

Royal Canadian Engineers Memorial: WW II Dieppe Raid

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Operation JUBILEE, the WW II raid on Dieppe, France across the English Channel took place on 19 August 1942. Originally conceived in April 1942 as Operation RUTTER, the Allies planned to conduct a major division-sized raid on a German-held port on the French Channel coast and to hold it for the duration of at least two tides. They would affect the greatest amount of destruction of enemy facilities and defences before withdrawing. This "reconnaissance in force" action was intended to test the defences of Hitler's continental fortress and the capability of the Western Allies to launch large-scale amphibious assaults against Hitler's "Fortress Europe".

An earlier attempt to launch Operation RUTTER in July 1942 had been abandoned due to bad weather but it was revived almost immediately as Operation JUBILEE. Operation JUBILEE was intended to foster German fears of an attack in the west and compel them to direct effort to their Channel defences at the expense of other theatres of operation. The operation was also to provide an opportunity to test new techniques and equipment and gain knowledge and experience for planning an eventual invasion.

The assault force comprised some 6000 troops, 5000 of whom were Canadian, with the remainder being British commandos and 50 American Rangers. Some elaboration of the Engineer activities in Operation JUBILEE can be found at pages 100-111 of "The History of the Corps of the Royal Canadian Engineers: Volume II.

The Raid, unfortunately, failed to achieve any of the objectives of the troops of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. Within a few hours of the start of the assault at dawn on the heavily fortified port, 4000 of the men were either killed, wounded or taken prisoner. The raid lasted only nine hours but, among nearly



5000 Canadian soldiers involved, 907 were killed and 1874 taken prisoner.

Some military historians believe that despite the terrible carnage, valuable lessons were learned from the Raid which made a great contribution to the success, two years later, of the D-Day landings.

The Royal Canadian Engineer participation in the Dieppe Raid comprised about 350 all ranks from 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. The largest sapper element was from 7th Field Company, with about 100 from 2nd Field Company, 65 from 11th Field Company, 25 from 1st Field Park Company and a few details from the 2nd Road Construction Company and the Mechanical Equipment Company. We continue to research the names of the sappers who participated in Operation JUBILEE and, to date, have identified some 210 sappers. A complete list of those who participated is published on this site at <https://cmea-agmc.ca/nominal-roll-known-rce-personnel-operation-jubilee-...> with a downloadable copy attached. Of this Engineer force, there were a total of 27 fatalities – 23 were Killed in Action, one Died of Wounds, and three died while Prisoners of War.

Lt WA Ewener and Lt JER Wood were awarded the Military Cross, L/Sgt GA Hickson and L/Cpl MD Sinasac received the Distinguished Conduct Medal and L/Cpl J. Fisher received the Military Medal. A number of others were Mentioned in Dispatches.

A memorial was erected in 1977 at Newhaven, England, in honour of members of the Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers who lost their lives as a result of the Dieppe Raid of 19 August 1942. It was erected and financed by the efforts of a group lead by the 11th Field Company RCE WWII veterans based in Sarnia, ON. They chose Newhaven as the location for their memorial because they embarked for Dieppe from Newhaven and because so many of the wounded were put ashore at Newhaven following the Raid.

The monument was unveiled on 17 August 1977 to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Raid. An annual commemoration service is held in the gardens at Newhaven each August, usually on the weekend prior to commemorations held in Dieppe itself. The monument has come to be regarded as a tribute to all the Canadian forces who took part in the Raid, and indeed to all those who served during World War II.



The following 27 Fallen Sappers are remembered by name on the monument at Newhaven:

Rank	Surname	Forename	Unit
Spr	Barnes	Harold Edward	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Bergey	Oliver Loraine	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Bisset	William Nichol	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Bockus	Leslie Ernest	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Breau	Raymond Amon	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Brown	William Albert	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Charbotte	Peter	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Cowlshaw	Frank	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Davison	Alexander Russell	11 th Fd Coy
Spr	Elliott	Delbert Alvin	2 nd Fd Coy
L/Cpl	Gage	Thomas R	2 nd Fd Coy
L/Cpl	Hall	Alfred Harry	7 th Fd Coy
Spr	Hodson	Cyril	7 th Fd Coy
Spr	Jones	Glynn	1st Fd Park Coy
Spr	Maville	Joseph John	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	McCaslin	William Henry	1 st Fd Park Coy
Spr	McGie	Chester	2 nd Fd Coy
Lt Col	McTavish	Gordon Howard	Comd
Lt	Millar	William A	7 th Fd Coy
Sgt	Murray	Ronald Charles	7 th Fd Coy
Spr	Oliver	Sydney George	11 th Fd Coy
Spr	Ramsay	John	11 th Fd Coy
Cpl	Russell	Thomas Daniel	2 nd Fd Coy
Spr	Sharp	Clarence Joseph	7 th Fd Coy
Spr	Shova	Elmer	11 th Fd Coy
Spr	Smith	Hugh	11 th Fd Coy
Spr	Williams	Stuart	7 th Fd Coy