

Greene, Eric
Lance Sergeant
North Nova Scotia Highlanders
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
F55225



Eric Greene wordt geboren op 13 mei 1919 in Burgeo, Newfoundland, als zoon van William en Louisa Greene. Zijn vader werkt hier als zelfstandige visser.

Het gezin Greene bestaat oorspronkelijk uit vader, moeder en 10 kinderen. Eric gaat vijf jaar naar de Plubic School, hierna werkt hij zeven jaar als visser bij het bedrijf van zijn vader. Op het moment dat Eric in militaire dienst gaat, zijn er al 4 kinderen overleden.

Eric meldt zich in Sidney aan op 10 juni 1940 bij de Cape Breton Highlanders. Op 22 oktober 1940 start Eric zijn opleiding en blijft tot 18 oktober 1941 in Canada.



Daarna vertrekt hij vanuit Halifax naar Engeland, wordt ingedeeld bij de North Nova Scotia Highlanders, blijft hier tot 29 juli om vervolgens bij de tweede landing op Juno Beach de tocht via België naar Gent te maken. Daar wordt hij ingekwartierd bij een Belgisch gezin, waar ook de foto wordt gemaakt waarop Eric samen met Christian op staat. Eric zal de foto bij zich dragen tot op de dag dat hij sneuvelt.

Eric met Christian.

Het regiment van Eric trekt via Nederland naar Duitsland, waar op 8 februari Operation Veritable begint. Op 14 februari hebben Eric en zijn mede soldaten zich verschanst in een boerderij aan de Rijn van waaruit zij het zicht op Emmerich hebben. Op deze dag wordt Eric door een kogel van een scherpschutter in zijn hoofd getroffen. Eric overlijdt ter plaatse.

Eric Greene wordt begraven op de tijdelijke begraafplaats bij de kerk van Warbeyen in Duitsland.

En op 1 november 1945 herbegraven op de Canadese Oorlogsbegraafplaats in Groesbeek, graf **XIX. B. 10.**

Tekst op zijn grafsteen:

IN MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR SON
WE THINK OF HIM IN SILENCE.
FATHER, MOTHER AND FAMILY.

Onderscheidingen Eric Greene:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France & Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp



Levensverhaal Fred Hulsman, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Geraadpleegde bronnen:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

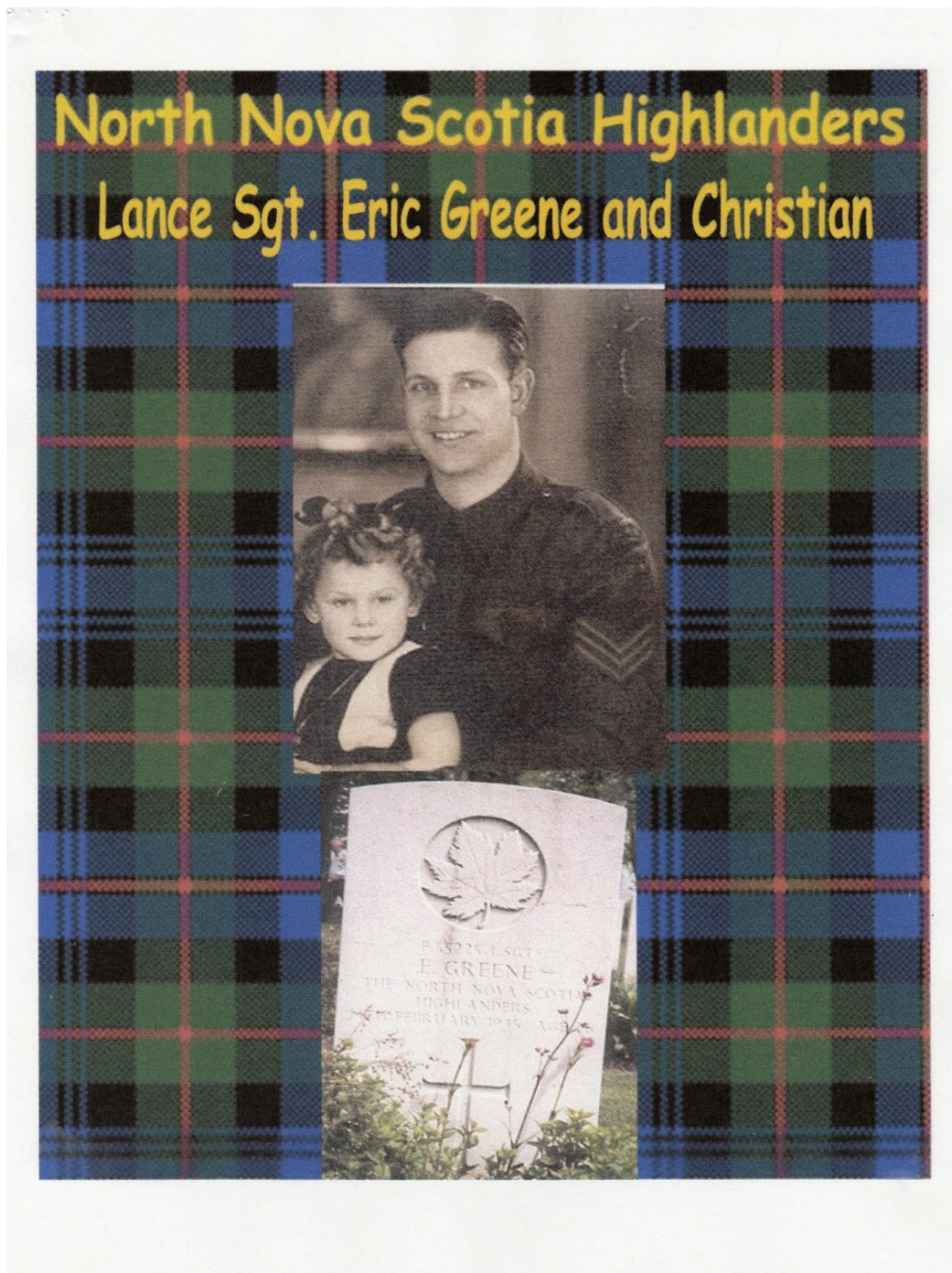
Library and Archives Canada

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca>

<http://www.canadaatwar.ca/battles/world-war-ii/>

Meaghan McCan, lid van Youth Delegate 2005

Foto Norht Nova Scotia Highlanders Regimental Museum



Hi. My name is Meaghan Beresford and I am from St. John's Newfoundland. Last year I attended the "Canada Remembers" theme week at *Encounters With Canada* in Ottawa. Supported by Veterans Affairs Canada, the week was full of activities designed to commemorate Canada's veterans and to educate the youth participants on what great things these Canadian heroes have done for our country. Last month I was informed by *Encounters With Canada* that I had been chosen to participate in a Veterans Affairs Canada overseas pilgrimage with a number of Canadian veterans to mark the 60th anniversary of Canada's participation in the liberation of the Netherlands. I was to be the youth representative for Nova Scotia.

I and the twelve other youth delegates were asked to research the story of a soldier from my home province who fought and died in the Netherlands. While in the Netherlands, I would make a presentation on the life of my soldier at the foot of his grave in one of the Canadian War Cemeteries that would be part of the pilgrimage itinerary.

"He was my best friend." said Mr. Keith Johnston, in March 2005, of Sergeant Eric Greene.

Just two months ago, Sergeant Eric Greene was simply a name etched on a piece of paper. On that same piece of paper were the names of his parents, William and Louisa Greene of Newfoundland; his Service Number in the Canadian army - F55255; and the date upon which he paid the supreme sacrifice - February 14, 1945. I would like now to paint a picture of the Eric Greene that I have come to know so well. Ultimately, he was a man who died honouring freedom and friendship.

The windswept community of Hunt's Island is perched precariously next to the isolated town of Burgeo, in the southwest corner of Newfoundland. It was there, amongst the saltbox houses and saltier air, that Eric Greene was born on May 30, 1918 to William and Louisa Greene. The fourth of nine children, Eric grew up surrounded by a tightly knit group of family and friends. His father was a fisherman and Eric was raised on the water, probably apprenticing to take over the family trade.

With the outbreak of war in September of 1939, however, Eric Greene left Newfoundland's rocky shores to fight for Canada, a country that was not even his own. The North Nova Scotia Highlanders, a regiment that formed part of the First Canadian Army, became Eric Greene's new family. Working his way to Lance Sergeant, Eric Greene was part of the greatest Allied military operation of the Second World War - Operation Overlord - the D-Day invasion. Landing as part of the second wave of the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, Lance Sergeant Greene witnessed horrors beyond belief while trudging along blood-stained Juno Beach. The North Nova Scotia Highlanders, being part of the second wave of the offensive that day, did not suffer many casualties on D-Day and they pressed forward into France. June 7, 1944 was a very different day for the North Nova Scotia Highlanders. The regiment was at the leading edge of the Allied front when the Nazis counterattacked. Many of Sergeant Greene's friends and colleagues were killed or wounded on June 7, 1944. While tragic, these losses also proved fateful, for it was on that day that Keith Johnston was assigned as a radio operator with the regiment. He was the man poised to be Sergeant Greene's best friend and my link to his story.

As the North Nova Scotia Highlanders continued to push their way through war-torn France and Belgium throughout the summer of 1944, Sergeant Greene and Mr. Johnston drew exceedingly close. In October, 1944 the two friends were billeted in houses adjacent to each other in the City of Ghent, Belgium. Described by Mr. Johnston as a "quiet man," Sergeant Greene went about his affairs calmly. A man of 5'11, with a glowing smile and cheerful eyes, Sergeant Greene, together with Mr. Johnston, would sometimes take the young daughter of his billet family for walks in the park. They were so taken with this little girl that they sought and were granted permission of her mother to have their picture taken with her. This peace only lasted a short interval of time however and Sergeant Greene prepared for the major offensive that ultimately would result in the loss of his life.

The Allied offensive to clear the west bank of the Rhine River commenced in February 1945. Operation "Veritable" led the Canadian troops, including Sergeant Greene and Mr. Johnston, to the edge of the Rhine River, across from the German town of Emmerich. Extremely intensive fighting ensued as the Nazis desperately tried to maintain control of their territory. Sergeant Greene, Mr. Johnston and the North Nova Scotia Highlanders endured many harrowing moments as they approached Emmerich.

Thanks to Mr. Johnston, with whom I personally spoke, I now possess a clear picture of the events of February 14, 1945, the day that Sergeant Eric Greene died. Mr. Johnston entered a small farmhouse overlooking Emmerich. Carrying his radio, which weighed 39 pounds, and his other equipment, Mr. Johnston climbed the stairs to the second floor of the farmhouse in search of his commanding officer. Instead he discovered Sergeant Greene sitting in a chair. Upon seeing Mr. Johnston, Sergeant Greene rose to offer his seat to his exhausted comrade and friend. Such a simple and unassuming act of kindness and friendship turned deadly because, as Sergeant Greene stood, a sniper's bullet struck him squarely in the head. While other soldiers were there to break his fall, Sergeant Greene died instantly.

While I did not have the privilege of meeting Sergeant Eric Greene personally, I am honoured to have "met" him through his friends and comrades. I shall be forever thankful that he and many thousands of other brave Canadian soldiers put their lives on the line to secure my freedom.

Meaghan Beresford - Youth Delegate
60th Anniversary Netherlands Pilgrimage
May 2005