

John Burpee Wallace

Trooper

G 135

**8th New Brunswick Hussars
Battalion**



Personal Information: John Burpee Wallace was born on September 21st, 1919 on Shepody Road, Sussex, New Brunswick. He was the youngest of four children born to John and Sarah Wallace. He was brought up in the Anglican Church. He worked on the family farm in Sussex for five years of his life. He had an education up to grade ten and at the age of sixteen he began work as a mill worker for the family owned woodworking factory, Wallace Manufacturing Company, where he stayed for two years. As a 5' 7 1/2", 135 pound man, John Wallace, along with his brother Ralph Wallace, enlisted with the 8th Hussars on July 23rd, 1940, in Sussex, N.B. John hoped to become a radio technician after the war.

Military Movements: Upon enlistment in July 23rd, 1940, John joined the 4th Canadian Motor Cycle Regiment, 8th New Brunswick Hussars Battalion along with his brother Ralph Wallace in Sussex. On August 21st, 1941, John started at Camp Borden where he received training. On October 10th, 1941 John set sail for the United Kingdom. He disembarked on October 20th, 1941. That November, John received his class three driving licence.

John and the 8th Hussars trained in the UK from October 1941 until November 1943. On November 14th, 1943, he and the 8th Hussars left the UK to fight with the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean. He arrived November 24, 1943, would serve briefly in North Africa and then would

spend more than a year in Italy as the 8th Hussars would play a major role in the Italian Campaign. Famous battles sites included the Liri Valley, Ceprano, the Gothic Line and Coriano. Over 92,000 Canadian soldiers served in Italy and 5700 are buried there.

The Final Days: On February 19, 1945 John and his regiment left Italy and disembarked in Marseilles, France on February 21. They traveled by train to Belgium and Holland. The 8th Hussars would play a major role in the liberation of the Netherlands. They would be a part of Operation Cleanser by which they had to travel 30 miles and purge the Germans from Dutch territory. By April 17th, 1945 they were less than five miles away from the sea but first the 8th Hussars had to make their way through a heavily wooded area. On this day Trooper John Wallace saw much action as did his brother, Sergeant Major Ralph Wallace. They gained a lot of ground. By nightfall, difficulties began as the Germans ambushed the 8th Hussars. The Hussars were a resistant lot and fought on. By day's end, the Germans had 80 dead, 120 of their men had been captured and they had lost a great deal of equipment. The 8th Hussars, on the other hand, had no seriously injured soldiers. They had lost 14 tanks and one lone trooper. His name was John Burpee Wallace from Sussex, NB. His brother Ralph was on the same terrain. He continued on with the 8th Hussars to liberate the town of Putten on April 18. The Dutch here were free again after five years of Nazi rule. No doubt Ralph Wallace arrived in this atmosphere of jubilation with a heavy heart. He had lost his only brother the day before on April 17, 1945. He was first buried in Putten. The war would be over in Europe in another 20 days.

Lest We Forget: For six years of service between 1939-1945 John received various medals such as the Italy Star, the France and Germany Star, The Defence Medal, The War Medal and finally on January 15th, 1944 he was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp.

John Wallace is reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands approximately 10 kilometres from the city of Nijmegen, grave reference **XIV. G. 5.**

This cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,000 soldiers. John didn't leave a will, but he did leave \$1500 dollars of life insurance to his brother Ralph and also 2 bonds of \$50 to be sent home. He was 25 years of age when he was killed.

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

Video by a student at Belleisle Regional High School as part of the school's Lest We Forget initiative: https://youtu.be/1_SdDu-ek0g



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

Bibliography

Howe. D. The 8th Hussars. A History of the Regiment. Sussex, N.B.: Maritime Publishing, 1964.

Archival Reference

Military Service Files of Trooper John Burpee Wallace obtained from Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

Internet Sites

Commonwealth War Memorial – Veterans Affairs Canada:
www.cwgc.org/debt_of_honour.asp?menuid+14

Second World War Files:-www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/dadtabases/war-dead

Attestation Form of John Burpee Wallace. Non-Permanent Active Militia of Canada. Filed November 8th, 1943 (H.Q. 1772-39-15-45)

Form P.64 Department of National Defence for John Burpee Wallace. Estates Branch, Ottawa, Ontario. Filed July, 5th 1945 (H.Q. 1772-39-972)

Attestation Form for John Burpee Wallace. Non-Permanent Active Militia of Canada. Filed November 8th, 1943 (H.Q. 1772-39-15-45)

Occupational History Form for John Burpee Wallace. Filed April 10th, 1941.

Certificate of Medical Examination of John Burpee Wallace. Filed July 18th, 1940.

Attestation Form of John Burpee Wallace. Non-Permanent Active Militia of Canada. Filed November 8th, 1943 (H.Q. 1772-39-15-45)

Particulars of Family of an Officer or Other Rank of the C.A.S.F or R.C.A.F (on active service) of John Burpee Wallace. Filed July 18th, 1940. (H.Q. 1772-39-16-51)

Service and Casualty From (Part 1) for John Burpee Wallace. H.Q. 1772-45-19.
Military File of John Wallace as obtained from Library and Archives Canada



GIVES LIFE IN ACTION—Tpr. J. Burpee Wallace, (above), aged 25 years, son of John J. and the late Mrs. Wallace, Main St., Sussex, was killed in action on the Western war front during April. He is survived by his father, one brother Sgt.-Major Ralph C. Wallace, in Germany; two sisters, Mrs. A. J. Robinson, at home, and Miss Grace Wallace, Elgin, Albert County, and his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Mary Peters, Lower Kars.

Kings County Record clipping from the collection of C. Cripps.



From the collection of L. Pollock who visited Groesbeek Cemetery in 2010.