

Pachkowski, William Frank

**Private/Queen's Own Cameron
Highlanders of Canada**

Royal Canadian Infantry Corps

H/22112



William Frank Pachkowski was born on the 6th of May 1925 in Stonewall, Manitoba. William (Bill) was the youngest son of Frederick and Mary (Maria) Pachkowski who both were of Austrian origin. Bills parents married at 16 November 1911. 7 Children were born: Bills brothers Alexander, Peter, and Michael. And sisters Hanka (Annie), Pauline (Polly), Rose and Bill of course. Bills family home life was happy.

Two of Bills brothers, Alexander and Peter, served as well.

Alexander enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force in Winnipeg on The 12th of March 1942. He passed away on the 29th of October 2001, in Lethbridge, Alberta, at an age of 89.

Peter enlisted at #10 District Depot at Winnipeg on the 18th of July 1940, and was initially posted to A Squadron of the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) and then reposted in 1941 to Headquarters Squadron as a Regimental Police Dispatch Rider. Peter passed away on the 25th of January 2002, in Winnipeg at an age of 81.

Bill left school (VIII grade) at the age of 16, and he followed a sheet metal course at a vocation school in Winnipeg. Bill was a truck driver for Safety Freight Lines in St. Boniface, Winnipeg before enlisting.

Bill played softball land hockey, and liked swimming and hunting. Bill reads very little and is not musical. He likes a show "as long as there is not too much rough stuff". Bill enjoys the company of others, he likes to go to dances and parties. All though his religion is United Church, Bill did not attend Church since he was young. When Bill was younger, he liked stamp collecting.

Bill enlisted on the 8th of February 1944 at #10 District Depot Winnipeg, Manitoba.

With his 1.97m and 71kg, Bill was a tall and slim built young man. He had brown eyes and hair. He had a scar on his right forearm and left index finger. Bill was a single man.

During the selection interview on the 9th of February 1944 , army examiner Lieut. A.F. Deverell described Bill as "A very tall, mild mannered and good humored lad who is bent on driving in the army as he did in civilian life, and chose Canadian Armoured Corps. for that reason. He has average army ability and impresses as most trust-worthy. Should make good average progress. Prospect for driver I/C. Consider this soldier the type who may not exert himself unless pressed".



Bill during his training, date and location unknown.

Bill got his basic training at the Canadian Army Training Centre, followed by specialist training at the A27 Canadian Reconnaissance Training Centre Camp Dundurn, Saskatchewan. On the 4th of September 1944 he qualified himself as Driver Mechanic Group "C".

Bill was posted to the Royal Canadian Infantry Corps and attached to 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders as a Private.

Bill served in Canada till the 14th of October 1944. He is shipped to the United Kingdom where he stays from the 20th of October till the 15th of December 1944. On the 16th of December 1944, Bill was transferred to the mainland of Europe.

The Queens Own Cameron Highlanders were a battalion in the 6th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. However Bill is trained as Driver/Mechanic he was deployed in the Infantry. His regiment advanced into the Rhineland (Germany) by February 1945 with Operation Veritable and on to the Calcar Ridge for Operation Blockbuster.



Private R. Neel and Sergeant R.B. Swain of The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada examining a German bazooka anti-tank weapon found in an abandoned trench in Hochwald, Germany, 5 March 1945. Picture courtesy Canadian Virtual Military Museum, Facebook.

After bitter fighting the Camerons dug themselves in on the edge of the Hochwald. The following day the battalion launched an attack on the enemy in front of Xanten.

On this day, the 6th of March 1945, Private William Frank Pachkowski was killed in action during the battle to clear Xanten from the enemy, east of the Hochwald Forest in Emmerich. He was 19 years old.

Bill was first buried in Germany, at the temporary cemetery in Udem.

For his service, Bill was awarded the 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, War Medal and CVSM & Clasp.

William (Bill) Pachkowski was reburied in Groesbeek in January 1948, grave **XXI.H.10**.

His headstone bears the text:

“With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand he wandered into an unknown land”.



Life story Kim Huvenaars, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Source(s):

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

Pictures of Bill and the Stonewall war memorial: Catherine Precourt & Stonewall Municipal Heritage Committee.

William is commemorated on the Stonewall War Memorial in Manitoba.



Stonewall War Memorial, Manitoba.

A lake in northwest Manitoba was named after William Pachkowsky in his honor in 1975. “At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.”

PACHKOWSKI, William F.

WWII

William was born on May 6, 1925, in Stonewall, Manitoba, to Theodore and Maria. After his education in Stonewall, Bill worked as a truck driver before enlisting in the Tank Corps at age 18 at Winnipeg's #10 District Depot on February 8, 1944. He received his CAC Reece training at Camp Dundurn, SK, qualifying as a driver mechanic. Bill embarked in October 1944 to the UK with the CAC Reinforcement Unit and on December 15th to North West Europe taking on strength with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. Bill, at age 19, was killed in action in Germany on March 6, 1945, and his body was relocated from the field grave near Uedem, Germany, to the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in Holland. His headstone bears the inscription "With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand, he wandered into an unknown land."

