Reconnaissance

Albert Allsop and 39th Reconnaissance Wing - Royal Canadian Air Force

1942 to 1946

Interpreted by Russ Paton

WellWaterBlog.ca

"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

– Winston Churchill

In October of 2025, Russ and Terri (Bear) Paton followed Albert Allsop wartime trek through Europe. This is their interpretation of Albert's experience.

Shrapnel

September 23, 1942 – Calgary, Alberta

Albert Allsop never carried a gun, but he was one of the most shot-at soldiers of WWII

Click on the Leading Aircraftman for details….

"These were still warm when I picked them up, they are the ones that missed". - Albert Allsop handed me several pieces of shrapnel.

"Another piece went by my ear and tore a hole through the tank on the truck I was driving. I managed to get out before it blew, but eight hundred gallons of aviation fuel doesn't take long to ignite."

Albert Allsop never carried a gun in WWII, but he was one of the most shot-at soldiers in Europe. Al was a Leading Aircraftman on an aerial Reconnaissance Wing, which meant his division was always near (sometimes behind) enemy lines.

Al's duties included driving a fuel truck to refill reconnaissance aircraft.

Proximity to the enemy, and the strategic value of the cargo he was responsible for, made Albert a prime target of the German Luftwaffe. Al suffered a pierced eardrum when the fuel tanker exploded but otherwise managed to avoid serious injury during the war.

Photo of a damaged Spitfire taken by Albert Allsop, from his WWII collection.

Albert Ernest Allsop was born on a farm near the small northern Alberta town of Wembley, in 1918. At the outset of WWII, Albert moved to Calgary to work in a munitions manufacturing facility.

CPR's Ogden Shops in Calgary were converted from railcar repair to a wartime manufacturing plant.

Albert deployed his farm-honed mechanical abilities to help build 4-inch anti-aircraft guns for the war effort. In 1942, with the war in Europe at a full boil, Albert enlisted in the RCAF. The Airforce needed able-bodied personnel, and Al answered the call.

At 24, Albert Allsop was older than many of the recruits he enlisted with.

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Albert Allsop managed to dodge every bullet and piece of shrapnel thrown at him during the war. He returned to Alberta when the fighting ended and eventually married Freda Shepherd, Bear's mom.

At gatherings in Lethbridge, Bear and Freda would be occupied with family banter, which gave me an opportunity to press Al about his war experiences. He wasn't always forthcoming with stories but, if I was patient and guided him a little, Al would sometimes relay fascinating wartime chronicles.

When Albert passed away in 2004, he took most of those stories with him, but I was fortunate to record a few before they faded to obscurity.

Taking Al and Freda for a Cessna flight in 2001 jogged some wartime memories.

Tomorrow, Bear and I are travelling to Europe. We will follow Albert's wartime trek through England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, in 1944 and 1945. I hope to add physical perspective to Al's stories, include some peacetime context, and take a few photos of places and events Albert encountered during the war.

I hope to bring Albert's war experience back to life, eighty years on.

Please follow along, but be mindful of flying …

…Shrapnel

TOTIV VIRIBUS

April 15, 1944 - Bognor Regis, England

Every day the 39th Reconnaissance Wing operated; they lived up to their motto.

Click on the crest of the 39th for details…

You know how annoying it is when you buy a new vehicle or an appliance, and you must spend a few minutes reading the manual before you use it? All you want to do is drive it, or make coffee, but there are a few things you need to know before you do. It is an irritating process, but necessary. This post is like that.

Bear and I are on our way to Europe to follow her stepfather's path during WWII. It is going to be an exciting and dangerous adventure, and we hope you will ride along with us, but first I need to give you some background. By the time you finish reading *Albert's Operating Manual*, we will be in England and the battle will begin.

Albert Allsop enlisted in the Air Force in September of 1942. He was posted to the Ogden Shops in Calgary for six months, then sent overseas.

Al landed in Scotland on April 15, 1943, and was immediately transferred to Bognor Regis, on the south coast of England. When he arrived on the coast, Al asked another soldier if they had experienced any enemy bombing in the area. He was told; ***"No, all the bombing raids are happening in and around London".*** *Apparently, nobody mentioned this to Hitler - two hours later Al and his troupe were diving for cover as bombs exploded around them.*

Al told me from that day forward; he heard shelling and gunfire every day of the war. When the guns finally stopped in May of 1945, Al said that the silence was surreal.

Excerpt from Albert Allsop's Eulogy – December 2004

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Conversations I had with Albert Allsop about his wartime experiences weren't in the form of interviews. They were sporadic discussions, conducted piecemeal over several years. I was unfamiliar with most of the places and wartime events Albert mentioned, so it was difficult to delineate his stories and form a chronology. In later years, Albert's cognition was failing, which added yet another obstacle to compiling a complete narrative.

Albert's wartime photographs often jogged his memory and helped us pull the story together.

Albert (right) and a crew mate servicing a Spitfire in 1944.

To supplement Al's stories, I studied WWII history and troop movement charts for western Europe. That data, combined with Al's narratives, revealed a story worth sharing.

Albert Allsop, May 1945 – A Canadian hero.

While I was looking for historical wartime information, I stumbled upon two soldiers in Al's unit.

Bill Balmer was in the same 414 squadron as Al; he was also a Leading Aircraftman. Balmer was from Grande Prairie, not far from where Al was born, so the two soldiers surely knew one another.

Balmer's son posted an article which provided detail of 414 squadron's movements through Europe; it delivered insight into the workings of an aerial reconnaissance unit and added perspective to Al's story.

Another soldier in Al's division, Lloyd (Ike) Robertson, also a Leading Aircraftman, gave an interview to *The Memory Project*. In that interview, Robertson expanded upon events that Al had mentioned to me.

I overlayed Bill Balmer and Ike Robertson's information with Albert's narrative to create a clearer picture. Some of the experiences attributed to Albert that you will read about in coming posts is an amalgam of these third-party testimonials.

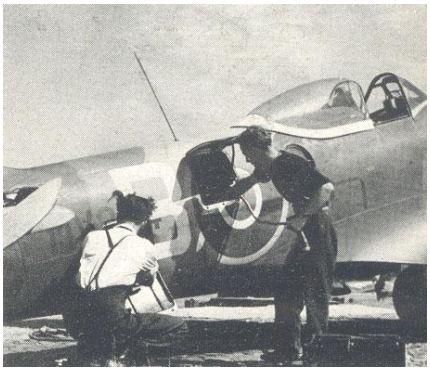
The “whole crew” of 39th Reconnaissance Wing, including Albert Allsop, Bill Balmer and Lloyd Robertson. The photo is too grainy to identify the individuals, but they are there.

To fully appreciate Al’s wartime experience, it is necessary to understand aerial reconnaissance.

The 39th Reconnaissance Wing was a Royal Canadian Airforce division under the command of the British RAF. The 39th was formed in September 1942 and operated from a command post at Leatherhead, Surrey, in southern England. Al served in “*39 RECCE*” throughout the war.

A reconnaissance unit’s purpose was to gather photographic intelligence in support of allied ground operations. Super-fast, single-seat aircraft, mostly Spitfires and Mustangs, would fly sorties behind enemy lines. Pilots would photograph troop movements, and identify bridges, railroads and other industrial targets. Film would be rushed back to base, developed, and in the hands of allied strategists within hours.

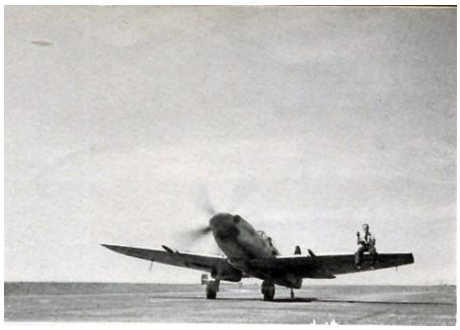
Aerial reconnaissance was essential to the Allies in locating, and thereafter destroying, enemy targets. The 39th flew as many as 80 recon sorties every day of the war.



Camera and film needed to be replaced after every flight.

Albert's duties involved maintenance of recon aircraft. He repaired planes that returned damaged and got them back in the sky for their next mission. Al also managed and transported aviation fuel, maintained runways, and assisted with camp mobilization each time the 39th advanced.

On a particular day in 1944, Al was asked to help a pilot navigate around potholes on a shelled-out taxiway. He positioned himself on the wing of a nose-high Spitfire and guided the pilot with hand gestures.



Al hopped off before the plane went to France.

Al's crew mate, Bill Balmer was tasked with running exposed film from returning aircraft to a photo developing facility. Once photographs were set, Bill would transport them to Headquarters for analysis.

Transporting film was a high-risk endeavour. Speed was of the essence, so Bill kept the throttle of his Harley Davidson cracked wide open, day and night, to make the urgent deliveries.

The enemy occasionally stretched piano wire across roadways, at neck height. Bill kept his head throughout the war, others didn't.

After D-Day (June 6, 1944), the 39th mobilized on the European continent. They continued to fly reconnaissance missions over enemy territory assisting ground troops advancing through France, Belgium, Holland, and deep into Germany.

Men like Bill Balmer, Ike Robertson, and Albert Allsop were integral to Allied success during WWII.

Albert Allsop, centre.

Now that you have read the manual…..

The harrowing stories Al told me about the events of D-Day, crossing the English Channel, landing in Normandy, trekking through war-torn Europe, and engaging the enemy in the heart of Germany will be the subject of blog posts over the next few days. I hope that you will join Bear and I as we ride along with Albert Allsop and the 39th Reconnaissance Wing through Europe in 1944-45.

Every day the 39th Reconnaissance Wing operated; they lived up to their motto: TOTIV VIRIBUS…

… With All Our Might!

A Letter from the Front

April 16, 1944 - Bognor Regis, England

This puffy cloud put a punctuation mark on the end of our first day following Albert Allsop's wartime trek through Europe.

Click on the dot for details…

Bear and I arrived in Bognor Regis, where Bear's stepdad was stationed in 1944. Our accommodation is undoubtedly more comfortable than Albert's was, and we never had to evade enemy fire on our first night here. We have some jetlag, but that is the extent of our discomfort.

While we are recovering, I concocted this fictional letter written by Albert to his parents the day after he arrived in southern England….

April 16, 1944

Dear Mother and Father

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am happy to report that I have arrived in southern England after the long journey from Calgary. We travelled five days on the train to Halifax, then 13 days on board the "Louis Pasteur" to Glasgow, and another full day on the train to Portsmouth. Needless to say, I am happy to have my feet on solid ground again.

This prairie boy had never seen an ocean before, but I am making up for lost time. Two weeks on the Atlantic and now, here I am living on the English coast! (I made the mistake of calling the water at

Portsmouth the "Ocean". A local Brit soldier laughed at me and said, "that's not the ocean, that's the 'sea'. Imagine! What's the difference, I say.)

The war has been nothing more than a dream for me the past month. It seemed so far away as we crossed the vastness of Canada and the Atlantic. The other recruits and I played cards and enjoyed the scenery, not thinking much about the conflict we were headed toward. We had just settled into barracks when the air raid siren sounded, and we were ordered to take cover. The peace of the past month was broken in a very big way! German Heinkel bombers dropped shells all around us. The anti-aircraft guns I built back in Ogden shot back at them, but the damage was done. Several aircraft and support vehicles were hit just across the runway from our bunker.

I knew when I signed up that I would be heading into danger, but I never anticipated that it would happen within hours of joining active duty, or just how furious the fighting would be. I don't regret my decision to join the RCAF, but the war has already become a terrifying reality I wasn't quite prepared for.

But please don't worry about me. I intend to stay safe and will be home as soon as I can.

On a happier note, I met a fellow from home while on the ship. Bill Balmer, from Grande Prairie, is a leading aircraftman like me. He and I are assigned to the 414 Reconnaissance Wing. We will be working together through this fight. Safety in numbers, I suppose, and good to have a pal from home!

There are rumours that the Allies will invade the continent soon. No one knows when it will happen or where exactly the attack will take place. I expect that 414 REECE will be very active the next few weeks, flying over the Channel to find the enemy and their supply chains.

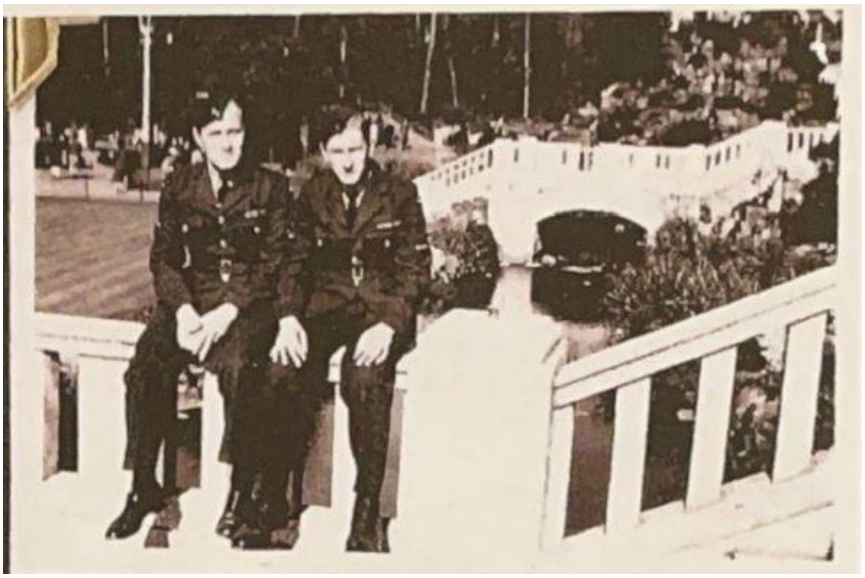
I better go get ready for it. I will send another note soon, and please do the same.

Your Son,
Albert

P.S. I am enclosing some photos. Me, and my Alberta pal, Bill, in Glasgow. Our Wing Commander, Moncrief, and a Heinkel Bomber we won't have to worry about again.

Albert Allsop - April 16, 1944

A Letter from the Front



Cyber Dust Bunnies

June 6, 1944 - Goodwood Aerodrome, England

Somewhere out there, floating on a mysterious cloud, is something you will never see.

Click on the Spitfire for details…

In the days before Wi-Fi, if I lost my notes, I could retrieve them by shuffling through the papers on my desk or looking under the bed. Not anymore. I wrote a draft post yesterday but misplaced it before I could publish it on the website. My notes about a ride I took on a Spitfire disappeared into that limitless void on the internet where lost documents go to die.

Somewhere out there, floating on a mysterious cloud, is a cleverly written and informative piece that no one will ever see. If there is a bed on the cloud, my notes are probably under it, surrounded by …

… Cyber Dust Bunnies.

I will attempt to resurrect the post as time permits, meanwhile, here are a few photos that partially capture the essence of the day spent with Al in 1944.

Albert Allsop and Wing Commander James Moncrief, 1944.

Russell Paton and Captain David Muldowney, 2025.

This is the fourth in a series of posts following Albert Allsop on his trek through Europe in 1944-45. The series begins on September 28, 2025.

Bai de la Seine

July 2, 1944 - Normandy, France

Al told me that crossing the channel to Normandy was his worst experience of the entire war.

Click on the portal overlooking Bai de la Seine for the complete story…

This is the scene Albert Allsop would have gazed upon in the early morning of July 2, 1944.

Albert was strapped into the driver's seat of a fuel truck being transported across the English Channel, on a barge like this one. His orders were to drive the fuel truck onto the shore when it landed at Juno Beach.

The truck and its cargo were to reach the mainland, "*at any cost*".

Juno beach was quiet this morning. A few seagulls chatted while the waves gently lapped the shoreline, a stark comparison to the dawn of July 2, 1944.

I gathered the story of Albert crossing the English Channel in segments. He never told the story from start to finish, it was fed to me at intervals, during conversations over several years. I have pieced together those snippets of conversation and overlayed them with historical records. I apologize in advance if the narrative that follows comes across like intermittent machine-gun fire.

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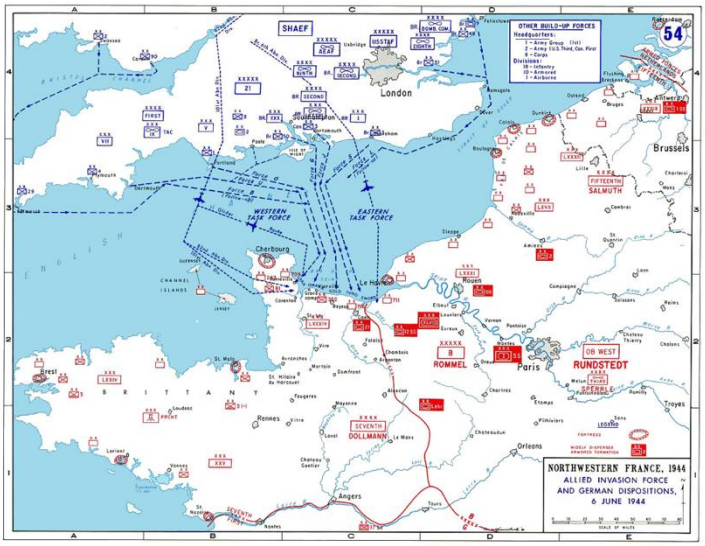
Al's unit remained in southern England after the Allied invasion of occupied France on June 6, 1944. The 39th continued to fly reconnaissance missions which provided valuable military intelligence on German positions. That data helped the Allies establish a foothold on the continent.

By July, the Reconnaissance wing was ready to move their base to France. Al and the other soldiers prepared to relocate their entire platoon of men, equipment, fuel, and aircraft, across the Channel.

Al's unit departed Portsmouth in barges, late in the evening of July 1st. They intended to arrive at Juno Beach under cover of darkness.



Al told me that large helium balloons were attached to each barge, with high-tensile wire used as a tether. The balloons and wire were a deterrent to enemy aircraft; if they came in low to fire on the barges, they would get tangled in the wires.

As they neared the beach, lookouts were positioned on the gunnels on either side of the ramp gate. The soldiers were tasked with directing the boat's pilot with hand signals, to navigate through shallow water. Al watched as the lookouts gave their signals and hoped that they would find a safe place to land.

The barge approached shore at full speed. Al told me that they hit an unexpected sandbar, which propelled the lookouts overboard.

"I never saw those poor bastards again".

The barge pilot attempted to reverse off the sandbar but couldn't move. The troop leader on board gave a command to lower the ramp. As it came down, Al saw what looked like an ocean of water between his truck and the shore. When the ramp was fully lowered into the water, Al placed the shifter in low gear and eased off the clutch. The loaded fuel truck, with Al strapped in the seat, rolled into the Bai de la Seine.

Before they left England, Al and the other soldiers had covered the truck engine with grease and wrapped it with burlap sacking. They had extended the truck's air intake above cab level in the hope that, if they had to drive through deep water, the engine and carburetor would stay dry.

When the truck drove off the ramp the tires contacted solid sand bottom. Al's elation with this development was short-lived. The sea floor remained solid, but it sloped *downward*, not *up* toward the beach. The truck crawled through ever deeper water, inching toward shore. Sea water rose past the floorboards and climbed the steering column. The truck, still in the lowest gear, pushed a wall of water with the grill. The shore was still a long way off.

Back in England, Al and the other drivers had been strapped into their trucks with seatbelts in such a way that they could not release themselves from their position in the driver's seat. Officers were aware that there was a chance that trucks might enter deep water when the barges landed on the French shore and they were taking no chances that drivers could abandon the trucks and their precious cargo of fuel.

Panic was creeping into Al's mind as the water level reached his waist, then his chest, with no way to bail out, as the truck descended ever deeper.

Al told me that the channel crossing was his worst experience of the entire war. He was convinced that he was going to drown, strapped into a truck, with no way of saving himself.

Fortunately, the bottom of the Bay levelled out and started to slope upward. The engine never failed. Al triumphantly drove his truck and cargo onto Juno beach that day. He was cut out of the driver's seat by his crew mates.

I have a great deal of respect for the humble man who told me this story. On July 2, 1944, the value of Albert Allsop's life had been reduced to less than a tank of fuel.

Albert's humility, and our freedom, were both forged in the chilly waters of the …

… **Bai de la Seine.**

"Did you celebrate with a beer later?" **I asked Al.**

"No, I went to the latrine and puked."

Apples

July 7, 1944 - Arromanches, France

When Wing Commander Moncrief took off from the airstrip at Arromanches, this would have been his view.

Click on the harbour for a closer look…

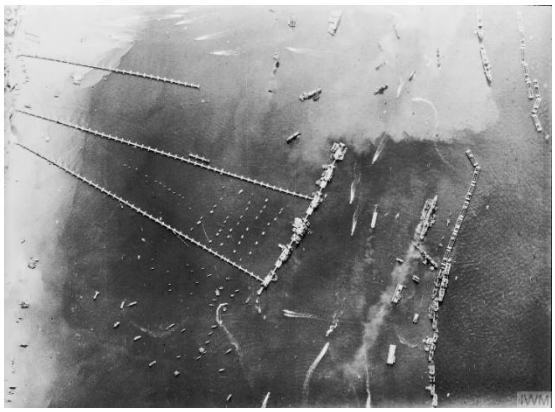
Albert's memories of his first few days on the European continent weren't about the trauma of the recent crossing, the proximity of the enemy, or the ceaseless shelling, they were about apples.

Al told me that his first assignment in France was to clear an apple orchard to make a runway for 39th Reconnaissance Wing's airplanes. He and a dozen other soldiers were sent to a field south of Arromanches and ordered to cut down trees in a wide swath.

"The apples weren't fully ripe in July, but we ate quite a few anyway. We were all dancing the "Green-Apple Two-Step" by the time we finished."

\- ***Albert Allsop***

When Wing Commander Moncrief took off from the apple-field airstrip at Arromanches, this would have been his view.



"Mulberry" harbours was a concept put forward by Winston Churchill. There were no natural ports along the coast of Normandy, so Churchill suggested that the Allies build them. He pitched the idea of manufactured, floating, modular harbours to President Roosevelt, who told his secretary after the meeting…

"You know that was Churchill's idea. He has a hundred a day and about four of them are good."

I am certain that more than 4% of Churchill's ideas were sound. He did win the war after all.

One of Al's squad mates proved he could make bad decisions where apples were concerned…

"We had a dugout with sandbags across the top, so when the guns got closer, we got down in the underground until they had gone. And this one night, we were sitting in France, and we were underneath, in an orchard; and there were some apples there and there was a tent next to ours. So, I was out of my tent, and I threw a couple apples and hit the tent next to us [laughs], and four guys came high tailing out of their underground. [laughs] I'm not going to tell you what they called me."

- Lloyd George (Ike) Robertson

Lobing apples at someone's tent in an air raid zone might have stretched the limits of good humour, but practical jokes are how soldiers kept themselves entertained in wartime.

Al told me another story which he asked me not to repeat. More than 20 years have passed, and I feel that the statute of limitations has run out, so here goes….

When the hostilities were in a lull, officers would assign tasks, many of them needless, just to keep energetic soldiers occupied. During one such break in the fighting, Al's CO ordered him and a few others to paint a Quonset building. The corrugated metal structure didn't require paint, but that is the task they were given.

One of the guys found a case of French wine and brought it with him to the jobsite. Rather than paint the building, the men sat behind it and got royally drunk. One soldier drank so much he passed out, and the others seized the opportunity to play a unique practical joke. They stripped the drunken soldier's pants off, dipped his rear end in paint, and dobbed ass-prints all over the building.

An unnamed soldier, possibly removing paint from his behind?

Bear and I wandered around Arromanches today. There is not much evidence that it was the most active harbour in the world for several months in 1944.

The town, and the airfield Al and the others carved out of an orchard, have reverted to their peaceful purpose, producing …

… Apples.

Remnants of Churchill’s Mulberry Harbours are still rusting on the beach. Sunken barges dot the perimeter of the bay, while idle German bunkers are aimed in their direction.

There is also a museum at Arromanches, dedicated to the heroes, and practical jokers, of that time.

Hongerwinter

1944-10-04 - Eindhoven, Netherlands

"We didn't have so much as a shrivelled potato to eat." – Ernie Verhulst

Click on the ration tin to hear how Canadian soldiers affected the people of Holland.

"39 RECCE would move locations frequently in order to be near the units that needed their support. Because of our proximity to the Front, 39 RECCE were the only Air Force Unit considered 'Front-Line Troops'." - **Bill Balmer**

Between July and October of 1944, Albert Allsop and 39th Reconnaissance Wing advanced with Allied forces north and eastward through France and Belgium. They reached Eindhoven, Netherlands on October 4th.

Nothing about the march through France and Belgium had been comfortable, but what they found in Holland tested even the toughest soldier's resilience.

Albert never met my neighbour Ernie Verhulst, but they had similar experiences during the winter of 1944-45 …

Ernie was 14 years old, living near Eindhoven. He was too young to fight but old enough to remember the Hongerwinter. Over coffee, Ernie told me some of what he experienced that terrible winter of 1944-45 …

"We didn't have so much as a shriveled potato to eat. My mother dug up tulip bulbs, and we ate those."

Albert was never forced to eat flower bulbs, but food and supply shortages confined 39 RECCE to Eindhoven on the German border, for the winter. Unusually wet and cold weather exacerbated the discomfort.

"We sat in Holland most of the winter [1944-1945], not doing much of anything; frontline armour, but nothing happening. One of the problems was that the armies had made so much progress we went quickly through Belgium, Holland to the border of Germany. Supply was a problem, so we were held up. – Bill Balmer

According to Dutch historian Ingrid de Zwarte, food became so scarce in the western Netherlands that in February 1945 official rations in the area dropped to 340 kcal per person per day. With so little food available, some people resorted to eating pets, animal feed, and flower bulbs. Starving citizens made long trips to the agrarian northeast to buy food direct from farmers. The black market thrived. For example, the price of bread on the black market was 210 times the official price. The situation was so bad that 40,000 to 50,000 children were evacuated to the northeast. By the time the Netherlands were finally liberated in May 1945, around 20,000 people had died.

For perspective, this little Belgian chocolate bar I picked up at the train station in Brussels contains 310 calories, almost a full day's ration during the Hongerwinter.

Al never reported going hungry, but he mentioned the poor quality of army food rations during the winter of 1944-45.

Albert and Freda stayed with us for a few days in 1990, to visit their grandson Marshall. We offered them a choice of white or whole wheat bread for breakfast toast. Al's response was quick, and honest…

"I don't eat black bread, had enough of that during the war."

The Germans took advantage of Allied supply shortages, relentlessly attacking bases stalled along the border.

"That was at Eindhoven, Holland. Vic Seer and I were putting a prop on an aircraft; and I looked out and I counted seven Focke-Wulfs, German fighter planes, coming in right down on the deck. So they come in and they shot up the wing on the one there. - **Lloyd George (Ike) Robertson**

The Spitfire in this photo from Al's WWII album, is likely the one Ike Robertson referred to in the quote above.

"I'd gone down and got behind the steel post of the hangar; and I reached out and got a piece of cement and put it up in front of my head. [laughs] And Vic run out around the corner and there was a dugout there; and he got down and there was six guys down in there in water up to their knees. And so as soon as they left, I watched the waves of aircraft, there was about 30 aircraft, and they come over in waves and they'd go up and they'd shoot back over the field. We lost 16 men that day. One chap had just come in from Canada the day before. After the raid was over, we said, oh, don't worry, they won't be back again until tomorrow. [laughs]" – **Ike Robertson**

Photo from Ike Robertson's collection.

"Once, near Eindhoven, we were cut off for three days and they attacked us every day. You took your weapon with you everywhere then, even to the latrine. They would attack and you would just grab it and run to the slit trench". – **Bill Balmer**

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Albert didn't use his tobacco ration during the war, he sometimes exchanged it for extra food items, which he shared with local kids.

A dribble of emergency supply packages arrived from Canada late in 1944. The rations included a variety of tinned and packaged goods including bully beef, Spam, cheese, jam, and soup.

Canadian Soldiers often shared their ration packages with the Dutch people.

I wish I had a story to tell you about this ration tin. Unfortunately, I don't know the circumstances of the bullet hole, or the fate of the soldier who the tin belonged to.

By spring of 1945 supply chain shortages had eased. Allied bombers were redeployed to drop aid packages to the starving people of Holland. My neighbour Ernie described the effect the bravery and generosity of Canadian soldiers had on him.

"We heard airplanes flying in and thought we were being bombed again, but they were dropping big boxes of food! We were so happy, we ran out in the fields not much caring if the packages landed on our heads. That was April of 1945. We never went hungry again."

***"The Canadians liberated us. I was so grateful I decided to move to Canada when the war was over."* – Ernie Verhulst**

Bear and I spent two days near Eindhoven. We found a boutique hotel not far from the WWII airport where Albert was stationed during the winter of 1944/45.

There are some fine restaurants in the vicinity, and a well-stocked grocery store. I picked up some local apples, more chocolate, and a package of “roombotter caramel stroopwafels”, so we did not personally experience the effects of …

… Hongerwinter.

Dizzy

1944-10-04 - Eindhoven, Holland

Why does this container have three handles?

Click on the military issue Jerry Can to find the answer…

Everyone and everything in the military during WWII had a nickname.

Collectively, enlisted men were ***Grunts***, and officers were ***POGs*** (***P****eople* ***O****ther than* ***G****runts*), but every individual also had his own moniker.

General Sir Bernard ***"Monty"*** Montgomery shaking hands with General George ***"Old Blood and Guts"*** Patton (no relation).

Nicknames weren't assigned; they developed organically as soldiers got to know one another. The names could be attributable to a place of birth ***Tex***, stature ***Shorty*** (usually reserved for tall people), or by some character trait or happenstance. A friendly fellow might be ***Buddy.*** One soldier with a leg injury was called ***Step-and-a-Half***. An unfortunate soldier who was caught sitting to pee was nicknamed ***Squatter*****;** the name followed him the entire war.

It could have been worse. German gestapo leader Klaus Barbie was called ***The Butcher of Leon*** for heinous war crimes he ordered or personally carried out.

I don't know what Albert's nickname was, maybe ***Al*** was enough. Lloyd George Robertson, one of the guys in Al's troupe, was called ***Ike,*** *for no reason I can think of*.

Ike and ***Al***

The collective name for Aircraftmen, like Ike and Al, was ***Airk*** or ***Erk.***

There were many nicknames for the enemy. Germans were ***Fritz, Jerry, Krauts*** (as in sauerkraut), ***Heinie, Hun,*** *or just* ***Nazis.*** Italians also called Germans ***Krauts*** but their version was ***Crucchi***.

Brits were ***Teabags*** or ***Tommy,*** as in *Tommy Atkins* (everyman in Britain, like John Doe

The Germans assigned nicknames too. French were ***Froschfresser*** “Frog eaters”, and Americans were called ***Kaugummifresser*** “Chewing gum eaters”. For reasons we can be very proud of, Germans called Canadians ***Sturmtruppen*** “Stormtroopers”, a nickname earned during First World War battles at Ypres and Vimy Ridge.

The Soviet Union Red Army had 13 million men and women in uniform during WWII. According to the Germans, every single one of them was named ***Ivan***.

Nicknames weren’t just used on the European front. In the Pacific the enemy were ***Japs*** or ***Nips*** (Japan or Nipon). The Allies weren’t the only ones who could dish out pejorative names. アリゲーター **(**pronounced “***Arigētā)*** was ***Alligator*** in Japanese, *any Allied personnel in an amphibious vehicle.*

Military equipment was also given nicknames. Pet names were more commonly used than the real labels.

Armour piercing weapons were ***Can-openers***. The British called Mills Bombs, ***Christmas-Crackers*** and Tanks were ***Fire Buggies.*** Soviet submachine guns were ***Burp Guns.***

An inflatable life vest was called a ***Mae West***, in honour of a buxom film star.

Hand Grenades were known by many names: ***Potato Masher*** (German), ***Pineapple*** (American), ***Hawkins*** (British).

In this photo, a British soldier is tinkering with a Hawkins, with a **Pineapple** strapped on his belt.

In this one, a German infantryman is about to throw a **Potato Masher.**

I think the German design might have given them a slight edge. I have never thrown a hand grenade, but I am certain that I could toss one attached to a handle farther than a ball or can-shaped one. What do you think, would a ***Potato Masher*** or a ***Pineapple*** be more effective in battle?

Stalinorgel (Stalin's Organ) – a phallic name given to Russian Katjusha rocket launchers.

Jerry Cans are so named because they were designed to carry fuel while fighting the Jerry's.

My brother Kevin is responsible for this tidbit:

"There are three handles on each can. When carried by one person he would use the centre handle. If two soldiers were carrying a heavy Jerry Can, they would hold it between them using the outside handles."

But let's get back to people nicknames.

American jazz singer, **Dizzy** Gillespie did not serve in World War II. At his Selective Service interview, he told the local board, "*in this stage of my life here in the United States whose foot has been in my ass?*" "*So if you put me out there with a gun in my hand and tell me to shoot at the enemy, I'm liable to create a case of 'mistaken identity' of who I might shoot.*" He was classified 4-F (a person considered unfit for military service by the U.S. Selective Service System due to physical, mental, or moral reasons) In other words, he was

… Dizzy.

Salt Peanuts - Dizzy Gillespie.

I have inserted a link to one of Dizzy Gillespie's wartime songs, but I am **not** recommending it. The song is 1940's Jazz, which is a genre that takes some patience to listen to. The song lyrics consist of two words "*Salt*" and "*Peanuts*".

Click the link if you want, but the song makes me **dizzy**.

Terri ***Bear*** and Russell ***Russ*** Paton in Eindhoven, Holland

Never, Never, Never

April 26, 1945 - Bergen-Belsen, Germany

I lack the literacy skills to describe the depth of horror Al and the other soldiers encountered at Bergen-Belsen.

Click on the German officer and his cargo for an interpretation, from someone who was there…

Albert hesitated as he turned the page of his war photo album.

"These are disturbing. We were among the first to arrive at Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp after it was liberated. I took these photos, but I don't like looking at them much."
– Albert Allsop

Al's concentration camp photos are *disturbing*. I remember experiencing sadness and barely controlled revulsion, as I sat looking at them in the living room of the man who took the photos.

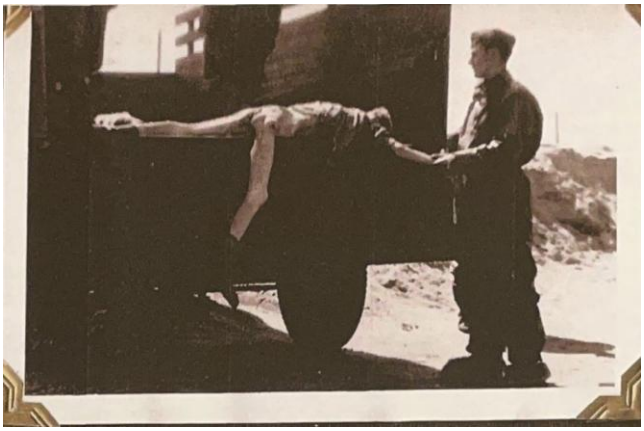
-

Al didn't share much about his concentration camp experiences. He showed me the photos, but he did not elaborate on what he had seen at the camp or how he felt about it. I tried to extract details from him a few times over the years. Each time, Al either remained silent, or changed the subject. He was obviously uncomfortable thinking about his time at Bergen-Belsen, 40 – 50 years after the war had ended.

Bear and I visited the Bergen-Belsen Memorial today. We tried to understand what her stepdad might have experienced walking into this death camp in 1945.

Before our visit, I read articles other soldiers in Al's unit published and gleaned additional information from official army records. I overlayed that data with Al's photos to gain perspective on the concentration camp experience. Unfortunately, I lack the literacy skills to describe the depth of the horror Al and the other soldiers encountered here.

How could humanity come to this?



39 RCCE marched into Bergen-Belsen on April 26, 1945, just eleven days after British forces liberated it from German control. What they found there stretched even battle-hardened soldiers' understanding of the capacity for human cruelty.

Al and the others remained at the concentration camp for several weeks, doing what they could to assist survivors and bury their dead.

Al and his fellow soldiers distributed water and food to survivors and transported the dead to mass graves.

Bergen-Belsen was established as a Prisoner of War camp for captured Soviet soldiers but soon evolved into a concentration camp for Jews and other victims of the Nazi regime.

70,000 people died at Bergen-Belsen. POWs, Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, political opponents, Roma (Gypsies), Poles, Blacks, gay men, disabled individuals, and anyone deemed by the Nazi's as a "criminal"; basically "anyone who disagreed with them".

The first to die were approximately 20,000 Soviet POWs. They are buried in mass graves about a kilometer from the camp.

Persecuted detainees followed in such great numbers that the Bergen-Belsen killing machine could not keep up with their annihilation and disposal. As many as 35,000 detainees died before the Allies liberated the camp.

Thousands of bodies remained unburied or un-cremated, heaped in piles or shallow trenches (stock photo).

Many of the 60,000 still alive at the camp were in terribly poor health. An additional 13,000 died before they received adequate food and medical care from their liberators.

I honestly do not have words to describe the horror of Bergen-Belsen. I will close with one final anecdote that comes as close as I am able. I do not include this picture and attached narrative for

dramatic effect. It happened, and the story needs to be told; for the woman and her baby, for Al and the soldiers who fought for them, and for all of humanity.

This photo, among all of Al's war images, had the greatest impact. Al never said a word about it but while I was researching Albert's WWII experience, I came across a testimonial of Marcel Auger, a soldier in Al's unit. Auger told the story of a woman he had seen in a pit at Bergen-Belsen. Auger's story and Al's photo are almost certainly connected….

"They took all those poor people and put them in the pit. In one of the holes, you can see a woman. She had nice black hair and a hole in her thigh. One of the guards told me how she got that hole in her thigh. The woman gave birth to a child at the camp. She was breastfeeding when one morning, an SS guard quartered it before her very eyes. She went crazy. She tried to run away and escape, but she couldn't get through the barbed wire. They shot her. You can see her body in the hole. It's a horrible memory." **– Marcel Auger**

World War II ended eighty years ago. Bergen-Belsen is now a reflective memorial in a peaceful nation, but mankind has not changed. We continue to have the capacity for profound evil, on the scale of WWII and the holocaust, or beyond.

We must be diligent, to resist and quell such evil before it takes root. Next time brutality on the scale of WWII happens, people like Bill Balmer, Ike Robertson, Marcel Auger and Albert Allsop may not be here to save us.

'I saw another man, I don't know how old he was, but he seemed like an older man. He was sitting on a rock and was chewing on his wool blanket. He was chewing and looking at me like a wild animal ready to jump on its prey."
*"It's an image I will never forget**. Never, Never, Never."***

– Marcel Auger

A Short Slither

April 30, 1945 - Bergen-Belsen, Germany

Not bald, emaciated or shivering, ….yet.

Click on the happy child in Montessori School, in 1940, to see what became of her….

Anne Frank

Born 12 June 1929, Frankfurt,
Lived in Amsterdam 1933 to 1944,
Spent two years in hiding in a secret annex,
where she wrote her famous *Diary of a Young Girl*,
Arrested, separated from her parents, and deported to prison,
Seen "*bald, emaciated and shivering*" January 1945,
Died in Bergen-Belsen March 1945,
Age 15.

My uncle Earl was born 24 May 1929, 19 days *before* Anne Frank. Earl is still very much alive and doing well (for a man of 96 years). My point is Anne Frank's story didn't happen very long ago. All that transpired to her and 6,000,000 other Jewish Holocaust victims happened within one man's lifetime.

World War II isn't ancient history; we are still living it. The time and metaphorical distance from Alligator Alcatraz to Bergen-Belsen is …

… A Short Slither.

Anne Frank and Earl Paton, born within a month of one another.

Anne has been dead for eighty years, because her parents were Jewish.

5000 people are buried under this single mound.

On the Other Foot

May 01, 1945 - Bergen-Belsen, Germany

Alex Coleville observes the atrocities of war.

Click on the soldier/artist for details…

Albert Allsop marched across wartime Europe with a famous Canadian painter. I doubt they knew one another, but Alex Coleville was with the Canadians in Normandy during the D-day invasion. He was in Nijmegen, Holland when Al was there, and they both witnessed the atrocities of Bergen-Belsen in April of 1945.

Alex Coleville, originally from Amherst, Nova Scotia, enlisted in the Canadian infantry in 1942 and served in a combat capacity until his talents as an artist were revealed. Coleville was elevated to the rank of lieutenant and assigned duties as a war correspondent and artist.

Alex Coleville with his painting, *Infantry near Nijmegen (1945)*

Colville's wartime paintings graphically depict the horrors he experienced while traveling with the 3rd Canadian Army Division.

Tragic Landscape (1945)

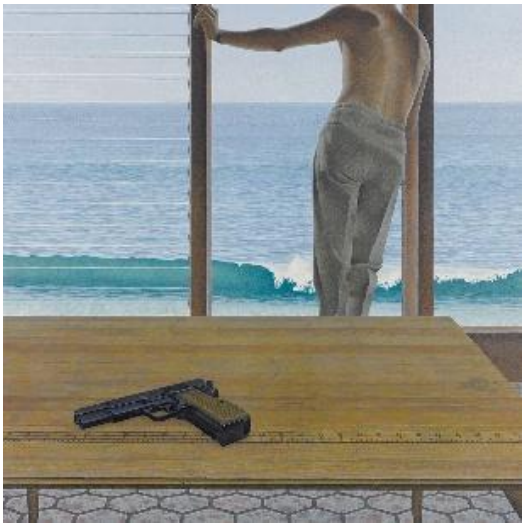
Bodies in a Grave (1946)

Infantry near Nijmegen (1945)

"His assignment to the concentration camp after its liberation exposed him to the full horror of human depravity, a traumatic and deeply affecting experience that he described as leaving him feeling numb."

- Alex Coleville Biography

Coleville continued his artistic career after the war. The hostilities were over, but his post-war art continued to exhibit the tension he felt in Europe. Coleville's paintings have a "*What is going to happen next?"* quality, that reflects the uncertainties of war.



Pacific,

Horse and Train,

Woman with Revolver

“The war profoundly affected Alex Coleville's art, instilling a lasting sense of the fragility of life, the potential for human violence, and the preciousness of ordinary, peaceful existence. His harrowing experience as a war artist, particularly his assignment to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, led to an enduring sense of disillusionment and a sharpened awareness of mortality that informed his signature style of meticulous, structured compositions and themes of isolation, trauma, and existential tension”.

- Alex Coleville Biography

The war changed Albert Allsop too. I never knew him as a young man; I met Al when he was 68 years old. I don’t know what his character was like before the war, but it is clear to me that the experience had changed him. Al was frugal with his possessions and frugal with his emotions.

I once introduced Albert to a customer of mine who was of German descent. Phil Spiess was a soldier in the German army during WWII; he spent most of the war imprisoned in a Russian POW camp. Phil survived that ordeal and immigrated to Canada after the war to establish an earthmoving business.

When Al accompanied me to work one day, we happened to bump into Phil, and I introduced them. As they shook hands I said,

“You two soldiers might not have been such good friends 50 years ago”.

The comment was meant as a joke but neither of the former combatants found much humor in it. I asked Al about it on the drive home, but I didn’t get much of a response.

-

Albert was a kind man, but he could be moody and psychologically distant. Until he met Freda, Bear’s mom, he had difficulty with relationships.

How much of Albert’s character was a residue of war, I cannot say.

Albert and Freda in 1990.

Following the path of Canadian soldiers through Europe in 1944-1945 has changed me too. I haven't been shot at or taken prisoner, in fact everyone we have met along the way has been extraordinarily friendly, but still, I feel a creeping sense of foreboding.

My disillusionment stems from the fact that we have this graphic example of what comes of hatred, of territorial greed, of tribalism blended with fascism, and yet it appears we have learned nothing.

The Second World War is only one lifetime behind us, but humanity seems poised to repeat it.

The British, Americans, and Russians of 1945 were heroes to us all. Allied by a common threat, they fought to preserve our freedom and won.

Today, the Russians are an aggressor. And the Americans? Who can say where they are headed, despite their hard-fought freedom?

I wonder what Alex Coleville and Albert Allsop would say about current political circumstances. I think they would agree that not much has changed, other than the hob-nailed boot of oppression appears to be …

… On the Other Foot.

Grave of a Canadian Trooper by Alex Colville (12164)
© Canadian War Museum

Honourably Discharged

May 4, 1945 – Lűneburg Heath, Germany

"A soldier-to-soldier camaraderie emerged between the victors and the defeated."

Click on the former combatants for details….

The final phase of Albert Allsop's war experience reads like a scene from *Forrest Gump.* Al and the 39th were so deep into Nazi Germany they were directly involved in events that would shape the world for the next century.

In March 1945, 39 RECCE crossed the Rhine with the First Canadian, Second British and Ninth U.S. Army. They were the first Allied unit to fly from German soil, and when they reached Lűneburg they had advanced as far as any Allied Air-unit would advance during the entire second world war.

- excerpt from official World War II War Diaries

***"Winston Churchill and Field Marshall Montgomery passed through our airfield the day we crossed the Rhine. We didn't even know it until they were gone, security could be that tight."* – Bill Balmer**

In the spring of 1945, the Russians advancing from the east and the Allies from the southwest, had fragmented the German army. There were pockets of scattered resistance fighting to re-gain control, but the Germans were effectively finished.

There was no further need for reconnaissance missions, so 39th RECCE was ordered to stand down in Lűneburg, while peace was negotiated.

With time on their hands, Al and the other soldiers wandered the streets of Old Lűneburg. They took photos of the magnificent gothic buildings. The soldier's photos from that time have tourist-like aspects.

Bear and I went looking for the buildings Al and the other soldiers had taken photos of. We positioned ourselves where the photographers had in 1945.

Lűneburg Old Harbour in 1945 (from Bill Balmer collection) and in 2025.

St. Johannis Church Lűneburg 1945, still standing in 2025.

Lűneburg airfield, where the 39th was stationed, was just a stone's throw from the Elbe River. The Soviet Red Army was aligned along its eastern bank. Al and some of the other soldiers drove to Hamburg to meet their Russian allies.

Bear and I followed Al's trail from Lűneburg to Hamburg. There were no Soviet soldiers there to meet us, but we could picture them along the riverbank.

"We exchanged rations, cigarettes and chocolate with the Russians, for trinkets. They were in worse shape than we were."

– Albert Allsop

The Elbbrücken bridge where 39th RECCE met the Soviet Red Army (Bill Balmer photo and postcard)

Today, the bridge at Hamburg where Al and the Russians met, is missing the magnificent entrance towers, but the double helix-shaped bridge remains.

Back at Lűneburg camp the next day, Albert and the men of 39th Reconnaissance Wing heard the news they had been waiting for - the German's had surrendered – the war was over!

39th RECCE soldiers listening to BBC News, May 4, 1945.

39th Reconnaissance Wing was stationed just 6 km from the field where General Montgomery accepted German surrender.

Montgomery accepting documents of surrender from German High Command at Lűneburg Heath, May 4, 1945

Bear and I took an early-morning drive to the surrender site.

It was quiet on the hill overlooking the town of Lűneburg, this morning. We were the only ones on site to pay tribute to the end of WWII hostilities.

Sitting in Albert's living room in Lethbridge, 50 years after the war ended, he talked fondly about the final days of the war.

"German soldiers arrived in great numbers, to turn themselves in. The Germans were afraid of Russian cruelty, so they surrendered their weapons to the British and US armies." – Albert Allsop

Given the 39th's proximity to the front, many German soldiers arrived at the Lűneburg camp to hand over their weapons. Al said that every German soldier who turned himself in expressed gratitude that the war was over, many apologized on behalf of their nation.

A soldier-to-soldier camaraderie emerged between the victors and the defeated.

"One afternoon, a German bomber flew over the airbase, which caused an urgent reaction but, instead of dropping bombs, it lowered its wheels and landed…. but the gear collapsed, or was retracted, and it belly landed." "Inside were two German pilots looking to surrender." "They were very happy to have landed alive, because for them, the war was over too." – Albert Allsop

Folke Wolfe FW 200 that "surrendered".

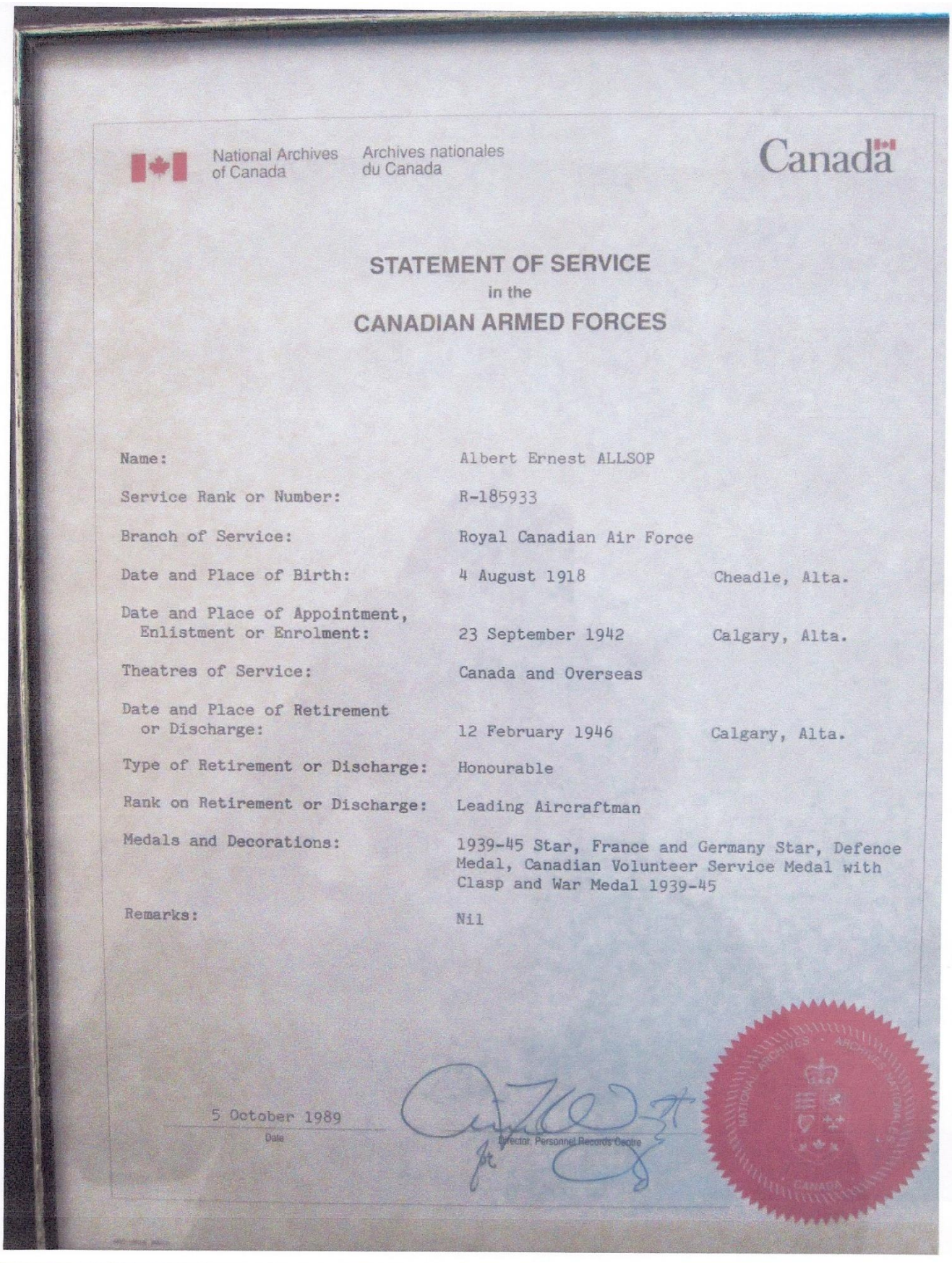
Members of 39th RECCE with German Aircrew (Bill Balmer, far left)

German pilots, "looking none-too-sad".

The war machine in its wisdom, had a "last in, first out" plan to return soldiers home. Al and the 39th were so deep in enemy territory, they didn't move out until August of 1945.

On February 12, 1946, in Calgary, Albert Allsop was …

… Honourably Discharged.



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Canada

STATEMENT OF SERVICE
in the
CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Name:	Albert Ernest ALLSOP	
Service Rank or Number:	R-185933	
Branch of Service:	Royal Canadian Air Force	
Date and Place of Birth:	4 August 1918	Cheadle, Alta.
Date and Place of Appointment, Enlistment or Enrolment:	23 September 1942	Calgary, Alta.
Theatres of Service:	Canada and Overseas	
Date and Place of Retirement or Discharge:	12 February 1946	Calgary, Alta.
Type of Retirement or Discharge:	Honourable	
Rank on Retirement or Discharge:	Leading Aircraftman	
Medals and Decorations:	1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and War Medal 1939-45	
Remarks:	Nil	

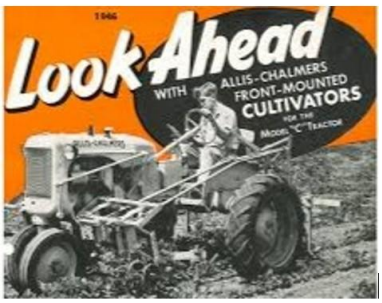
5 October 1989
Date

Director, Personnel Records Centre


39 RCCE - March to May 1945
Netherlands
Belgium
Germany
Amsterdam
The Hague
Rotterdam
Nijmegen
Arnhem
Eindhoven
Wesel
Rheine
Dammer
Wunstorf
Soltau
Hamburg
Bremerhaven
Groningen
Zwolle
Münster
Dortmund
Essen
Düsseldorf
Cologne
Bonn
Koblenz
Frankfurt am Main
Mainz
Darmstadt
Würzburg
Nuremberg
Mannheim
Saarbrücken
Trier
Metz
Antwerp
Ghent
Bruges
Dunkirk
Calais
Lille
Liège
Mons
Amiens
Rouen
Le Havre
Beauvais
Reims
Paderborn
Hildesheim
Braunschweig
Wolfsburg
Celle
Göttingen
Kassel
Erfurt
Jena
Bamberg
Erlangen
Heilbronn
Aurich
Emden
Schwerin
Peterborough
Norwich
Cambridge
Ipswich
Colchester
Luton
Southend-on-Sea
Canterbury
Northampton
Alkmaar

The Civilian War

September 10, 1945 - Lethbridge, Alberta



One day you are dodging machine-gun fire, and the next you are selling Allis-Chalmers tractor parts.

Click on the tractor for a Look Ahead…

A Peace Treaty is the end of one war, and the beginning of the next. Nobody gets shot at in the follow-up war, but what happens after active military service is just as dangerous.

One day you are dodging machine-gun fire in Nazi Germany, and the next you are selling Allis-Chalmers tractor parts to farmers in southern Alberta. There is no way to make that transition **easily.**

Bill Balmer received a cheque for $556.60 from *His Majesty* for 1081 days of service. Adjusted for inflation, that is $9,870.91 today, not much for risking your life for three years. Albert Allsop received about the same amount.

His Majesty also provided an economy class ship and rail ticket back to your enlistment destination, and a $100 voucher for civilian clothes when you landed.

There might be a victory parade when you get home, maybe a few complimentary meals, or free beer at the legion hall, then you are on your own.

The girl your dreamt about all those long, lonely nights is married to that rich, draft-dodging, son-of-a-bitch you couldn't stand in high school. Your friends have moved on, your parents got old worrying about you, and your younger brother now owns the farm you grew up on.

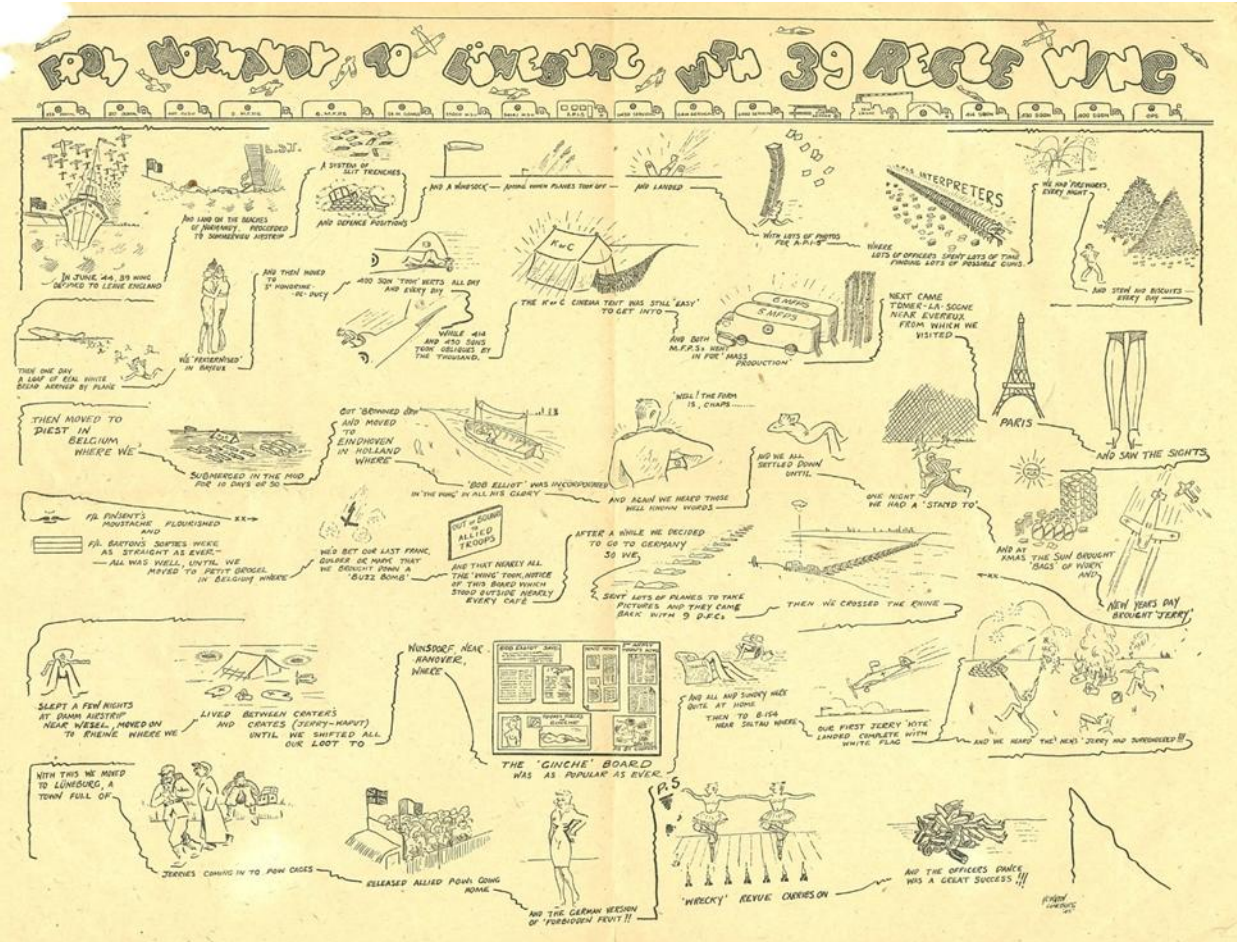
At least in Germany, you knew who the enemy was.

When you got in a fight over in Europe, you were a hero. At home, they throw you in jail for the night. Drinking was the national sport over there, now you drink alone, or in a bar full of hicks who couldn't point to Eindhoven on a map.

The guys you were in the service with are in the same predicament, and they don't want to talk about it either. They are all trying to keep their heads above water, going for a trip down *Memory Strasse* doesn't appeal.

So, you do what you did in Europe. You suck-it-the-fuck-up and keep slogging. Little by little, you start winning …

… The Civilian War.


FROM NORMANDY TO LÜNEBURG WITH 39 RECCE WING
IN JUNE '44, 39 WING DECIDED TO LEAVE ENGLAND
AND LAND ON THE BEACHES OF NORMANDY. PROCEEDED TO SOMMERVIEU AIRSTRIP
A SYSTEM OF SLIT TRENCHES
AND DEFENCE POSITIONS
AND A WINDSOCK — AMMO WHEN PLANES TOOK OFF — AND LANDED
WITH LOTS OF PHOTOS FOR A.P.I.S
INTERPRETERS
WHERE LOTS OF OFFICERS SPENT LOTS OF TIME FINDING LOTS OF POSSIBLE GUNS.
WE HAD 'FIREWORKS' EVERY NIGHT
AND STEW AND BISCUITS EVERY DAY
THEN ONE DAY A LOAF OF REAL WHITE BREAD ARRIVED BY PLANE
WE 'FRATERNISED' IN BAYEUX
AND THEN MOVED TO S^T HONORINE-DE-DUCY
400 SQN 'TOOK' VERTS ALL DAY AND EVERY DAY
WHILE 414 AND 430 SQNS TOOK OBLIQUES BY THE THOUSAND.
THE K of C CINEMA TENT WAS STILL 'EASY' TO GET INTO
AND BOTH M.F.P.S. WENT IN FOR 'MASS PRODUCTION'
6 MFPS
5 MFPS
NEXT CAME TOMER-LA-SOGNE NEAR EVEREUX FROM WHICH WE VISITED
PARIS
AND SAW THE SIGHTS
THEN MOVED TO DIEST IN BELGIUM WHERE WE
SUBMERGED IN THE MUD FOR 10 DAYS OR SO
GOT 'BROWNED OFF' AND MOVED TO EINDHOVEN IN HOLLAND WHERE
'BOB ELLIOT' WAS INCORPORATED IN 'THE WING' IN ALL HIS GLORY
'WELL! THE FORM IS, CHAPS......
AND AGAIN WE HEARD THOSE WELL KNOWN WORDS
AND WE ALL SETTLED DOWN UNTIL
ONE NIGHT WE HAD A 'STAND TO'
AND AT XMAS THE SUN BROUGHT 'BAGS' OF WORK AND
NEW YEARS DAY BROUGHT 'JERRY'
F/L PINSENT'S MOUSTACHE FLOURISHED AND
F/L BARTON'S SORTIES WERE AS STRAIGHT AS EVER — ALL WAS WELL, UNTIL WE MOVED TO PETIT BROGEL IN BELGIUM WHERE
WE'D BET OUR LAST FRANC, GULDER OR MARK THAT WE BROUGHT DOWN A 'BUZZ BOMB'
OUT OF BOUNDS TO ALLIED TROOPS
AND THAT NEARLY ALL THE 'WING' TOOK NOTICE OF THIS BOARD WHICH STOOD OUTSIDE NEARLY EVERY CAFE
AFTER A WHILE WE DECIDED TO GO TO GERMANY SO WE
SENT LOTS OF PLANES TO TAKE PICTURES AND THEY CAME BACK WITH 9 D.F.C.s
THEN WE CROSSED THE RHINE
SLEPT A FEW NIGHTS AT DAMM AIRSTRIP NEAR WESEL, MOVED ON TO RHEINE WHERE WE
LIVED BETWEEN CRATERS AND CRATES (JERRY-KAPUT) UNTIL WE SHIFTED ALL OUR LOOT TO
WUNSDORF, NEAR HANOVER, WHERE
THE 'GINCHE' BOARD WAS AS POPULAR AS EVER
AND ALL AND SUNDRY WERE QUITE AT HOME
THEN TO B-154 NEAR SOLTAU WHERE
OUR FIRST JERRY 'KITE' LANDED COMPLETE WITH WHITE FLAG
AND WE HEARD THE NEWS 'JERRY HAD SURRENDERED'!!
WITH THIS WE MOVED TO LÜNEBURG, A TOWN FULL OF
JERRIES COMING IN TO POW CAGES
RELEASED ALLIED POWs GOING HOME
AND THE GERMAN VERSION OF 'FORBIDDEN FRUIT'!!
P.S
'WRECKY' REVUE CARRIES ON
AND THE OFFICERS DANCE WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!!!