

Dubé, Jean-Marie

11-F-6



Jean-Marie was born on May 17, 1922 in Saint Onésime, Kamouraska, Quebec.
The village had 627 inhabitants at that time.

He was the fifth child of Alexandre and Adeline Beaubien Dubé.
His parents were married in 1910 and had a large family.

Jean-Marie had 5 brothers and 8 sisters. In addition: 4 boys and 2 girls had died at a young age.

Father Alexandre died at the age of 49 in 1937. Jean-Marie's youngest sister was 9 years old at that time. One of his brothers served already in the Canadian Army.

Jean-Marie dropped out of school when he was 13, after completing "grade 5".
He worked as a labourer on nearby farms. He was adventurous, loved playing softball and dancing, reading detective stories and loved jazz.
He visited the cinema every week. Jean-Marie also often went hunting and fishing.

The medical report states that he was a heavy smoker, a light drinker. Besides that, it reads that he was underweight; 5'3" tall and 116 lbs on the scale.

On September 7, 1939, Jean-Marie enlisted in the army at the age of 17.
Because he was initially found unsuitable for infantry training, he was assigned to the 18th Field Ambulance van het Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, (RCAMC) until May 1941.

In the meantime he himself, had been in hospital several times.

In May 1941 Jean-Marie was transferred to Halifax, No.6 (Reserve) Field Ambulance, RCAMC.

In August 1941, Jean-Marie became acquainted, as a patient, with the Lester's Field Military Hospital (LFMH) in St-Johns.

In November 1941 he was Absent Without Leave (AWL); awarded with 14 days Confined to Barracks and 3 day's pay.

Mid November he was hospitalized for another two weeks.

Jean-Paul continued his service as an assistant in various departments of the hospital.

Early February 1942 he was granted 14 days furlough. Upon return, reassigned to another department of the hospital.

March 30, 1942 the records read: *"failing to appear on place of parade"*; the price: 4 day's pay.

In October 1942 Jean-Paul was transferred to the Royal Canadian Naval Hospital (RCNH) for some weeks.

The next note is: he was on leave in the second half of February 1943.

As of May 1, 1943 Jean-Paul was taken on strength by Le Régiment de St. Hyacinthe.
Then came transfer after transfer:

October 1943: Régiment de Joliette.

February 1944: Le Regiment de Montmagny.

Midsummer 1944 Jean-Paul is "on transit".

July 5, 1944: CAMC Peterborough.

July 16, 1944: Camp Borden in the Training Centre of the Army Medical Corps.

On November 30, 1944, Jean-Marie embarked for the United Kingdom.

From December 9, 1944 to February 23, 1945, he waited in England to be deployed in Northwest-Europe.

On February 24, 1945 Jean-Marie appeared in the Wester-European theater of war. He was assigned to the Régiment Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal on the 6th of March 1945, as a stretcher bearer.

The regiment was still involved in the Rhineland offensive.



Stretcher bearers in action

To clarify:

The Rhineland Offensive

In early March, the Canadians were assigned to take Xanten, established by the Romans in about 15 B.C. and the place from which the German 256th Infantry Division launched its 1940 invasion of the Netherlands.

It began with opening approaches to the town by Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal. Resistance was stiff.

On 22 February, once clear of the Reichswald, and with the towns of Kleve and Goch in their control, the offensive was renewed as "Operation Blockbuster" to link up with the U.S. Ninth Army near Geldern on March 4, after "Operation Grenade".

Fighting continued as the Germans sought to retain a bridgehead on the west bank of the Rhine at Wesel.

During the night of 23rd and 24th of March, the Allies cross the Rhine at Wesel and Rees with amphibious vehicles. On March 24, another 16,000 paratroopers landed on the east side of the Rhine. The largest one-day airborne operation ever.

On March 29, the Rhine crossing is completed and the Rhineland is in Allied hands. The Rhineland offensive claims 25,000 Allied and over 60,000 German victims.

After the FMR's participation in the Rhineland Offensive, the regiment moved north. The Division was ordered to liberate the eastern part of the Netherlands and to advance to the city of Groningen. Jean-Marie never reached that city.

The border between Germany and the Netherlands was crossed. Much resistance was encountered during the advance to Gendringen on March 31, 1945.

The regiment of Jean-Marie advanced fairly quickly.

On the 4th of April a strong fighting patrol (one company, the carrier platoon and the flame thrower section) tested the German defenses on the outskirts of Zutphen. The city was found strongly defended.

On the 7th of April 1945, the fateful day for Jean-Marie. The regiment advanced to the Schipbeek Canal between Laren and Holten.

The carrier platoon patrol, along the south bank, engaged machinegun fire and artillery shelling.

The enemy had dug in along the north bank. Lieutenant P.H. Boutin was killed by a sniper.

On April 8, about 08.00 am, the infantry started crossing the Schipbeek Canal under machinegun fire and artillery shelling. Carrier platoon crossed on ferry and helped by securing the bridgehead.

Flamethrowers were used successfully.

Early afternoon the bridgehead was firmly established and the engineers started building a bridge.

In the fierce fighting Jean-Marie Dubé was seriously injured.

He was taken to No. 9 Field Hospital in Lochem, where he died of wounds.

He was temporarily buried at the cemetery in Lochem.

His final resting place is at the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten.

Grave reference: 11-F-6.

He was awarded:

1939-1945 Star; France-Germany Star and the War Medal 1939-1945.

