

TROOPER WILLIAM SMASHNUK

Regimental # M16422



William, born on January 5th, 1921, was the 3rd oldest in Peter and Elena Smashnuk's family. He had seven brothers, Nick, Paul, Eli, George, Harry, Donald, Leon and three sisters; Dorothy, Mary and Doreen. Peter and Elena were originally from Romania and had settled in Andrew, Alberta before moving to the Grande Prairie District in 1920. Peter filed a homestead application on SW-25-72-3-W6 in an area of Bezanson known as Lindsay. The family worked hard on their farm and eventually purchased another quarter of land. The children received their education at the One-Room Lindsay School. From 1935 to 1939, William worked for the Northern Alberta Railway in Edmonton as a brakeman.

On November 16, 1939, William enlisted with the Edmonton Regiment Canadian Active Service Force at Edmonton. He embarked for the United Kingdom in December 1939. On January 3, 1942, William was granted permission to marry Elizabeth Hitchcock, a nurse, at Reigate, England. A son, Gary Allan Patrick was born at Bromley, Kent. William was injured in a motorcycle accident in England and later wounded while in Italy. He served in Canada, United Kingdom and Central Mediterranean area. Trooper William Smashnuk received the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp and the War Medal 1939-45. He was discharged on June 7, 1945 at Calgary.

William remained in Calgary; however, his wife and son did not join him in Canada. He died suddenly on October 6, 1947 and was buried at the Glen Leslie Cemetery.

Reference

Service File

Smoky River to Grande Prairie History Book

Notes from Janet Lougheed (niece)

Newspaper articles on being wounded (it appears not all information on being wounded is being sent by Archives Canada as part of the Service File)

Note: service file states year of birth as 1920.

