**de Balinhard, J.S.C., Lt.**

Lieutenant John Stewart Carnegie de Balinhard of the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry was killed in action on 28 July 1943 and is buried at the Agira Canadian War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy. John was born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan on 13 November 1909 and was raised on the family farm east of Nut Mountain, Saskatchewan. He attended two years at the Yorkton Collegiate Institute finishing in 1926. John de Balinhard served in the Militia with the 16/22nd Saskatchewan Horse where he rose to the rank of Sergeant on 13 January 1928. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Militia on 8 June 1932. He was employed as a farmer and as a horse breeder prior to joining the Active Service Force of the army on 8 February 1940 and was taken on strength to the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, Regimental Depot as a 2nd Lieutenant. At the time of enlistment he was married to Iris Alice. After some training at Depot and the Infantry Training Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba he proceeded overseas arriving in England on 5 September 1940. On arrival he was posted to the 3rd Canadian Infantry Holding Unit for one month before joining the Patricia’s as a newly promoted Lieutenant. Lt de Balinhard attended the Canadian Junior Leaders School from 6 to 26 July 1941. In August of 1941 the Patricia’s became part of Force 111 which was assembling in Scotland for operations at Spitsbergen. The force was to destroy the coal facilities on the island in the arctic. The force was downsized and the Patricia’s did not deploy returning to 1 Canadian Infantry Division’s area in England. On 12 March 1942 he returned to Canada as an instructor at A15 Canadian Infantry Training Centre in Winnipeg and Shilo, Manitoba. Lt de Balinhard was transferred to No.100 Canadian Army Basic Training Centre in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba on 9 May 1942. Shortly after arriving he was appointed Acting Captain at the training centre. With his instructional duties complete he returned to England arriving 13 February 1943 and reverted back to his substantive rank of Lieutenant. On arrival he was posted to the 1st Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit until rejoining the Patricias on 5 March 1943. The following month he completed a Battle Drill Course at the Combat Training School. Lt de Balinhard sailed with the regiment on Operation Husky landing on the shores of Sicily with ‘A’ Company on 10 July 1943. He was the Platoon Commander for 9 Platoon, ‘A’ Company. He fought as a Platoon Commander with the Patricia’s advancing north through Grammichele, Piazza Armerina, and Valguarnera. The Patricias fought in the taking of the town of Leonforte on 23 July 1943. In the evening of the 26th of July 1943 the Patricias assaulted the defensive position east of Nissoria. Lt de Balinhard’s company was in reserve and was tasked to pass through the two lead companies once the first objective was secure. As it happens Alpha and Bravo Companies got disorientated and the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada passed thru to assault the second objective. The next task was the assault on the town of Agira. On the 28th of July Alpha and Bravo Companies were set to attack the town when at noon that day it was report that the enemy had withdrawn. A fighting patrol from Alpha Company was sent in and reported the lack of enemy in the west side of town. Later in the afternoon the two companies entered town and once in the town came under fire from buildings on the main street. A house to house fight started with 9 Platoon advancing down one of the streets. The Platoon Commander Lt de Balinhard moved to the roof of one of the building to recce the situation and was shot by a German sniper. He was originally buried in a garden near the church in Agira and in 1944 was reburied at the Canadian war cemetery. Lt de Balinhard was awarded the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, War Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp. He was the son of Col. John Carnegy de Balinhard DSO and Jessie de Balinhard of Yorkton, Saskatchewan. His father served in the South Africa War and was a Lieutenant in the PPCLI during the first war. He was wounded in action on 3 October 1915 and later served as a Major in a Saskatchewan Regiment. Lt de Balinhard was the husband of Iris Alice de Balinhard of Yorkton, Saskatchewan and the father of four sons.

**De Balinhard Lake, Saskatchewan** (map sheet 73K/6) 54° 29’N 109° 11’W, located northeast of Goodsoil in the Meadow Lake Provincial Park. The lake was named in his honour on 17 January 1952.