

Cpl Frank Giesbrecht

5-A-6



Frank was born on June 20, 1918 in Grunthal, Manitoba, he was the son of Jacob Giesbrecht, his mother died shortly after his birth. His father remarried Elizabeth Giesbrecht. He had four sisters from his father's first marriage, the youngest Minnie Isaacs he named as his beneficiary. From his father's second marriage, 3 half-brothers and 9 half-sisters were born. Three of them died as babies.

Frank's family belonged to the Mennonite Community (German background). These Mennonites, named after their leader Menno Simons, had to emigrate from Europe to America/Canada at the end of the 19th century due to serious threats against their faith. They had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church. Mennonites are pacifists and hold on to norms and values from decades ago. They want to be independent of the state and therefore do not use pension rights or collective health insurance. They don't drive a car and wear modest clothing. For children, the world is not much bigger than the farm, school and church. At the age of fourteen they quit school to work on the farm. There are approximately 130,000 Mennonites living in Canada. The Amish are closely related to the Mennonites, they observe the rules of the faith even more strictly.

Frank spoke English and, because of the origins of his environment, "low Dutch" and because of that knowledge he was able to speak to the population in Flanders and the Netherlands to some extent.

Frank left school at the age of 13 and worked as a farm laborer until he entered military service.

He was active with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada or The Non-Permanent Active Militia from January 10, 1941. On November 24, 1941, he reported for active duty in the Royal Winnipeg Rifles in Winnipeg. After training he went to the United Kingdom on April 19, 1942. There his military training continued. He went to Normandy on June 6, 1944 during the D-Day landings, where Frank was deployed in the fierce fighting on the Normandy mainland. He was seriously injured on 28 August 1944 and returned to the United Kingdom for recovery. On September 25, 1944, Frank returned to his regiment to continue participating in the advance through Belgium and the Netherlands.

Frank died on Monday, April 16, 1945 at the age of 26 as a result of serious injuries sustained on April 10, 1945 during the battle in or around

Deventer. He was then most likely transported to the Canadian field hospital in Lochem. Frank died there and was also temporarily buried before he was reburied in Holten on February 1, 1946.

His medals were: the 1939-45 Star; France Germany Star; Defense Medal; War Medal; CVSM & Clasp.

The province of Manitoba has a lake named in his honor.

