

Freeman, Allan Maxwell
Trooper
B-61973
8th (New Brunswick) Princess
Louise's Hussars
5th Canadian Armoured Regiment



Personal Information: Allan Maxwell Freeman was born on June 29th, 1920 in Toronto, Ontario. His mother was Margaret Louise Freeman and his father was Nelson Freeman. Allan was living in Toronto at the time of enlistment.

Allan was a sturdy, strong lad and was capable of hard work. He was six foot one and a half inches and weighed 185 pounds. Allan was eager for active service. He enjoyed playing sports and he also was considered to have good leadership qualities.

Allan was attended the United Church. Allan worked as a lens grinder for one and a half years, and he also worked in a bakery for two years. He attended school from age 6 to 14 and completed up to grade 8. In his family, there were five children, Allan, his three brothers, and his sister. Their names were Grace, Stuart, Beverly, and Andrew. Unfortunately, Allan's brother, Andrew, passed away in September of 1942 while Allan was away training at Camp Borden.

Military Movements: When Allan enlisted on August 8, 1941, he was 21 years of age. Even before Allan enlisted for the war, he was involved with the military. He was part of the Royal Rifles of Canada from July 1940 until enlistment. He enlisted with the #2 DD (AF) or "C" wing for the CACTC. After that he was sent to training at Camp Borden, Ontario. When he was in training, he had switched regiments to now be with the 23rd Army Tank Regiment (Halifax Rifles) C.A.F. Allan also earned several licenses such as a Class III (Tracked), a Class II (Wheeled & Tracked), a Class III (Carrier), and also a Class III Mechanic.

As training continued, Allan was involved on one mishap. Allan received a cut on his head. He was checked out by nurses and he had a good recovery in five days. It was also during this time that Allan decided to study German during his free time in the evenings. Eventually, Allan was evaluated and was sent overseas. He left Canada the 18th of June, 1943 and arrived in England June 24th, 1943. Allan left England the 14th of November, 1943 and arrived in the Mediterranean on November 27th, 1943. Once in Italy, Allan switched regiments. He was transferred to the 5th Canadian Armoured Regiment better known as the 8th (New Brunswick) Hussars. In Italy, the Hussars faced their first real action in May, 1944 when they would play a role in the Canadian advance through the Liri Valley. The Hussars would assist at both the Gustav and Hitler Lines. They helped the allied forces secure the Melfa River crossing.

The Hussars had a two month rest from battle but continued to train and experiment in preparation for their next destination: the Gothic Line. Training days were interspersed with beach days. Leave passes were issued; some went to Rome, some to the Adriatic Coast. In August the war was on again for the Hussars. They moved toward the Gothic Line via Montecchio. On August 26, the attack on the Gothic Line began. The Hussars were prepared for a different kind of attack here from their previous experience in the Liri Valley. They knew the enemy had the advantage of prepared fortifications; the question was whether they had the soldiers to man them. Intelligence reports indicated that their reinforcements had not yet arrived. It was essential for the allied forces to strike immediately. The Hussars played a major role in the breakthrough here. By September 1, the battle was won. Soldiers would have a one day rest on September 2 and then would begin the Battle of Coriano Ridge where they would face the strongest opposition of their war time experience. The contribution of the Hussars in Italy was significant. By February, 1945 the Hussars left Italy to assist in the final months of the war in North West Europe. Allan left the 18th of February, 1945 and arrived in Marseilles, France, February 20, 1945. After Italy, Allan proceeded eventually to Belgium and then on to Holland.

The Final Days: Around the time of 1944-1945, the Canadians played a major role in the liberation of Holland. In 1940, the Germans came to Holland and invaded their country. The Dutch people struggled as Germany took control of their country and their people. Germany captured as many Jewish people as they could and put them in concentration camps. Around 75% of Holland's Jewish people were killed during the war.

In 1944, troops started arriving in Holland to help free the Dutch from the Germans. The 5th Canadian Armored Regiment (8th Hussars), along with the 1st Canadian Corps and the 1st Canadian Infantry Division, were responsible for the liberation of the western side of the Maas River in Holland.

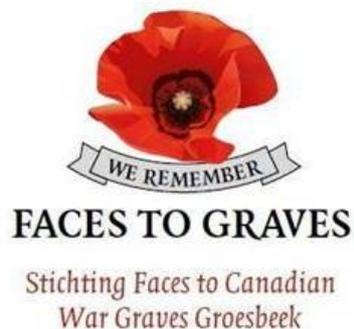
On April 12th, 1945, there was a battle in Arnhem. It was an intense battle with fighting from house to house, but after two days the town was liberated. After that, the 8th (New Brunswick) Hussars planned on heading north to Ljsselmeer River, about 50 kilometers from where they were. They planned to cut off the enemy forces in Apeldoorn who were facing the 1st Canadian Division. Canada liberated Apeldoorn on April 17, 1945. The plan was successful, but in between those two battles, there was a tragedy. On April 15, 1945, Allan Maxwell Freeman was killed in action.

According to the 8th Hussar War Diary there were several anti-tank guns that were clearing the path for Hussar tanks. "C" Squadron was pushing on to their assigned position but they had one tank that was hit. It left three wounded and one killed. Allan Maxwell Freeman was the casualty. Allan was one out of 7600 Canadian soldiers who died during the nine month campaign to liberate Holland. Two other Hussars who died on April 15, 1945, were Trooper Hedley Bannan and Lieutenant William Albert Spencer.

Allan Maxwell Freeman gave his life for his country. For his contribution, Allan earned the 1939-1945 Star, the Italy Star, the France-Germany Star, the War Star, as well as the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp.¹

Lest We Forget: Allan Maxwell Freeman is now buried at the Nijmegen Canadian War Cemetery, Grave **VII. A. 9**. He was survived by his parents, two brothers and one sister who was twelve years old at the time of his passing. Allan Freeman died at the age of 24.

Biography courtesy of the Lest We Forget initiative of Belleisle Regional High School located in Springfield, NB.



Biography made available for Faces To Graves, with courtesy of Stephen Wilson, Belleisle Regional High School.

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Archival Reference:

Military service files of Trooper Allan Maxwell Freeman obtained from Library and Archives Canada.

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Internet Sites:

<http://www.canadaatwar.ca/memorial/world-war-ii/149855/trooper-allan-maxwell-freeman/>

<http://www.canadaatwar.ca/memorial/world-war-ii/153685/lieutenant-william-albert-spencer/>

<http://www.canadaatwar.ca/memorial/world-war-ii/148004/trooper-hedley-bannan/>

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2663329?Allan%20%Maxwell%20Freeman>

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Photo References:

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