

Hoover, James Earl
Calgary Highlanders
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
Private
K51940



James Earl, called Jim was born in Medicine Hat, Alberta on December 5, 1924. His parents were George and Blanche (the boys called her Marnie, because they couldn't pronounce Mum!). George fought with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry at Vimy Ridge and was wounded at Paschendaele in WWI. Blanche came from a family with a distant relative who fought with the British on the Plains of Abraham in 1759. Jim's younger brother is Geordie (our Dad).



Jim with his Mum(Muriel) and Dad(George).

The family moved to Nelson, British Columbia in 1938. Jim graduated from High School in June, 1943. Jim belonged to the Rocky Mountain Rangers, the Nelson Reserve Home Guard, in 1942. Jim was also the Lieutenant Colonel (Commander) of the local High School Army Cadets and a King Scout.

Brilliant Student Training in Army

Special to The Vancouver Sun

NELSON, July 21.—James E. Hoover, son of Lt.-Col. and Mrs. George A. Hoover, and pupil of Nelson Junior-Senior High School, will receive word that he won a scholarship in recent senior matriculation examinations at Queen's University, Kingston, where he is taking the No. 2 Army University Course.

James was J. E. Hoover born in Medicine Hat on December 5, 1924, and took his high school education here.

He joined the Nelson unit of

the Reserve Battalion of the Rocky Mountain Rangers in the spring of 1942 and qualified as a sergeant the following February. He was lieutenant-colonel of Nelson High School Cadets (Army) Corps and left for Kingston to start his army course July 8.



Upon graduation, Jim won a scholarship at UBC, but when he was accepted to the military program at Queen's University, he chose to go there.

Jim loved the outdoors and spent much of his free time fishing, hunting and hiking



Jim after pheasant hunt.



Jim, Grandma Hoover and brother Geordie.

In preparing this, we discovered close to 100 letters that Jim sent home while away. Here are some excerpts:

Second last letter sent on February 25, 1945, to our Dad:

"Whatever happens, do not let Marnie or Dad get worrying. That will do no good for anyone and will just be hard on them. Remember that the job has to be done and the sooner it is done the better."

Last letter sent on February 28, 1945 to his Mum and Dad:

"I shall be going up to the regiment soon, so I thought I had better tell you a few things. As you know, I am here entirely because I thought I should come. I would not have felt that I was being honest, if I had stayed back to go to University as an "essential occupation". I could have gone to Brockville (near Kingston) for the Officer's

Speaker, Trinity

"Cross or Swastika? Which?" This was the question posed by James Hoover, Speaker when Mrs. W. C. Kettlewell's Young People's Bible Class took the service at Trinity Church Sunday night.

"This question must be answered and will be answered by the youth of the world," he declared. "Either alternative requires the support and effort of the young people." Hitler perverted youthful minds to build his authority. His principle, the guiding of youthful minds, could "remodel the world along Christian lines by channelling youths' zeal into constructive fields," he said.

The speaker contrasted the way of the Cross, Christ's way, with the way of the swastika, Hitler's way.

"We have found the characteristics of Christ's way — happiness, forgiveness, righteous indignation, loyalty, sincerity, fearlessness, manhood and love.

"What has Hitler to offer in place of these," he asked. "Hitler believes in happiness also—the controlled, degraded happiness of 'strength through joy', censored and propaganda-laden entertainment in the theatres . . . great parades and spectacles. But even from these we would be excluded should we choose this way, because only Aryans are allowed such happiness."

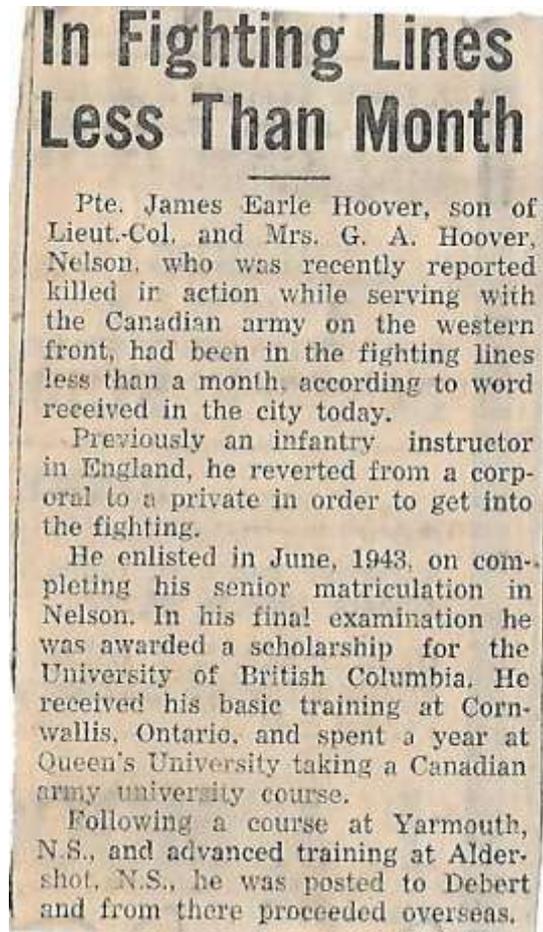
VENGEANCE, DISLOYALTY, FEAR

Hitler did not forgive, but when one German was killed, 50, 100 or more hostages were shot. Hitler used disloyalty to subdue others and keep them subdued. His path was the path of fear. Hitler's creed was nationalism and race hatred.

"We must have Christ in our hearts to bring us peace," the young speaker asserted. This must begin through the home and the Sunday School, should be carried on through youth organizations, and then through Church membership.

Men and women now in the Armed Services and the young people who will be in the Services before this war is over must be the ones to build the new life without bickerings and contention. We must turn to Christ for peace, security and a new world," he declared.

Course, but I did not feel that a man should take a commission and go into action with no battle experience to lead a platoon of veterans. Instead, I signed a waiver to go overseas."



Jim was a Christian and was active with his church youth group. Shortly before going east for training at Queen's, he gave the message at the church one Sunday. The message was titled, "Cross or Swastika? Which?". You can read excerpts from the message in the article enclosed, but the words that meant the most to us were, "We must have Christ in our hearts to bring us peace."

We were also able to get a better idea of the kind of person Jim was by a couple of the sympathy letters sent to his parents after his death. Here are a couple of them:

From Jim's High School Principal:

"After the numbness of the first shock, we all – and you in particular – will have the fondly cherished memory of a life that, though short, was full of accomplishments, full of kindness and service, and above all was untarnished and entirely wholesome."

From Jim's HS English Teacher:

"If ever there was a fine young Canadian with every quality we admire and desire in our leaders – that boy was Jim – perfect health, high intelligence and integrity, such a keen mind that could think quickly through a problem, reduce it to its elements and express those concisely and forcefully."

Jim was killed in action in the Hochwald Forest, near Cleve, fighting with the Calgary Highlanders. He was "killed by a mortar bomb during a very dirty engagement we had entering the Hochwald Forest in Germany".

He was first buried in Bedburg, Germany and later reburied to the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave reference **VII. E. 6.**



Photo: www.lestweforget1945.org

After the war, 18 mountains in the West Kootenays were named after Nelson boys who lost their lives. In the fall of 2016, we were fortunate to climb Mount Hoover and instal a plaque.



THANKS, JIM, AND ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FOUGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM. WE OWE YOU SO MUCH



Biography by namesake Jim Hoover, Craig and Graham Hoover and their father Geordie Hoover (Jim's brother).

Biography made available for Faces To Graves, with courtesy of Jim Hoover.