

Morehouse, Blake Elbridge, Trooper (G53778)



- Blake Eldridge Moorehouse was born on 20 November 1918 at White Head, Grand Manan, New Brunswick. He was 26 years old when he died of accidental Injury on 13 February 1945 in the Netherlands.
- On 18 March 1942, he enlisted at the No. 7 National Resources Mobilization Act Clearing Depot in Saint John, New Brunswick. He was then sent to the No. 8 Canadian Armoured Corps Training Centre in Borden, Ontario, where he qualified as a driver and mechanic for wheeled and tracked vehicles. He was sent overseas in July 1942 and posted to the 1st Canadian Armoured Corps Reinforcement Unit. From there he was transferred to the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars) then back again several times. He was sent to France on 12 September 1944, as a reinforcement to the 7th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment.
- He had only 30 days military training at the Fredericton Training Centre prior to enlisting.
- He left school at the age of 16 after completing eight years of public school. Subsequently, he worked as a mechanic's apprentice.
- Prior to enlisting, he was employed for seven years as an engineer-mechanic on a diesel-powered costal freighter owned by A.N. Chaney, a marine service based in Grand Manan, New Brunswick. He had also worked as a fisherman.
- According to his medical examination, he was 6 foot 1 inches tall and weighed 160 pounds. He had fair hair and brown eyes. He was found fit for category A.
- Son of Joseph, a fisherman, and Isabelle M. Morehouse, of White Head, Gran Manan, New Brunswick. He had four brothers: Mendell (39), Lindsay (36), Linden (36), and Eldred (22); and one sister: Hilda E. Lompkinson (40).
- Blake was a bachelor and had no children.
- The sole beneficiary of Blake's will was his mother.
- His body is buried in the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek, Netherlands (Ref V. E. 8.) (plot, row, grave)

Context

After nearly seven weeks in a string of observation posts along the River Waal, the Regiment moved back to Nijmegen on 3 February. This redeployment was in preparation for Operation Veritable, whose

mission was to clear the west bank of the Rhine, cross the river and advance into Germany. The 3rd Canadian Infantry Division was responsible for operations on the northern flank of the operation. The operation was divided into three phases, corresponding to the three main fortified zones established by the Germans. The 2nd Canadian Corps plan provided for the three British divisions and the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division to launch the initial assault on the morning of 8 February, and for the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division to follow on the evening of the same day. The 3rd Canadian Infantry Division was given the task of clearing the area between the Nijmegen-Kleve road and the River Waal.

On 8 February, the launch date of Operation Veritable, the Regiment completed its check of vehicles, armament, and all equipment.

The difficulties imposed by the Dutch climate only worsened at this time, especially in the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division's low-lying sector, the Waal Flats. A sudden thaw and heavy rains caused the River Waal to begin rising from 3 February, reaching a peak on 17 February. Earlier in the winter, the Germans had breached the main dike six kilometres east of Nijmegen. On 6 February, water began to pour through this gap and on 8 February, most of 3rd Canadian Infantry Division's area of operations was submerged.

In Lieutenant Pavey's words: "... life became exceedingly wet. The only possible way of getting to the Squadron positions was by boat, buffalo, weasle [sic] or some other amphibious vehicle.... The whole 3rd Division ... had removed its wheels and taken to the water. Liaison, supplying, communicating and fighting was done across the choppy flood waters in these oddly-labeled craft."

Amphibious vehicles were much used, but choppy water and racing currents sometimes proved too difficult for the Weasels. On 12 February 1945, a gap was blown in the winter dike to counteract the flooding caused by the enemy further up the Waal. As a result, the Regiment was marooned by the large breaches on either flank, and the only way to reach the squadron positions was by water. Three Buffaloes were assigned the task of taking supplies to the squadrons, but when these failed to appear, the transportation had to be performed by the squadron Weasels. Just after last light on the following day, a Weasel from "A" Squadron tried to reach the squadron location with rations, batteries and jerricans picked up from Nijmegen. The engine cut out and although the driver managed to restart it and get it to within 70 metres of the beaching strip, the motor again stalled. Two of the four regimental personnel aboard tried to climb out, and the boat swamped. Despite rescue efforts, both drowned. They were Troopers Blake Eldridge Moorehouse and Alfred Peter Mayer.

MEMORIAL SERVICE TPR. B. MOREHOUSE

United Baptist Church at White Head Filled With Friends of Young Soldier.

White Head, Grand Manan, April 16.—A memorial service in memory of Tpr. Blake Morehouse, who made the supreme sacrifice while serving with the Canadian Army in Holland, was held Sunday afternoon at the United Baptist Church at White Head at two o'clock. Blake was a member of this church and had shown keen interest in things spiritual.

The service opened with the hymn "Does Jesus Care?" and was conducted by the Rev. A. S. Carpenter. The choir with their organist, Mrs. Eugene Robinson, sang the hymns "Sometime We'll Understand" and "Jesus Understands" and a duet, "Beyond the Sunset," by Mrs. Delma Doucett and Miss Evelyn Darling.



TPR. BLAKE MOREHOUSE

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The church was beautiful with flags and flowers, given by the family, friends and church. During the invocation the pastor unveiled the photograph of the late Tpr. Blake Morehouse, which was draped with the Union Jack, paying tribute to his life and service and reminding his hearers how he had given up the eager joys and high hopes of youth, taken orders through long years of training and at last giving up his life to gain Freedom for us. "It is for us to be dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from our honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which he gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that he, with others, shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom and that government by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth," said the minister through the dedication period.

A two-minute silence was observed out of love and respect for him who had answered the last call.

Mr. Carpenter used as his text (2 Tim. 4:6-8), speaking of the qualities of a good soldier. Truly Blake was a good soldier and had kept the faith. A letter from his commanding officer in Holland spoke of the high esteem in which he was held both by himself and his comrades.

Besides his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Morehouse, he leaves to mourn his fiancée, Miss Ida Weaver, four brothers, Mendall, Lindsay, Linden and Eldred, and one sister, Mrs. Tompkinson.

Newspaper clipping—From a World War Two issue of the Fredericton (New Brunswick) Daily Gleaner, c.1945. Submitted

PAY FINAL TRIBUTE TO YOUNG SOLDIER

Memorial Service For Tpr. Blake Morehouse at White Head



TPR. BLAKE MOREHOUSE

WHITE HEAD, April 16.—(Special)—A memorial service in honor of Tpr. Blake Morehouse, who made the supreme sacrifice while serving with the Canadian Army in Holland, was held recently in the White Head United Baptist Church.

The large congregation present testified of the high esteem in which Tpr. Morehouse was held by the people of Grand Manan Island. The pulpit and communion table were draped with the Union Jack, and during the service the pastor, Rev. A. S. Carpenter, unveiled a picture of Tpr. Morehouse which was draped with a flag, paying tribute to his life and service.

Mr. Carpenter spoke from a New Testament text on the subject of a good soldier. A letter from Tpr. Morehouse's commanding officer in Holland spoke of the high esteem in which Tpr. Morehouse was held by the men of his regiment.

Tpr. Morehouse was a member of the White Head Baptist Church and took a keen interest in the things that were spiritual. The many floral tributes were an additional evidence of the high place he held in the thoughts of his many friends in the community.

The choir, under the direction of Mrs. Eugene Robinson, sang "Does Jesus Care," "Beyond the Sunset," "Jesus Understands" and "Sometime We'll Understand."