

Biography Frank Gallant



Frank Gallant in Europe



Monument in Wellington PEI where Frank is mentioned.

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Introduction

We started this project with Franks biography. We searched through this for facts about him and his career as a soldier. We got many files from Mr. Veldhuis about Frank Gallant. We mailed his niece and we got some info and some websites from her. From this information we made a speech and read it at a memorial in Posterenk on the 13th of April, exactly 73 years after he died there. We have also laid a wreath next to the mill. A few other people also read a speech on this evening, such as Gerard Hendriks, the president from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch. But also children read a rhyme about freedom. We met people from Posterenk and they told us about their annual tradition. Every year they come to the windmill to commemorate the fallen soldiers in Posterenk. Altogether, it was a fun and interesting evening. Now we have some information about the fallen soldier Frank Gallant, who fought for the liberation in the Netherlands.

Biography

This is the speech we gave in Posterenk:

In preparation for this assignment, we have in recent weeks worked out more about the fallen soldier Frank Gallant, a Canadian soldier who died in the Netherlands while fighting for the liberation.

Frank Gallant was born on 24 November 1914 in Wellington, Prince Edward Island, Canada. When Frank was 14 years old, he stopped school and started working as a farmer, and later as a carpenter. As a hobby, he liked to play sports and played hockey and basketball. He was Roman Catholic. Frank was able to speak English and French even though he read very little, the only thing he read was the newspaper. He was a single man, without children.

On August 13, 1942, Frank Gallant chose to join the Canadian army. At the beginning of his service, he was housed in Charlottetown, as an infantryman. After this he was transferred to Petawawa and he was assigned to the Engineers, where he followed his basic and follow-up training. In this unit he was described as a reserved personality. Because of his skills as a truck driver and interests Frank Gallant was seen as suitable as a fireman or maintenance employee. Because he had no need to follow a specialized training, he was transferred back to the infantry. Here he has also completed his advanced training. In November 1944 he left from Canada to participate in the fighting in Europe.

Until March 1945, the Carleton and York Regiment fought on several important battles. This was the regiment where Frank Gallant was assigned. From April 1945 this regiment took part in the campaign against the Germans in the Netherlands.

Frank Gallant was killed in battle on April 13, 1945. So this is about 73 years ago. He was described as a healthy, attractive, single man. He had black hair and brown eyes. Despite the fact that he did not talk much, he seemed a stable and confident man.

Frank Gallant was temporarily buried in Posterenk with five other soldiers from the Carleton and York Regiment who all fell between 13 and 15 April 1945. Today we want to commemorate Frank Gallant, but also the other 5, namely James Frank Mossy, Samuel Glazier Porter, Harold Gordon Sabean, Richard Booth Savage and Fredrick Joseph Tait.



This day we learned a lot about how people still want to remember the heroes. Also some other people gave speeches. Also Gerard Hendriks who is the president of the royal Canadian legion branch 005 gave a speech. In this speech he told about the Carleton and York Regiment where Frank was part of. We talked with him after our speech and got it from him.

The liberation

Most parts of the Netherlands are liberated in the period of 1944/1945 because of Canadian soldiers. Where many of them brought the ultimate sacrifice. Only in the Netherlands, this led to about 7700 victims on the side of our Canadian liberators. Frank and 5 others died in Posterenk, the place where we held our speech about Frank. Although Posterenk only has 275 inhabitants it has suddenly become an important village to Canada.

History of the Carleton en York regiment

They delivered the greatest achievements in the Italy campaign and landings on Sicily in 1943, followed by the liberation from east and middle Netherlands in 1945. The Carleton and York regiment is formed in 1937 through the amalgamation of two regiments, the Carleton Light Infantry and The York Regiment. After 3 and a half years of training, the regiment took part in the invasion of sicily in July-August 1943.

In September 1943 the regiment took part in the invasion in Italy. They fought for the British army for three months, which was hard because of the land they fought on and the tactics of the Germans. In December 1943 the battle changed, the Germans tried to get the Allies as far to the south of Italy as possible. The fights became even harder. From December 1943 until march 1945 the Carleton and York regiment took part in difficult fights and many soldiers died. In april 1945 they arrived in the Netherlands and fought against the Germans for the liberation of the Netherlands.

Posterenk, the place where the Carleton and York regiment fought on the 13th of april 1945, the day Posterenk was liberated.



In this picture you see Gerard Hendriks who is the president of the royal Canadian legion giving his speech. In this speech he was telling about the Carleton and York Regiment where Frank was part of, he was also telling about the liberation of Posterenk.

The temporary grave in Posterenk

Here you can see a picture of the temporary graves of the 6 fallen soldiers. After this place the soldiers were buried in Holten.

Frank has lain there until 1946.



The Wilpermolen

This is the Wilpermolen, the place where the commemoration took place. You can also see this mill on the picture at the top, they were buried near this mill.

To remember the Canadian soldiers who fought there the inhabitants of Posterenk set up a commemoration every year.



His grave in Holten

Here you see the grave of Frank Gallant as it is right now, he is buried on the Holten Canadian Military Cemetery. A Canadian cemetery with 1394 soldiers.

In Holten you can find stories about the soldiers in an information center to get some more information.

Frank is buried in grave 4, row A, plot 3.



Feedback

Danique:

I have learned a lot from this project. We needed to learn to work together, and make decisions about who was going to do what. We work together in a lot of projects at school so we knew this wouldn't be a problem. For me this project was interesting because you are getting more respect for the fallen soldiers who are not really known. When you search for Frank Gallant on the internet you can't find any information about him. So we started with the dossiers, it was a bit difficult to get through those because it was a lot and because it was only the second time we did this – with the Polish exchange was the first time but that was only 2 hours and not as complicated – so you could say this was our first time. We had difficulties to read the things that were handwritten, but when we found out what was written it were actually the best parts. I was also a bit shocked about the letter the parents of Frank got when he died. Going to Posterenk was the thing which had most impact on me, we learned a lot about the liberation of Posterenk. The thing that impressed me the most was the speech of Gerard Hendriks. I am happy about how this project went and I think I have learned a lot.

Sanne:

I really enjoyed the project. It was interesting to find out the biography of this man named Frank. It's weird, because we have been busy to find out things about Frank, and we know a lot about him, while we don't even know him personally, and we are not able to, never. The collaboration with Danique went well. We worked on the project together, we helped each other and did about the same amount of work. The presentation we held in Posterenk is also something I will never forget. It was a beautiful experience, and it was nice to see the people in Posterenk commemorating this each year, and talking to them about it. First, we were hesitating if we wanted to do a project, but I'm glad that we did. We learned a lot from this project.