, 1943, he went overseas in March, 1944, and saw action in France, where he was wounded by shrapnel, but remained on duty. Born in Toronto, he attended the Duke of York school and had won several championships in track meets. His widow, Mrs. Etoile Walsh, lives on Wascana Ave. with her two daughters, Georgina, 3, and Norma, one year old. Surviving also are his mother, Mrs. Zella Long; a brother, Ross, and a sister, Norma, all of Toronto." data-bbox="115 643 417 868"/>

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*Newspaper clipping The Toronto Star 1945.*

In September 1945, John is reburied at the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave **VII. F. 14.**

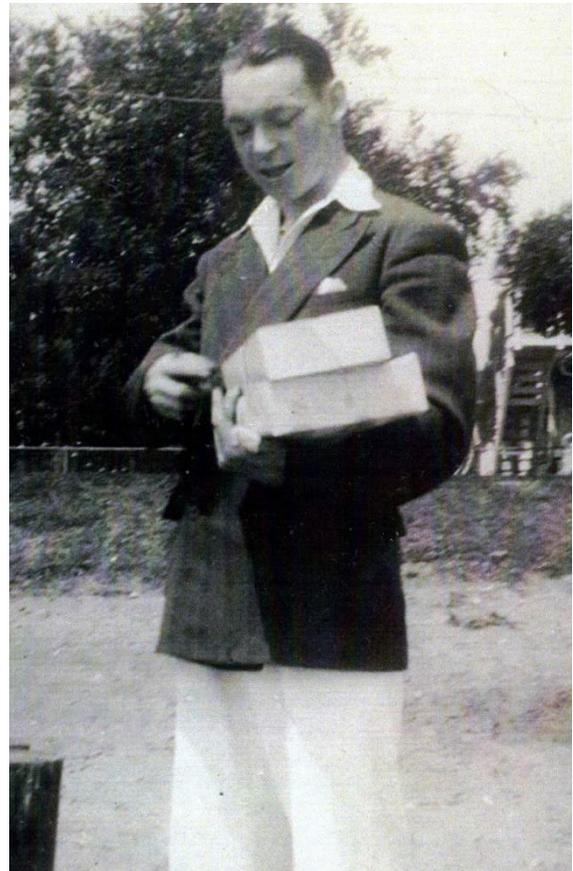
Awards: Memorial Cross, 1939-1945 Star, French Germany Star, War Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.



Life story Marian Straatman, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Norma Luks Walsh + photos  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
Library and Archives Canada



*John Walsh.*

15 Dec 43

FURTHER INFORMATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Referred to Army Examiner during course of Basic Training.

A well built man--well adjusted to Army life--wife and child in Toronto wherein mother also resides--reported by Platoon Officer as a slow thinker who is well up in training--good soldier prospect. This man obviously has an intelligence higher than that indicated by his "M" score. He is readily responsive to questioning and direct in his replies. Well disciplined, he is excellent soldier material.

Recommendation: Continue present training.

*G.M. Saunders*  
(G.M. Saunders) Capt.  
A.E. No.20 (B)T.C.

15 March 44

Completed Basic Training at #20 B.T.C.  
Completed Corps Training Infantry at A-10, C.I.T.C.  
M.F.M. 6 clear. Walsh is a well built man, with a pleasant, co-operative manner. He has tried hard throughout his training and seems dependable. Anxious to serve overseas in a combatant capacity. Examination of the foregoing and interview indicate suitability for overseas service in Infantry (others) operational. *N/T.*

Personnel Selection Examination of documents Completed  <i>OK</i> APR 20 1944 A.E. <i>Robert Speer</i> 1st Trg Bde DEBERT
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*John A. Mullin* Lt.  
(J.A. Mullin) A.E.  
A-10, C.I.T.C.

8 May 44 TOS - 3 CIRU from Canada.  
Interviewed, found satisfactory for Gen Duty in INF.  
and if required might be useful in RCE Rlwy Coy.

15 Jun. 44 SOS to X-4 List (CIC)

*E.A. Wood* Capt  
(E A Wood) SPO (2) 3 CIRU



*Christmas Eve 2018 - photo Diana Venis- Kerkhoven.*