

## **Cst. Foreman J.W.**



**FOREMAN, JAMES W. - CST. Regimental No. 17334**

**April 24, 1963 - Sangudo, Alberta Age: 29**

Although Jim Foreman was born and raised in rural Saskatchewan, he came to love living in the Province of Alberta. Alberta was where he'd spent the most rewarding days of his life. His entire eleven and a half satisfying years with the RCMP were spent there. It was in Alberta where he'd made new friends, where he'd courted his wife, Lillian, and where his two sons were born. For Jim Foreman, life was sweet in Alberta, but it all came to an end when he tried to help a friend fix his car that had broken down on the highway.

Cst. James Foreman was stationed at Mayerthorpe, about 60 miles west of Edmonton. On the night of Wednesday, April 24, he had arranged to meet a friend of his, Irvin Purdy, to discuss a police matter. They had agreed to meet at a location on Highway #43 west of Sangudo, but Purdy's car broke down and he had to pull off the highway and wait for help. Luckily, Foreman came looking for him and, when he found Purdy stranded on the highway, he drove him to the nearest service station so he could buy some oil. Then they drove back out to the broken-down car.

Purdy's car was parked on the north shoulder of the road facing west. Foreman pulled his cruiser around facing east and parked it about eight feet in front of Purdy's, so that their grills were facing each other. Foreman told Purdy to turn his headlights on and to engage his left turn signal. While Purdy was doing that, the policeman turned on the headlights of his cruiser. Purdy later claimed that the police car's red roof lights were also flashing, but there are others who disputed this.

Because the hood support was broken on Purdy's car, Jim Foreman held up the hood while his friend poured the oil into the crankcase. Foreman was standing nearer to the ditch while Purdy was almost out on the pavement. As Irvin Purdy poured, he noticed a set of headlights approaching from the east at a high rate of speed. As the lights got closer, it seemed that the car was travelling on the shoulder of the road.

When it became clear that the car wasn't going to stop, Purdy let a yell out of him. "Look out, we're going to get hit!" he shouted. Then he tried to run for the ditch between the two parked cars. Foreman reacted a split second later by dropping the hood and trying to run. But it was too late for both of them.

The car that was bearing down on them at 55 miles per hour was a 1960 Dodge sedan driven by David Baker. Baker had seen Purdy's tail lights, but thought he was moving at highway speed. He closed in on the parked cars so quickly that the only thing he could do to avoid a collision was to swerve toward the ditch. But he still smashed into the back of Purdy's car and crushed both Purdy and Foreman between the two parked cars. Purdy was the more fortunate of the two because he was tossed through the air and landed unconscious in

the ditch. Jim Foreman took a much more solid hit. He too, was thrown into the ditch and his multiple internal injuries turned out to be fatal.

Passing motorists began to stop. Seeing that Cst. Foreman was having trouble breathing, one of them ran to call an ambulance. While everyone waited for medical help to arrive, the passenger in the Baker car, Dan Prociuk, tried to give Cst. Foreman mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. When the ambulance arrived, the attendant took over and tried to give the officer oxygen, but it was no use; Cst. Foreman was dead.

Irvin Purdy regained consciousness at the scene and was taken to a hospital and successfully treated. Baker and Prociuk were not seriously hurt. Their statements to the police indicated that they had been drinking beer that evening, but there was insufficient evidence to charge them with being impaired.

Three days later, James Foreman was eulogized as a good father and husband and an effective police officer. He was also remembered for being a crack shot with a pistol, having won the prestigious Minto Revolver Cup in 1953. Cst. Foreman was buried at Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Edmonton. His youthful widow, Lillian, still in her mid-twenties, was left alone to raise their two sons, aged four and two.