

Jerimia James Gaunt

Trooper

10-F-9

Jerimia was born on August 30, 1919 in Holden, Alberta to the catholic farmer's family of James and Joanna G. Gaunt (nee Crowley). He had four brothers; Peter, Frank Austin, Ignatius and William and two sisters; Mary and Priscilla Marie.

His attended primary school (Public School (Grade VI). After school he worked he had a year of experience as a forgerman at a transport company in Grande Prairie where he worked with a team of strong horses in the local distribution of heavy goods.

After serving with the reserve forces at the training camp in Grande Prairie from April 18, 1941, a month later he took the step to sign up for active service with the Canadian army and was assigned to the Royal Canadian Dragoons, a tank unit.

Physical examination (the man must be stripped)			
1. Height	6 feet 0 inches	2. Weight	178 pounds
3. Complexion	dark	Colour of eyes	brown
		Colour of hair	black
4. Development	good	{ good fair poor } Strike out inapplicable words	
5. Chest measurement—Girth on full expansion	40½ inches		
	Range of expansion	4 inches	
6. (a) Vision without glasses—Right eye	20/20	left eye	20/20
(b) If in possession of glasses: Vision with glasses—Right eye		left eye	
7. Hearing, right ear	W.V. 15	left ear	W.V. 15
8. Mouth and teeth	carious molars		
	Describe dentures, if any		
9. If the above named man suffers from any disability, whether congenital or pathological, which places him in a category lower than "A", a clear and concise description of such disability is to be given here:—			

After a few months, on November 23, 1941, he was transferred to the United Kingdom. After almost two years of training, he was deployed to the Italian front on October 25, 1943.

Canadian army in Italy, 1943-45

The role of the Canadians in the Italian Campaign during World War II was crucial, but less known compared to the Normandy landings. Between 1943 and 1945, more than 92,000 Canadians fought in Italy, building a reputation as elite troopers.

Canadian participation began on July 10, 1943 with the invasion of Sicily. They slowly fought their way north. The most legendary and bloody confrontation of the Canadians in Italy is the Battle of Ortona, a port city on the Adriatic coast,

which was stubbornly defended by the Germans. Because the streets were full of rubble and mines, Canadians devised a tactic of blowing holes in the walls of houses to move from building to building without having to go outside and expose themselves on the streets.

In 1944, the Canadians played a key role in breaking the two German Defence lines in Central Italy:

- Gustav-line: They helped in the attack on Monte Cassino and broke through the neighbouring Hitler line.

- Gothic Line: In the fall of 1944, the 1st Canadian Corps led the attack on the heavy German Defence in the Apennines and along the coast near Rimini.

During his stay in Italy, his mother died on February 3, 1944. In fighting around Cattolica, he was slightly injured on September 2, 1944 and was admitted to a field hospital for five days.

Operation Goldflake

From February 22, 1945, Canadian troops in Italy were moved to France in the greatest secrecy and under strict camouflage in a very short time. In order to deceive German intelligence services, measures were taken to suggest that Canadian troops were still in Italy.

The trip from Italy to Marseille, France lasted two days. From there it was a five-day drive to the Belgian border, a distance of 1085 km. By the end of April, more than 60,000 troops and support personnel had been transferred from Italy to the front in Northwest Europe.

As did Jerimia, he went to France on March 19, 1945 and not soon after to Belgium and the Netherlands. The Royal Canadian Dragoons were deployed there to participate in the liberation of the eastern and northern Netherlands from the beginning of April. At the end of April they arrived in Friesoythe (Germany) and they experienced the end of the war in and around Westerstede (Germany).

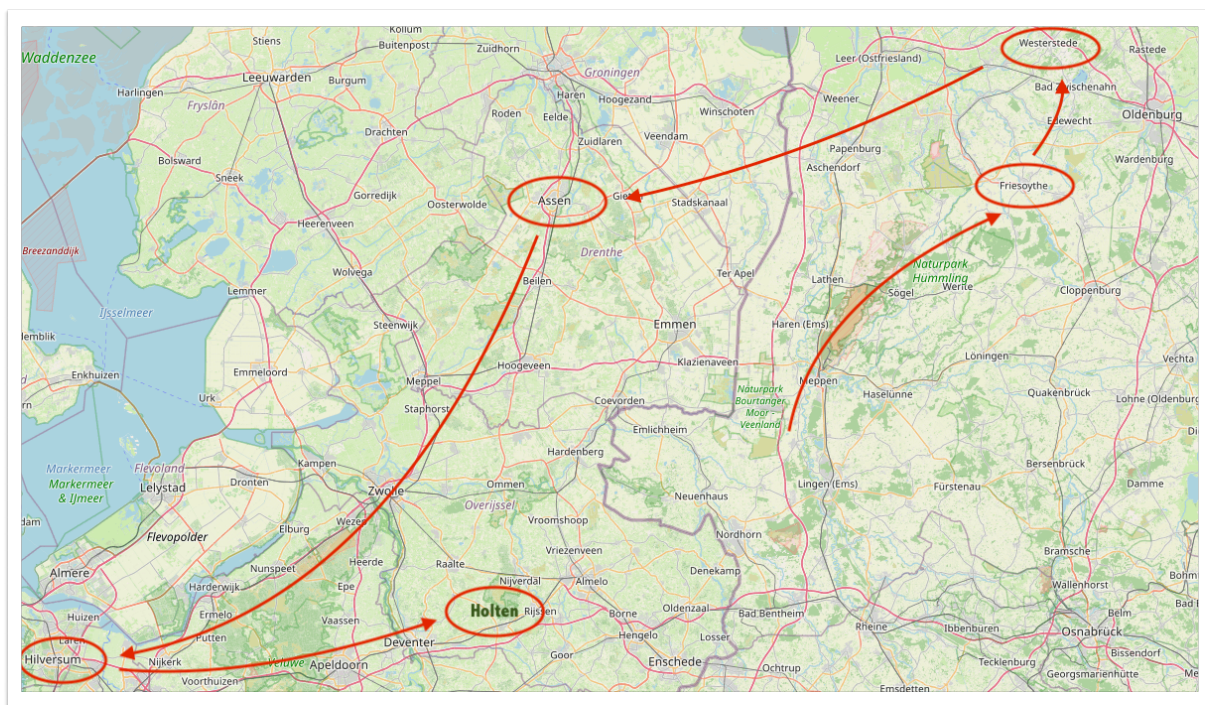
Once in Germany, Canadian soldiers were not allowed to fraternise with the locals. It was therefore a relief to be able to return to recently liberated Drenthe on May 11, 1945, where they were enthusiastically met by the Dutch population.



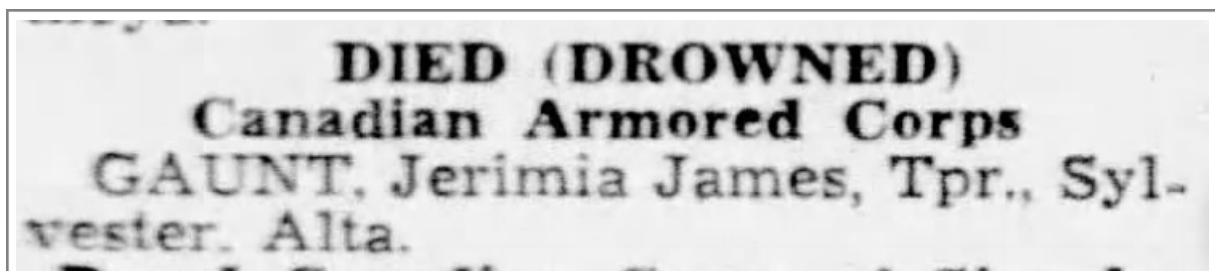
The Canadians remained in the Netherlands to, among other jobs, maintain order and restore infrastructure. On Monday, July 9, 1945, they were stationed in Assen.

That day Jeremiah James Gaunt, 25 years old, drowned. The exact circumstances are not recorded in his military file. It is clear that it was an accident. His body was buried in Hilversum before he was reburied on March 29, 1946 in the Canadian War Cemetery in Holten where he rests in plot X, row F, grave 9.

The map below shows Jeremiah's movements in the last months of his life.



His headstone reads: EVER REMEMBERED BY FATHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS R.I.P.



He was awarded the 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; France Germany Star; Defence Medal; War Medal; CVSM & Clasp



Edwin vd Wolf, Bas Sjoerts v1.1, August 2026

*Sources: ancestry.ca; Wikipedia; <https://www.cwgc.org>
Operation Picture Me*