

**Sapper James Franklin Holt**  
**Regimental number: 853458**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Engineers**

**born: 12 May 1898 - died: 10 September 1918**

Sapper James Franklin Holt<sup>1</sup> was born on 12 May 1898 in Ivy, Ontario, the son of William and Mary Holt.<sup>2</sup> His father, William James, was born in Essa, Ontario in 1856.<sup>3</sup> He was the son of Jacob and Elizabeth Holt and a Methodist. His mother, the former Mary Gallinger, was born in July 1864, also in Essa.<sup>4</sup> She was the daughter of Reuben and Jane Gallinger and a Presbyterian. William and Mary were married in Essa on 24 May 1882.<sup>5</sup> They had six children: George R. (born 9 September 1886),<sup>6</sup> William Henry (born 12 July 1887),<sup>7</sup> Ethel (born 12 September 1892),<sup>8</sup> Joseph West (born 25 October 1895),<sup>9</sup> James<sup>10</sup> and Flora (born 1 July 1900).<sup>11</sup>

In 1901, the family was living near Cardwell, in Simcoe County, where William was a farmer. In 1911, the family is shown as living in the township of Essa in Simcoe South, where William is a labourer on a farm.

James enlisted in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force in Alliston, Ontario on 27 May 1916.<sup>12</sup> When he enlisted, he was a farmer, living in Elm Grove, Ontario. His next-of-kin was his father, who was then living in Cookstown, Ontario. James was 5' 6½" tall, had a medium dark complexion, grey brown eyes and dark brown hair and was a Methodist.

On 10 September 1918, the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion was stationed near Fontaine-lès-Croisilles, southeast of Arras in northern France, and was working on road repairs in the area when James was wounded.<sup>13</sup>

Whilst sitting at the bottom of his dugout at Rumaucourt an enemy shell exploded at the entrance and fragments for it wounded him severely in the chest and legs. After receiving first aid he was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station where he succumbed.<sup>14</sup>

He was indeed admitted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his chest and legs and died the same day.<sup>15</sup> He was buried the following day at Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row H, Grave 53). His mother, as his next-of-kin, was notified of his death. She was living at R.R.2, Cookstown.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.<sup>16</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.<sup>17</sup> A total of 75 patients died at the 1<sup>st</sup> CCCS in September.

James' older brother, Joseph, also served in, but survived, the Great War. He enlisted, at the age of 19, in Ottawa in the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Canadian Mounted Rifles of the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force (Regimental number 111562).<sup>18</sup> When he enlisted on 29 March 1915, he was a fireman, living in Peterborough, Ontario. Near the end of the war, he married Doris Beatrice Marshall in London, England.<sup>19</sup> They were married at All Saint's Church in Fulham, near London, England, on 7 May 1918. Doris, born in 1900 in Fulham,<sup>20</sup> was the daughter of George Lewis Marshall.<sup>21</sup> Joseph returned to Canada with other discharged soldiers because there was no suitable employment for them in England.<sup>22</sup> He arrived in St John's, Newfoundland, on the Mindosa on 14

December 1918. In 1921, Joseph and Doris were living at 45 Morley Avenue in Toronto with their two-year old son, Joseph A.<sup>23</sup> Joseph was a clerk.

James' other brothers do not appear to have served in the Great War. George married Sarah Elizabeth Smith on 16 October 1912 and in 1921 was a wire repairer, living in Toronto with his wife and two children (Margarette and Frank J.)<sup>24</sup> William, a barber, married Julia Etta Reiber on 5 March 1919 in Toronto.<sup>25</sup> James' sister, Ethel, married Robert Calvin Mooney on 9 July 1913<sup>26</sup> and, in 1921, was still living in Essa with her husband, a farmer, and two children (Clifford and Ruby).<sup>27</sup> His youngest sister, Flora, married Henry Duke Smith, a widower, on 10 December 1919 in Cookstown, Ontario<sup>28</sup> and, in 1921, was living with her husband, a farmer, and her daughter (Gladys).<sup>29</sup>

James' father died of influenza in 1929<sup>30</sup> and his mother of a cerebral haemorrhage in 1937.<sup>31</sup> Both are both buried in Alliston Union Cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> His name is shown as James Franklin and Franklin James in different documents.

<sup>2</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869-1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for James Franklin Holt

<sup>3</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for William James Holt, Marriage County or District: Simcoe

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for James F. Holt, Province: Ontario, District: Cardwell, District Number: 51, Sub-District: Adjala, Sub-District Number: A-4

<sup>7</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869-1918," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for William Henry Holt. In other records, his name is given as William J.

<sup>8</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869-1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Ethel Holt

<sup>9</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869-1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Joseph West Holt

<sup>10</sup> Franklin James' name was sometimes shown as Frank, sometimes as James and sometimes as James Franklin.

<sup>11</sup> "1901 Census of Canada," entry for James F. Holt

<sup>12</sup> "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Franklin James Holt

<sup>13</sup> "MIKAN 2005999: War diaries - 9th Battalion, Canadian Engineers," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>: accessed 24 October 2015)

<sup>14</sup> "Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914-1948," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Franklin James Holt, Service number: 853458

<sup>15</sup> "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 648

<sup>16</sup> "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 7 October 2015)

<sup>17</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War: 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G); accessed 17 June 2015)

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- <sup>18</sup> "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Joseph West Holt
- <sup>19</sup> "London, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Joseph West Holt, Parish: All Saints, Fulham, Borough: Hammersmith and Fulham, Register Type: Parish Register
- <sup>20</sup> "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837-1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 17 December 2015), entry for Doris Beatrice Marshall, Registration district: Fulham, Inferred County: London, Volume: 1a, Page: 345
- <sup>21</sup> "London, England, Marriages and Banns, 1754-1921," entry for Joseph West Holt
- <sup>22</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 17 December 2015), entry for Joseph W Holt
- <sup>23</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Joseph Holt, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: York East, District Number: 142, Sub-District: Toronto (City, part), Sub-District Number: 11, City, Town or Village: Toronto
- <sup>24</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for George R. Holt, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: York East, District Number: 142, Sub-District: Toronto (City, part), Sub-District Number: 24, City, Town or Village: Toronto
- <sup>25</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for William John Holt, Marriage County or District: Bruce
- <sup>26</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Ethel Holt, Marriage County or District: Peterborough
- <sup>27</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Ethel Mooney, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: Simcoe South, District Number: 128, Sub-District: Essa (Township), Sub-District Number: 6, City, Town or Village: Essa Township (sub Div No 2)
- <sup>28</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801-1928," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Florie Holt, Marriage County or District: York
- <sup>29</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 24 October 2015), entry for Duke Smith, Province or Territory: Ontario, District: Simcoe South, District Number: 128, Sub-District: Essa (Township), Sub-District Number: 5, City, Town or Village: Essa Township (sub Div No 1)
- <sup>30</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869-1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939-1947," William James Holt
- <sup>31</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869-1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939-1947," Mary Holt