

Hoblitzell, Hugh Frederick

Age: 21

Nationality: Canadian/American

Rank: Pilot/Officer

Unit: No. 133 Squadron

Occupation: Pilot

Service No: J/39533

Birth: 15 August 1923
Sarnia, Ontario
Canada

Home Town: Toronto, Ontario,
Canada

Death: 14 November 1944

Patricia Bay Station Hospital, BC
Injuries from traffic accident

Burial: Mount Pleasant Cemetery.
Toronto, ON, Canada



Biography

Hugh Hoblitzell was still a schoolboy at Upper Canada College when he applied to the RCAF. He had completed his junior matriculation and planned to continue with his education after his service. Hugh applied to be a pilot and was accepted for pilot training. During his training he was dogged by poor health of an unspecified nature. No flags had been raised in his medical examinations when he was categorized A1B.

At Initial Training School, Hugh was determined and conscientious but was found to be slow at learning. At Elementary Training he was thought to need good supervision and did not apply himself.

During Service Flying Training, Hugh again encountered health problems and was recommended for discharge or reassignment:

“This pupil ceased training on medical grounds which preclude him from any aircrew trade. He has appeared before a local re-selection board who recommend that he be re-mustered to “Flying Control” or granted his discharge.

“He possesses good service spirit and made every effort to continue flying. His deportment and discipline are good.”

Hugh, who was enlisted 17 December 1941, was discharged on 12 March 1943 with the rank of Sergeant.

By 21 June 1943, there must have been improvements in Hugh’s health and he re-enlisted and started flying training once again. This second time through he performed well and was above average. He was granted his Pilot’s wings on 10 December 1943, when he was promoted to Pilot/Officer and was recommended as suitable for fighter or reconnaissance work.

Hugh was posted to No. 133 squadron, Patricia Bay, British Columbia on 19 August 1944. Two month later, on October 23rd, he was involved in an accident when a Grey Lines bus skidded and hit him. Though his injuries did not initially appear to be life threatening, he died as a result of the accident on November 14th.

Hugh Hoblitzell was born in Sarnia on 15 August 1923 to Fred George Hoblitzell and Irene Lillian Parson. Fred Hoblitzell was an American, born in New York, who moved to Canada in 1912 and was elected Liberal MP for Eglinton in 1940. He served one term and did not stand for re-election in 1945. Hugh had one sister, Shirley, who was three years older.

In late 1943, Hugh became engaged to Catherine Eleanor Victoria Spencer, whom he married in Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada, on 31st December 1943.

Canon and Mrs. C. R. Spencer, Bowmanville, wish to announce the engagement of their daughter, Catherine Eleanor Victoria, to Pilot Officer Hugh Frederick Hoblitzell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick G. Hoblitzell, M.P., Toronto. The marriage will take place in St. Clements Anglican Church, North Toronto, on Friday, December 31st, at 3 o'clock. Reception at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Ellis, Lytton Blvd., Toronto. 52-1

From The Canadian Statesman

30th December 1943



Details of Accident

On 23 October 1944, Hugh Hoblitzell was standing in the rain at the south east corner of San Juan Avenue and Gordon Head Road in Saanich. He was waiting to catch a bus with his brother in law, Major Melville; Padre to His Majesty's Forces. The bus applied its brakes to stop at the corner, skidded on the wet pavement and the back of the bus struck Hugh, throwing him to the ground.

The bus driver, who was driving on this route for the first time, saw one man in a trench coat at the corner and attempted to draw up close by him when the bus skidded and turned to face up San Juan Avenue. He never saw the second man, Hugh, and did not realize he had hit him until after he got out of the bus.

Hugh was taken to the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria where he was first treated. The Medical Officer from Patricia Bay visited him on October 24th, carried out further treatment and escorted Hugh back to the RCAF Station Hospital at Patricia Bay, where he continued to care for him until 14 November 1944. The Command Surgical Consultant was advised about Hugh's condition and visited twice for examination. On the first visit he found nothing in Hugh's condition to cause alarm. The second visit was to perform emergency surgery after Hugh's condition unexpectedly deteriorated.

During surgery, he found:

“Lacerated kidney with peri-nephric haemorrhage was found – pedicle clamped. Much generalized oozing about wall of organized cavity. Patient had become poor risk with change in picture – after kidney was removed sudden welling of blood proclaimed further damage – whole cavity wall oozed when touched – immediate packing controlled further blood loss – careful, slow removal of packing – no bleeder found – cavity dry – elected closure with packing -half way through closure another welling of blood necessitated a larger pack than was first thought necessary, however with a poor risk already receiving transfusion and very flat no hope of finding bleeding area within such friable walls was entertained. He was speedily closed – shocky – prognosis grave from superimposed shock and blood loss which though replaced, I am sure, in toto, did not rally patient.

Despite all agents – oxygen, coramine, blood serum – patient succumbed 9 hours after operation”

Hugh died of his injuries without regaining consciousness.