

Trooper John Joseph McLeod

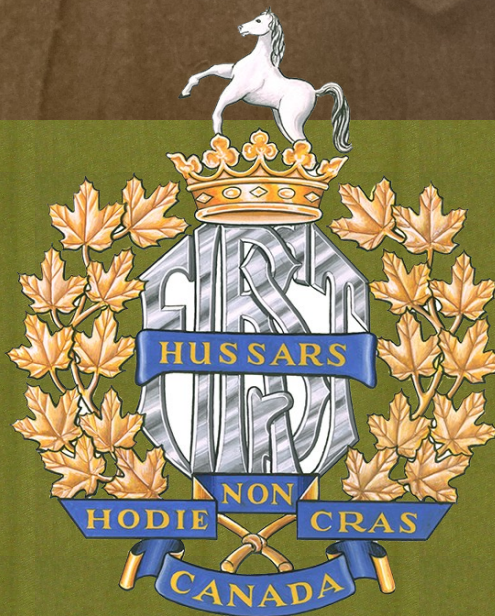
First Hussars, R.C.A.C.

Family Life:

John Joseph (Jack) McLeod was born on June 15, 1921, in Neyaashiinigmiing (Cape Croker), one of fourteen children to Mary Louise and John Malcolm McLeod. His father fought in the First World War and served with the Veterans Guard during the Second. Growing up, Jack played an array of sports including soccer, softball, and hockey. He attended school until age 14, when he left to work on the family farm. John indicated that he hoped to become involved in mixed farming after his military service.

Service History:

At 19, on June 17, 1940, McLeod enlisted with the Grey and Simcoe Foresters in Owen Sound. Many positive comments were made about him throughout his testing and training. The auditing officers noted a number of times that John “appeared quite intelligent” and was “[a] quiet boy – [with a] good appearance.”



Decorations:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France and Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer service Medal with Clasp

Service History:

After training at Camp Borden, Trooper McLeod left for England on June 15, 1943. When the Grey and Simcoe Foresters were disbanded in August 1943, he became a member of the 6th Armoured Regiment, more commonly known as the 1st Hussars.

McLeod saw his first action on D-Day. The 1st Hussars landed on the western half of Juno Beach in support of 7th Infantry Brigade. After suffering heavy casualties on the beach, the 1st Hussars were left with only 13 tanks. Following the bloody battles for Caen, they moved further south of the city to provide armoured support for the next battle codenamed Operation Spring.

On July 25, the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division launched an attack on Verrières Ridge with support from the 1st Hussars. They would face heavy resistance as they attempted to seize the higher ground.

Service History Trooper McLeod was a member of C Squadron and according to their Events Log of that day, “C Sqn was strafed [sic] by friendly aircraft.” McLeod was wounded during this incident. Upon arrival at the field hospital, he had minor injuries with his condition marked as “fairly good.” He was then transferred to No. 121 British General Hospital, R.A.M.C, located near Bayeux, where his wounds were treated and shell fragments removed. On July 27, while receiving further treatment for these wounds and 2nd degree burns to his hands, the “patient collapsed suddenly [and] died.” Trooper John Joseph McLeod was only 23 years old.

Interesting Story: In 1972, Mary Louise McLeod, John’s mother, was chosen to represent all Silver Cross Mothers of Canada and lay a wreath at the National War Memorial in Ottawa during the Remembrance Day Ceremony on behalf of those who had lost children in the world wars. She was the first Indigenous woman to be given the honour of being National Silver Cross Mother.