

Anderson, William Charles
Trooper
Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment
Royal Canadian Armoured Corps
M-107424



William was born on October 27, 1923 in Manville, Alberta. He grew up in Edmonton, Alberta. Charles Harold Anderson was his father. His father was English and his mother was Irish. His mother died on October 31, 1933, when William was nine years old. He was brought up further by his father Charles Harold Anderson. His father was a nurse at a university hospital. Charles was the third child in a row of the seven children. He had three younger brothers, a younger sister, and two older sisters. The family was Baptist. William did not really have any hobbies, but he sometimes read fiction, played bowls and pool.

William went to school until he was seventeen. After primary school he attended High School for another year. After this he followed the practical training for plumbing at Wedstone Plumbing for two and a half years. William would have liked to get back to work there when the war was over, and so did his boss. On March 22, 1943, he enlisted in the army, at the age of nineteen. A healthy boy of 5 ft 7,5 in and 147 lbs. He had brown hair and blue eyes. William volunteered to join the army because he felt it was his duty as the eldest son. His little brother George later also enlisted in the army.

William was polite and friendly during his training. He was interested in shooting. He had a good character for a soldier. He trained at Camp Borden and obtained the Gunner Operator Group C qualification there. On November 24, 1943, William left for England to be prepared further for the war. Here he continued the Gunnery Wing training.

He left England on June 2, 1944 and arrived in France on June 6. On August 25, 1944, William had an accident in France, he was hit by a truck and sustained a badly bruised ankle. Because of this he spent 11 days in hospital in England.

On Sunday, September 17, William was gone for three days. As a punishment, William had to forfeit ten days' wages and got a note in his file. The reason for his disappearance was not stated in his file. He did not return to France until October 9, arriving a day later. In March 1945 the Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment was part of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division.

In the night of March 27 to 28, the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division started the attack on Emmerich, which they took after bloody fighting on March 31. On that day they also occupied Elten and Hoch Elten and crossed the border into the Netherlands. They liberated 's-Heerenberg and advanced towards the village of Wehl.



Canadian tank on the 'Keppelseweg' in Wehl.

On April 2, A squadron supported the Canadian 7th Infantry Division in the fighting in and around Wehl. They disabled light machine guns on the flanks and sent out patrols to track down German pockets of resistance. They experienced a lot of nuisance from roadblocks, blown bridges and mines.

At two o'clock in the morning on April 2, all the deployed patrols had returned and it had become clear how the Germans defended Wehl.

There was a first line of defense along the railway, a second was on the south side of the village. The attack on Wehl began at four in the morning. Prior to this, there had already been an artillery bombardment on the German defense lines. On the left flank A Company attacked, on the right flank D Company, each supported by a section of WASP flamethrowers, and tanks from the C squadron of the 27th Canadian Armoured Regiment (The Sherbrooke Fusiliers).

The opposition was fierce, but at six o'clock that morning they reached the south side of Wehl. There they were relieved by B and C Companies which, with the support of flamethrowers and tanks, of which William was a part, were fighting their way to the north side of the village. William was in one of these tanks. His tank was hit at least twice by German artillery on the Keppelseweg from the direction of the Rosa Monastery. William was killed, along with two other crew members. These were Lance Corporal Norman Adrian Belveal and Trooper David Frederick England, both 20 years old. The gunner and the tank commander managed to get out of the burning tank.

William was temporarily buried in Vrasselt, Germany.

He was later reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, the Netherlands, grave reference **XX. E. 14.**

Trooper William Charles Anderson's was awarded with:

- 1939-45 Star
- France & Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp.



Tpr. W. C. "Bill" Anderson, who has been killed in action with a tank unit in Germany. He was a son of Charles H. Anderson, 10934 76 ave. The soldier attended Rutherford and Garneau schools and was with the Whetstone Plumbing Co. before his enlistment in April, 1943. He entered France on D-Day.

In Wehl, various monuments remind us of the victims who fell during the liberation.



This tile in the sidewalk of the Keppelseweg, at number 22, indicates the place where William's tank stood.

War memorial in Norman Belvealstraat in memory of one of the Canadian soldiers who liberated Wehl on April 2, 1945. In him, all of Wehl's liberators are honoured.



Life story: Sylvia Thuis, Research Team Faces to Graves.

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Library and Archives Canada
- 'The liberation of the municipality of Wehl', thanks to Karl Lusink

