

In for a penny, in for a pound.

As stated before, we will mention all nine Canadians who were honoured with the Military Order of William and were appointed Knight 4th Class.

In the previous editions we have listed four names so far.

In this edition we highlight, briefly, the other five, in alphabetical order.

Like Lieutenant Forbes, they were among the survivors.

Caron, Roger,

Gillis, James E.,

Kirk, Wilford H.,

Liddell, Kenneth C.,

Mason, Gerald L.



Lieutenant Roger Caron.

Service number: E51488

Born: 30-01-1921 in Quebec.

Died: 21-06-1950

Research taught us:

"On April 24, 1945 around 12:00 noon, the D-Company of the Royal 22nd Regiment was halted in the woods in its advance towards Amersfoort. Heavy machine gun fire from the road to Hoogland was the cause. Lieutenant Caron of B-company was detailed by his Commanding Officer to outflank this pocket of resistance with his platoon. In support a Churchill AVRE tank would go forward.



AVRE with 290 mm mortar
and 2 machineguns

The enemy were dug in on each side of the road and the road was blocked with felled trees. Lieutenant Caron advanced with his platoon close behind the tank which was firing as it moved forward. Then, dashing ahead he and his men began to shoot the Germans out of their positions. In so doing, the platoon suddenly came under fire from two machineguns. They were pinned to the ground and the tank was unable to give supporting fire because of the closeness of the platoon to the enemy. Showing complete disregard for his own personal safety, Lieutenant Caron dashed forward and jumped into a slit trench which was occupied by a German Officer.

After a brief struggle, Lieutenant Caron disarmed the officer and at the point of his pistol obliged the Officer to march, with his arms raised, towards the machine guns and order his men to cease fire. In this way, Lieutenant Caron personally captured the two machine guns who were pinning down his platoon.

Then his platoon, inspired by his courage, dashed forward and cleaned out the whole position, capturing sixty-five of the enemy."

This was the action for which Lieutenant Roger Caron was awarded the Military Order of William.

Gunner James Elmer Gillis.

Service number: F82234

Born: 08/24/1922 in West Devon.

Died: 11/14/1986 in Dawson Creek.

Assigned to the 4th A / T Regiment RCA.

The Dutch description for the nomination is very general. However, we obtained substantial information from Canadian sources.

Gillis had previously received a Mention in Despatches. More interesting was his action for which he was awarded the Military Order of William.

The facts:

DECORATIONS - C. A. S. F.				REG. NO.		RANK		C.A.S.F. UNIT	
GILLIS, James Elmer				F-82234		Gnr.		4th Cdn A/Tk Regt	
SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS CHRISTIAN NAMES)				REG. NO.		RANK		C.A.S.F. UNIT	
AWARD				AUTHORITY		DATE		PAGE	
MILITAIRE WILLEMS-ORDE, DEGREE OF KNIGHT OF THE FOURTH CLASS				C.O. 51		22-12-45		5911	
DEED OF ACTION OR CITATION (SEE REVERSE SIDE)				THE KING has been pleased to grant unrestricted permission for the wearing of the following decorations which have been conferred on the undermentioned in recognition of distinguished service in the cause of the Allies: DECORATIONS CONFERRED BY HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF THE NETHERLANDS.					

DECORATIONS - C. A. S. F.				REG. NO.		RANK		C.A.S.F. UNIT	
GILLIS, James Elmer				F-82234		Gunner		4th Cdn A/Tk Regt	
SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS CHRISTIAN NAMES)				REG. NO.		RANK		C.A.S.F. UNIT	
AWARD				AUTHORITY		DATE		PAGE	
MENTION IN DESPATCHES				37521		4 Apr 46		1287	
DEED OF ACTION OR CITATION (SEE REVERSE SIDE)				THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of Mentions in Despatches, in recognition of gallant and distinguished services to:					

40/P & B/1420 (3000)		Date recommendation passed forward	
Received		Passed	
Brigade		31 Aug 45	
Division		31 Aug 45	
Corps		4 Sep 45	
Army		4 Sep 45	
26 SEP 1945			

Brigade **5 Cdn Armd** Division **1 Cdn** Corps
4 Canadian Anti-Tank Regiment
Schedule No. (to be left blank) Unit **Royal Canadian Artillery**
Army No. and Rank **F 82234 Gunner**
Name **GILLIS James Elmer**
(Christian names must be stated)

Action for which commended (Date and place of action must be stated)	Recommended by	Honour or Reward	(To be left blank)
Throughout operations in the Netherlands, Gunner Gillis has shown a devotion to duty and courage that has been an inspiration to all members of his troop. On one occasion in APRIL 1945 when his troop was attached to the Westminster Regiment (Motor) and engaged in an attack on PUTTIN, HOLLAND, Gunner GILLIS obtained information from a civilian that twenty-five of the enemy were in a woods on the outskirts of the town. No infantry was available so Gunner GILLIS, without hesitation, moved his self-propelled gun forward, deployed his men, shelled the area, and through his action captured fifteen of the enemy. In the face of heavy machine gun fire and sniping, Gunner GILLIS directed and encouraged his men and his actions resulted in complete success for the engagement and contributed in no small manner to the eventual success of the battalion plan. Gunner GILLIS' initiative, ability, and courage under fire in this action is only one example of many that he has shown throughout his military career.	NETHERLANDS AWARD "Militaire Willems-Orde", degree of Knight of the 4th Class. (W D King) Lt-Col Comd 4 Cdn A Tk Regt RCA (J S Ross) Brig CRA 5 Cdn Armd Div (I S Johnston) Brig GOC 5 Cdn Armd Div (G G Simonds) Lt Gen GOC Cdn Forces in the Netherlands		

P.T.O.



Sergeant Wilford Hirman Kirk.

Servicenummer: L154040.

Born: 18-02-1918 in Saskatchewan.

Died: 29-07-2009 in Ingleside, Marchwell, Saskatchewan.

Assigned to the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada.

The records read:

"On November 17, 1944, the 6th Canadian Infantry Brigade was deployed in an operation intended to block the Germans' way out of South Beveland.

The B-company of the QOCH took part in a battalion attack near Woensdrecht.

The attack was launched with infantry, tanks and flame throwers over flat terrain. The enemy had dug in and was determined not to budge. In no time the tanks and flamethrowers were stopped by minefields. Because the target was vital, the infantry was ordered to continue without this support.

Sergeant Kirk led his platoon under heavy machine gun and rifle fire to a position close to the enemy trenches. It was impossible for the whole peloton to advance. Single-handedly, Sergeant Kirk went up to the front enemy position under covering fire from his men. With success, he took 17 prisoners of war. He was injured, but he refused to go back.

He reorganized his platoon and led them in a second attack on an enemy reinforcement. They succeeded in killing seven Germans and capturing ten others".

The injuries caused Kirk to be out of circulation for a few days. After the fighting on the Rhine his combat task was over. He went back to Belgium and became an instructor for the recruits.

He rejoined the QOCH in Amersfoort immediately after the end of the war. He was put in command of the Regimental Police. In November 1945, during a motorcycle patrol, he drove into a bomb crater and broke his collarbone, among other things. That meant six weeks in hospital in Belgium.

On January 10, 1946, he was released from service.

Wilford H. Kirk visit the Netherlands again. Most recently on May 29, 2009. He then attended the ceremony on the occasion of Marco Kroon's knighting, together with five other Knight's 4th Class.



At the reception afterwards together with Princess Margriet.



Luitenant Kenneth Cecil Liddell.
Born: 26-04-1916 in Montreal.
Died: 07-08-1977 in Vancouver.

Assigned to:
21 Canadian Armoured Regiment.
(Governor Generals Foot Guards)

The records:

"On 29 December 1944, the 21st Canadian Armoured Regiment was ordered to move forward astride the railway line in the immediate vicinity of Heerle, Holland, and to then attack and capture the town of Moerstraten. Lieutenant Liddell was commanding a troop of 2 Squadron and was ordered to advance on the town of Heerle as lead troop and to lead the way through to the second objective, Moerstraten.

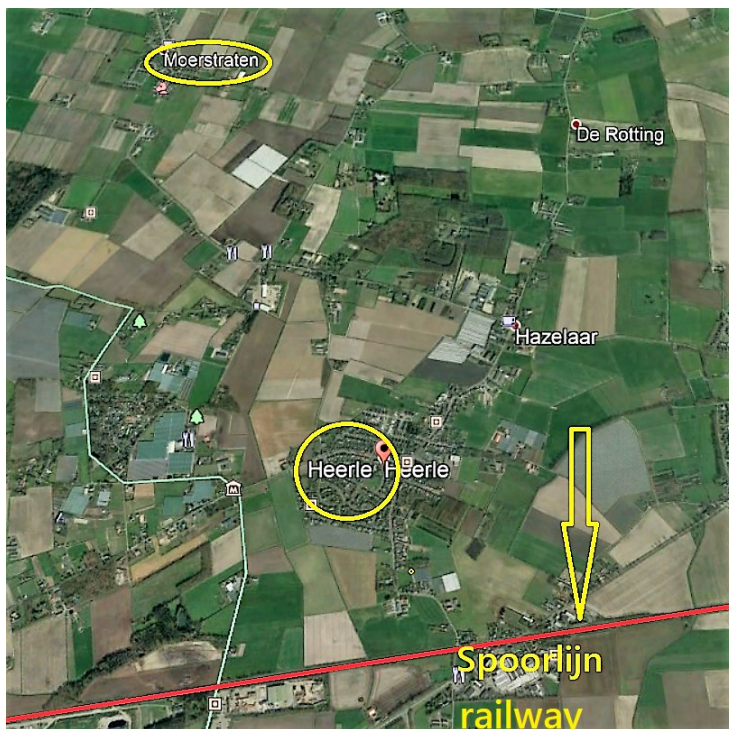
Under blistering enemy mortar, machine gun and anti-tank fire, this officer pressed the attack forward. Accurate anti-tank fire knocked out one of the four tanks but undaunted and fully realizing that speed was essential for the success of the attack, Lieutenant Liddell quickly pressed beyond the railway and continued to the west of the town.

The speed and dash of the manoeuvre, despite the heavy direct shell fire, demoralized the enemy and, before they could recover, Lieutenant Liddell positioned his three tanks of the troop in fire positions from where his accurate fire accounted for two enemy armoured vehicles.

The enemy attempted to retreat towards prepared defences on the second objective and quickly rallying his tanks, Lieutenant Liddell moved forward to attack Moerstraten before the enemy could completely organize the defensive position. As the troop advanced this officer brought down heavy fire on the first two anti-tank guns of the enemy defences, demolishing both and killing five of the crews.

As the enemy fire thickened, a high explosive shell landed squarely on the back deck plate of the officer's tank and although the basket box was knocked off, the engine was undamaged. To press home the advantage already gained, Lieutenant Liddell moved forward straight into the centre of the town, spraying the houses with all the weapons and fire at his disposal.

The Germans retreated in utter confusion to the outskirts of the town. On passing through the town and reaching a wooded area, Lieutenant Liddell discovered an enemy infantry force forming up to counter-attack. Realizing if this attack should be allowed to develop that the squadron advancing on Moerstraten might be seriously endangered, this officer took up fire positions with his tanks. The enemy, under a protective artillery concentration suddenly moved from the cover of the woods to counter-attack. An armour-piercing shell crashed into the second tank causing it to burst into flames. Alone and with no flank protection, Lieutenant Liddell engaged the advancing enemy and his fire was so effective that the counter-attack was broken up and the enemy again dispersed. This action enabled the squadron to move forward, capture the town and further exploit the success to cut the main highway and enemy line of retreat from Bergen op Zoom to Steenberg.



Coolness under heavy fire, courage, initiative and outstanding leadership in the face of tough enemy opposition was not only shown on this occasion but in many similar instances as Lieutenant Liddell fought with his troop.

His ability to take the initiative at the opportune time, together with speed and dash in the attack, directly reflected on the crew and the ultimate success of many encounters".

This was the action that led to his appointment as a Knight 4th Class in the Military Order of William. He had also received a Mention in Despatches.

DECORATIONS—C. A. S. F.				
LIDDELL, Kenneth Cecil		TD-4711	Lieut. CAPT 01	FILE NO. <u>C6-L-807</u> 21 Cdn Arm'd R. R.C. Arm'd C. 6H(15 ARMD R)
SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS) CHRISTIAN NAMES		REG. NO.	RANK	C.A.S.F. UNIT
AWARD	L.G. AUTHORITY	DATE	PAGE	DEED OF ACTION OR CITATION (USE REVERSE SIDE)
<u>MENTION IN DESPACHES</u>	37521 C.G. 10	4-4-46 9-3-46	1264	THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of Mentions in Despatches, in recognition of gallant and distinguished services to:
CANADIAN FORCES DECORATION	CAO 501	26-7-56		
70 MID				

DECORATIONS—C. A. S. F.				
LIDDELL, Kenneth Cecil			Lieut	FILE NO. R.C. Arm'd C. 21 Cdn Arm'd Regt (GGFG)
SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS) CHRISTIAN NAMES		REG. NO.	RANK	C.A.S.F. UNIT
AWARD	L.G. AUTHORITY	DATE	PAGE	DEED OF ACTION OR CITATION (USE REVERSE SIDE)
<u>MILITAIRE WILLEMS ORDE, DEGREE OF KNIGHT OF THE FOURTH CLASS</u>	C.G. 51	22-12-45	5911	THE KING has been pleased to grant unrestricted permission for the wearing of the following decorations which have been conferred on the undermentioned in recognition of distinguished service in the cause of the Allies:
87F				DECORATIONS CONFERRED BY HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF THE NETHERLANDS.

Luitenant Gerald Leslie Mason.

Born: 26-03-1910.

Died: ?

Assigned to:

South Saskatchewan Regiment.

(In several records his name was listed as Gerald Linn Mason.

This did not make the search for information any easier. HS)

The records:



Originated 26 June 1945

40/P & 8/1426 (5018) CFA 1

Date recommendation passed forward

Received 23 Jun 45 Passed 21 Aug 45

Brigade 1 SEP 45 Division 4 SEP 1945

Corps 6 Sep 45 Army 26 SEP 1945

6 Cdn Inf Brigade 2 Cdn Inf Division 2 Cdn Corps

Schedule No. (to be left blank) Unit CIC (S Sask R)

Army No. and Rank Lieutenant

Name Gerald Leslie MASON (Christian names must be stated)

Action for which commended (Date and place of action must be stated)	Recommended by	Honour or Reward	(To be left blank)
On the evening of 14 October 1944, the South Saskatchewan Regiment was holding a defensive position north of PUTTE. Lieutenant Mason was in command of 7 Platoon. Just at dusk the enemy infiltrated into the position with tanks and infantry and surrounded the A company positions. Due to the large area 7 platoon was forced to hold intercommunication between sections was strained. Realizing that control of his platoon was vital at this time and that lack of information might mean disorganization and disaster, Lieutenant Mason ran from section to section under intense mortar fire and through enemy machine gun and rifle fire, carrying ammunition, giving information and issuing orders to his men.	(J.V. Allard) Brig Comd 6 Cdn Inf Bde	"NETHERLAND AWARD"	
When a tank fired on the platoon at point blank range and knocked out the anti-tank gun and it's crew, Lieutenant Mason immediately worked his way under fire to where the dead PIAT man lay. He	(G G SIMONDS) Lt Gen GOC Cdn Forces in the Netherlands		

PTO

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picked up the PIAT in one hand and a case of bombs in the other, and while under concentrated machine gun and gun fire from the tank, ran forward towards the tank and took up a fire position. From this position he fired two bombs which forced the tank to withdraw and drew the whole weight of the enemy fire upon him and away from his men, allowing his platoon to move to new positions. He then quickly reorganized the platoon and with increased determination successfully drove off the enemy counter attack, and continued to hold the objective securely.

This gallant action on the part of Lieutenant Mason was entirely responsible for the security of the company position, and in no small measure responsible for the retention of the battalion objective which was severely threatened.

His courage, determination, and defiance of enemy fire on this occasion won him the greatest admiration of all ranks in the battalion, and was a fine example to the men under his command, and typified his conduct in all the major battles during the liberation of the Netherlands.

If a casualty as under, fill in date

Nature of Casualty	Date
Killed in action	
Died of Wounds	
Died	
Missing	
Prisoner of War	

DECORATIONS—C. A. S. F.

MASON, Gerald Linn

Lieut.

FILE NO.

C.I.C.

S. Saak. Regt. I

SURNAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS) CHRISTIAN NAMES

REG. NO.

RANK

C.A.S.F. UNIT

AWARD

L.G. AUTHORITY

DATE

PAGE

DEED OF ACTION OR CITATION
(USE REVERSE SIDE)

MILITAIRE WILLEMS
ORDE, DEGREE OF
KNIGHT OF THE
FOURTH CLASS.

C.G. 51

22-12-45

5911

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DECORATIONS CONFERRED BY
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF
THE NETHERLANDS.

In three editions, we have named all nine Canadians who received the highest Dutch Military Decoration.

They deserve our respect.

Herman Sligman