



Allan Burslem was the son of son of Allan and Ann (nee MacKenzie) Burslem of Dutton Ontario. He was married to Rita Marie Burslem and lived in London Ontario prior to enlisting.

Prior to enlisting, Allan Burslem attended Queen's University in Kingston Ontario as a Postgraduate student in Arts (Geology). After that he joined the Hollinger Gold Mines as Geologist

## **Service**

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Lt Burslem enlisted in March 1941 and proceeded overseas in April 1944. He served in the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals and was the Signals Officer for the Algonquin Regiment.

He was reportedly an excellent Signal Officer for the battalion. In the unit's published history, Warpath, it says about him "'Burs' ran his

signals platoon in such a fine, cooperative manner that we all felt we had the best communications it was possible to have. His men loved him; he would often be found relieving one of his fatigued lads and laying in a line himself. He had never, to our knowledge, taken any rest himself until all communications were in and functioning."

Due to the rapid advances on wide frontages in the later stages of the war, it was not possible to clear all enemy from the areas the Canadian units operated in and 'skulkers' were everywhere. While driving in his jeep to visit "C" Coy in their new position in the region of BORGER/ESTERWEGEN GERMANY on 12 April 1945<sup>[3]</sup>, Lt Burslem and his driver Cpl Ruddy were ambushed by the enemy. Lt Burslem was killed while Cpl Ruddy was wounded but managed to crawl away. Warpath<sup>[2]</sup> goes on to say "The manner of his death aroused the greatest resentment in the regiment, Lt.-Col. Bradburn being particularly angry. As for the signallers, from then on it was hard to keep them at their proper work - they wanted to fire weapons, lots of them, instead of manning wireless sets."

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## **Military Cross Citation**

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Lieutenant Burslem was awarded the Military Cross in recognition of gallant and distinguished service in the field.<sup>[4]</sup> His citation read:

On 7 March 1945, the Algonquin Regiment with under command A Squadron 29 Canadian Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment, attacked enemy strong points at MR 103362 on the outskirts of VEEN, GERMANY. Lt Burslem, RCCS (attached to the Algonquin Regiment) directed the battalion intercommunication during this attack. During this period shelling was extremely heavy. It was impossible to prevent infiltration of enemy snipers or the resultant harassing of unit lines of communication. Drivers of supply vehicles and ambulance jeeps were continually being wounded and killed by sniper fire. In spite of this constant danger, Lt Burslem personally guided his line parties into the forward localities under heavy fire and methodical sniping and during a thirty-six hour period this officer made no less than eight trips personally repairing line and carrying batteries to the forward posts. During this action Lt Burslem also acted as guide to ammunition and supply forward localities and on one of these occasions the ammunition carrier he was leading was halted by strong anti-tank fire. Disregarding the fire his actions drew, this officer quickly transferred some badly need PIAT ammunition into his jeep and attempted to run it through to the forward company where supplies had been exhausted. He was again held up by sniper fire but successfully deathly with this situation by employing his Bren gun and eventually reached the beleaguered company. Throughout this whole action Lt Burslem carried out his hazardous work with a quiet efficiency which inspired confidence in all those who worked with him. The continuous gallant, unselfish, conduct of this officer is regarded as most worthy and in the highest interests of the service.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **Lake Burslem**

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Lieutenant Burslem has a lake named in his honour in the Northwest Territories (60°8'31"N 105°33'31"W).<sup>[6]</sup>