

Dabbs, Harold Jackson, Sergeant (D3297)

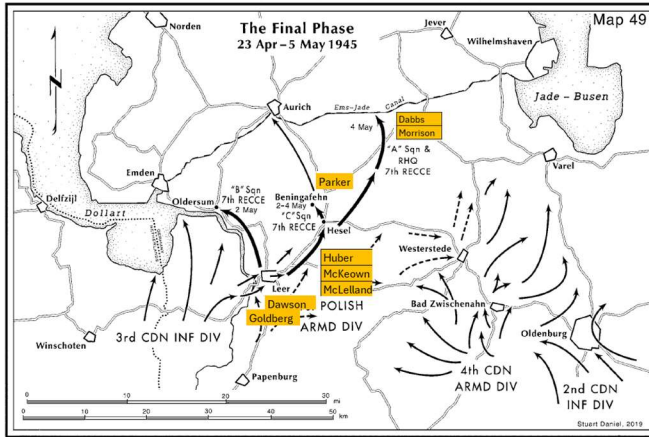


- Harold Jackson Dabbs was born on 27 December 1920 in Lachine, Quebec. He was 25 years old when he died of wounds received in action against the enemy on 4 May 1945 in Germany.
- On 26 July 1940, he enlisted for active service with the 3rd Canadian Motorcycle Regiment in Montreal (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars). On 26 February 1941, he was transferred to Camp Debert, Nova Scotia with his unit, which was redesignated as the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment. At Camp Debert, he qualified as a driver (wheeled) class III. On 23 August 1941, the unit left for the UK and deployed and trained in Southern England. On 17 June he was deployed to France.
- He was promoted to Sergeant on 10 January 1945. He died of wounds on 4 May 1945.
- He had no military experience prior to enlistment.
- Prior to enlisting, he worked for 1.5 years as a machinist at the Dominion Bridge Company.
- He left school at age 16 after attending 2 years of high school.
- According to his medical examination, he was 5 foot 7.5 inches tall and weighed 135 pounds. He had brown eyes and black hair. He was found fit for category A.
- He was the son of Enoch and Lily Dabbs, who married in 1913 in Toronto and later lived at 192 St. Joseph's Street, Lachine, Quebec. Harold had four siblings; Enoch Jr. (31), Jack (14), Betty (17), and Mrs. J. Miller (Age not indicated on file.)
- He was single and had no children.
- The co-beneficiaries of Harold's will were his father and his mother.
- His body is buried in the Holten Canadian War Cemetery, Overijssel, Netherlands (Ref: XII. C. 10.)(plot, row, grave)

Context

- After liberating the northern part of the Netherlands, the Regiment and the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division were ordered to cross into Germany and start clearing the Rheider peninsula. The first elements of the Regiment entered Germany during the second half of April 1945. Unlike the Netherlands, where the enemy was withdrawing using delaying tactics, the German forces were determined to fight. They had prepared their defences and laid thousands of mines and were much more aggressive. Further, the local population had no incentive to help the

Allied Forces, and the ground was soft and boggy making it more difficult to manoeuvre. These factors combined to increase the number of casualties.



- According to the War Diary for 4 May 1945: ““A” Squadron continued clearing area as given up to the line of the Canal. At 1030 hours HOLTROOP MR 889374 was reported clear. By noon one Troop had taken WEISMOOR MR 9935 with twenty Prisoners of War. On their way to WIESMOOR they captured intact a large power plant for NORTH-WEST GERMANY at MR 9935. Other elements had reached MR 9039 taking 26 Prisoners and areas MRs 9339 and 9638. As a patrol approached the bridge at MR 998410 it was blown and the enemy opened fire from across the EMS-JADE Canal. Thirty-seven Prisoners of War came across the canal at MR 8839 and gave themselves up to another patrol. In this skirmish Cpl Morrison was killed [in action] and later Sgt Dabbs later died of wounds received. By 1430 hours the Squadron had cleared area NORTH and EAST to Canal EMS-JADE MRs 8839 to 9480 to 0033 and at this hour an envoy under a flag of truce, purporting to be from the garrison com'd at AURICH, was conducted to 8th Canadian Infantry Brigade Headquarters. The Squadron was ordered not to cross the Canal.”