



Pte. William F. McCooeye, Algonquin Regiment who was killed on April 24, 1945, at the age of 24, in the liberation of the Netherlands.

William F. McCooeye was the second eldest brother in a family of four children. He was born on August 16, 1920.

He is a descendant of Thomas McCooeye also known as "*Red Tom*" or "*Paddy McCooeye*". Thomas was born in 1808, Co. Antrim, Ireland. He emigrated to Canada via

New York, married Elizabeth Waddell and settled on land south of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. They raised a large family on the family farm. He died at Metcalfe, Ontario, Canada in 1896.

William F. McCooeye's parents, Samuel and Lyda McCooeye raised their children Cecil, William (Bill), Anne and Lawrence on a farm 35 km south of the capital city Ottawa, Ontario. Their family farm was just outside of the rural town of Metcalfe, Ontario.

William (Bill) McCooeye, enlisted in World War II, even though he could have claimed an exemption. He was eligible to be exempted from service because he was needed in Canada to work the family farm. His eldest brother Cecil was a married man with a child and was exempt from service. His labour was needed in Canada to supply the country and the troops. His youngest brother Lawrence was too young to serve in the military.

His brother-in-law Frank McDowell (Anne) also served in the European theater. He was in England and France during the war.

His brother Lawrence, 15 years old, remembers accompanying his father Samuel and Bill to the train station. Bill was joining his fellow members of the Algonquin Regiment at a training base in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada.

With fond farewells, see you soon, and give 'em hell, Bill was off to war.

William (Bill) as the second child in the family was feisty. He liked to play pranks and tease people.

Once when his parents went visiting and left the children at home.....

The boys (Cecil, Bill and Lawrence) strung up Anne's doll with a rope over the rafters in the house and teased her, making her jump for it, and making her cry. A pot of mashed potatoes was left on the stove and all of the children took up spoons. They used the mashed potatoes as ammunition, and flinging spoonful's across the room, tried to hit each other. Their parents came home in the middle of the mashed potato fight and some of the mashed potatoes hit their father! We can only imagine the consequences! Although he liked to tease his brothers and sister, he was still their fiercest protector.

Bill had, had training as an amateur boxer. Although a slightly built man, he was fast with his fists.

As the World War II approached William (Bill) was working the family farm, as well as finding work with other farmers in the area who needed a helping hand.

He had a steady girlfriend named Jean. Bill and Jean had serious intentions for one another. Would they have married after the war? We don't know. We do know that for many years Jean would visit and write to William's (Bill) parents.

William (Bill) often wrote to his mother and father, and other family members, all during the time that he was serving in Europe. In a very unfortunate turn of events the family farm house burned to the ground shortly after the war ended. All of Bill's war time correspondence was lost in the fire.



It was the last letter from his commanding officer however, that devastated his family. His youngest brother Lawrence was out in the fields of the farm about 1 km from home. He could hear his mother's wails and cries of anguish as his parent's read the news that their beloved son had been killed.

William was shot by a German sniper as he was taking cover in a trench, during the liberation of the Netherlands.

Pte. William F. McCooeye died of his wounds on April 24, 1945. He was 24 years old.

He was forever mourned by his family. His sacrifice is memorialized at a cenotaph in Metcalfe, Ontario close to where he was born. His name (second last in the list) appears along with others from the area who also died in the line of duty during World War II.

