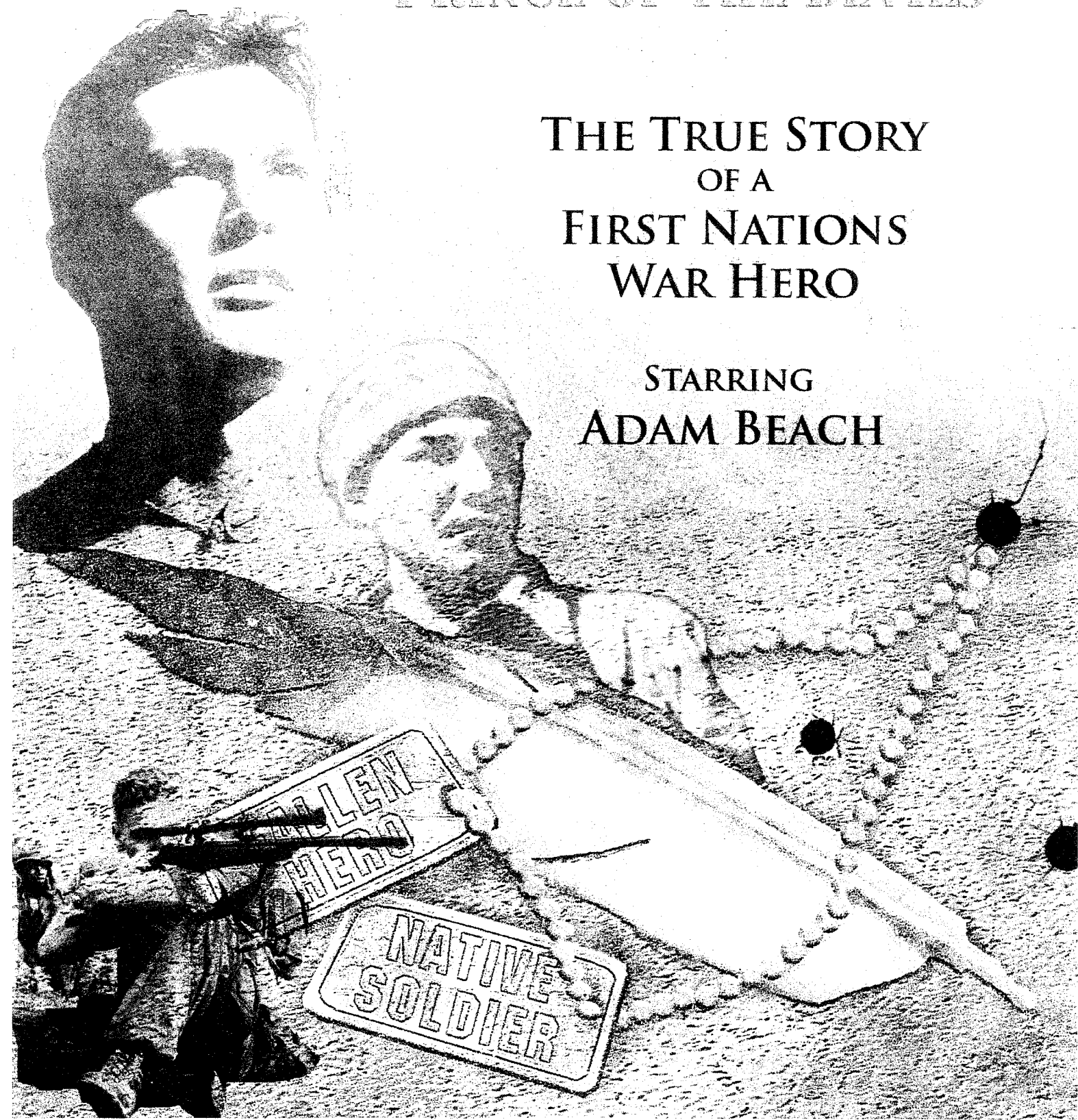


TOMMY PRINCE

PRINCE OF THE DEVILS

THE TRUE STORY
OF A
FIRST NATIONS
WAR HERO

STARRING
ADAM BEACH



TOMMY PRINCE

A Synopsis of His Military Life

To call **Tommy Prince** a brave and remarkable man would be an unmistakable understatement. Tommy was a warrior and a soldier who earned the distinction as Canada's most decorated First Nations soldier.

He was born Oct. 25, 1915 at Petersfield, Manitoba, one of 11 children born to Harry and Elizabeth Prince of the Ojibwa Nation. Growing up Tommy became a superb marksman. He developed exceptional tracking skills while hunting in the wilderness surrounding his homeland. 25 years later on the 3rd of June 1940 he was accepted into the Canadian army after being turned down several times despite meeting the army recruitment requirements. Tommy excelled in the army, first as a field engineer and later with the Canadian Parachute Battalion. On his return to Canada in 1942 after going to the U.K.'s paratroopers specialist training program he was promoted to sergeant.

A quote from Tommy... *"The moment I put on my uniform I felt a better man".*

He and a couple other members of his unit volunteered to be part of an elite brigade that was formed from British conception. It was to be a Canadian and American Brigade known as the First Special Service Force (FSSF) under the command of the great **General Robert T. Frederick**. Later the Brigade was to be christened the "**The Devil's Brigade**" by its enemies. This incredibly commanded Brigade is the most successful special service force in military history (not one failed mission). It was the German Soldiers who were so intimidated by one phantom soldier, an Indian named Tommy Prince, they called him "**The Black Devil**."

"**The Devil's Brigade**" moved to Italy, and on February 8, 1944, Anzio, Italy, Tommy was sent forward to report the location of several German assembly points, including artillery positions. He set up in an abandoned farmhouse about 200 metres from the enemy assembly area, well behind enemy lines, with over 1,400 metres of telephone wire connecting him to the force. He had a clear view of the enemy's emplacements and promptly reported them. An artillery duel followed as the Allies attempted to knock out the tanks and gun towers reported by Tommy. One of these rounds cut the telephone wire. The duel died down as a result. Tommy donned on a farmers clothing, grabbed a hoe and, in full view of German

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soldiers, pretending to be a farmer working his crops. He slowly inched his way along the line till he found where it was damaged, then, pretending to tie his shoelaces, rejoined the wires. After finishing the repairs, he made a show of shaking his fist at the nearby Germans, then again toward the Allied lines.

Returning to his lookout spot, This process was to happen again and again over the following few hours, still he continued his reports, and over the next 24 hours four German batteries were knocked out along with all four tanks all put out of action, saving countless of his comrades lives and casualties. For this action, Tommy was awarded the Military Medal, his citation reading (in part)

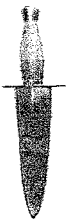
"Sergeant Prince's courage and utter disregard for personal safety were an inspiration to his fellows and a marked credit to his unit."

"The Devil's Brigade" was moved to southern France as part of Operation Dragoon. On September 1, Tommy and one other soldier were sent on a mission to go through the enemy lines to scout their position. They found the encampment area of an enemy reserve battalion. On the way back to report, the two came up on a battle between some Germans who had pinned down a group of French partisans. Tommy and his partner started sniping the Germans, who eventually withdrew. When Tommy made contact with the French leader, he asked Tommy where his company was located, when Tommy pointed to the private and said "Here." The French commander was stunned and said that he thought there had to be at least fifty of them. The French commander recommended Tommy for the Croix de Guerre, but the courier was killed en route and the message never reached the French Commander-in-Chief, Charles de Gaulle.

Tommy continued on to reach his unit. He then personally led the unit back to the encampment and joined in the battle, which resulted in the capture of the entire battalion, about 1000 men. From start to end, Tommy had been without food, water or sleep for 72 hours and had walked over 70 km across rugged, mountainous terrain. For this Tommy was recommended for the Silver Star, his citation read:

"So accurate was the report rendered by the patrol that Sergeant Prince's regiment moved forward on 5 September 1944, occupied new heights and successfully wiped out the enemy bivouac [encampment] area. The keen sense of responsibility and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Prince is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the Allied Nations."

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When the fighting in southern France ended, Tommy was summoned to Buckingham Palace where **King George VI** presented him with his Military Medal and Silver Star on behalf of the American President **Franklin D. Roosevelt**.

In all, Tommy Prince was decorated nine times, the most of any aboriginal soldier in the war. The war in Europe ended while Prince was in England.

In 1950 Tommy re-enlisted in the Canadian army to fight the United Nations troops in the Korean War. With his previous rank of sergeant re-instated, he was now a member of the Second Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, the first Canadian regiment to arrive in the war zone. Tommy received the Korea Medal, the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal. He stayed in the army after the Korean truce, instructing new recruits in Winnipeg until his honorable discharge Oct. 28, 1953.

Tommy saved a man from drowning at the Alexander Docks in Winnipeg in June 1955. After pulling the man from the water and to safety a crowd gathered, Tommy humbly slipped away to avoid the press hoopla. That was Tommy Prince. However he was recognized by one of the crowd, then recognized for his heroism. Tommy passed away on Nov. 25, 1977 at the Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg and was interred in the Brookside Cemetery.

Tommy's medals changed hands several times before coming up for auction in London, Ontario. His nephew Jim Bear organized a pledge drive and purchased the medals, entrusting them to the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg.

Tommy had a fierce pride in his people and a strong sense of civic duty. He dedicated himself to increasing educational and economic opportunities for his people.

In Tommy's own words: *"All my life I had wanted to do something to help my people, and to show their good name."*

It is Bay Film Studios' commitment to the memory of this great Canadian Soldier that the world will know his life is a testament of his dedication and pride of his people. We will carry on to show their good name.