

**Bartlett, Ralph Henry George**

**Lance Bombardier**

**4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment**

**Royal Canadian Artillery**

**L 59806**



Ralph Henry George Bartlett was born on 13 February 1919 in Waldron, Saskatchewan, the son of Leonard George Bartlett (1891 – 1970) and Elizabeth Mary Bartlett (1889 – 1980). His parents married in Yorkton on 12 November 1913.

Ralph had one sister, Audrey Mary (Martin), who is four years older. The family lived in Waldron, RR #1 and attended the Church of England. After the war his parents moved to 160 Second Avenue in Yorkton.

Ralph left school when he was fourteen years old, at that time he graduated grade 8 and started working on the farm of his father in Waldron. On this farm he worked for eight years before enlisting

On 2 October 1941 he enlisted and is posted to the 64<sup>th</sup> Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery, in Yorkton as a Gunner. In his medical report was written: Height 5 ft, weight 156 pounds, blue eyes, brown hair and he loved sports like baseball and hockey.

Two days after his enlistment he went to the Canadian Army Training Centre in Regina. From December 1941 to the end of March 1942 he received training in Brandon, first training at the A4 Royal Canadian Artillery and then at the Canadian Army Training Centre.

On 27 March 1942 he left for the United Kingdom where he arrived on 7 April. On arrival he was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit as a Gunner. A month later in May he was transferred to the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.

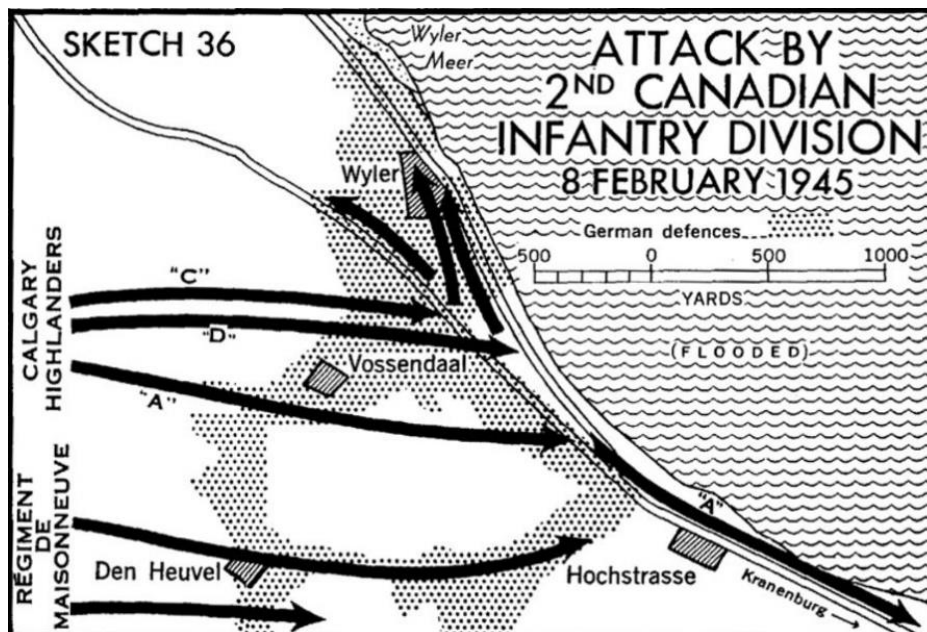
In England he followed many training and courses during the rest of the year and the following year, and then he left for France on 5 July 1944. Two months later he was promoted to Lance Bombardier.

At that time the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment was an artillery unit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division. The Division was involved in the Battle of Verrierès (July 1944), the Battle of the Schelde (Antwerp, September 1944) and they played an important role in the Winter Offensive between the rivers Rhine and Maas during 8 to 25 February 1945.



Bombardier of the 4th Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), oiling his rifle

Operation Veritable was part of the Winter Offensive and started on 8 February 1945. The regiment of Ralph Bartlett was involved in this Operation and started the battle that day at 10.30 am.



Four divisions moved forward simultaneously on a six-mile front between the Nijmegen-Kranenburg-Cleveroad and the river Maas near Mook.

The task of Bartlett's regiment was to clear a small triangle of territory south of the Nijmegen-Cleve road in the vicinity of Wyler. After stiff fighting the task was completed at 18.30 hr.

The following day the rain started, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division had to move on to an area east of Cleve, but the rain made everything muddy and it was difficult to move on.

The third day's operations were rather disappointing owing to the bad conditions heavy rain, strong winds and stiffening opposition around Cleve.

The Germans had already breached the dikes and the combination with the heavy rain meant that the road from Nijmegen to Calcar and the part to Cleve, which was previously captured by the Division, was now under water and transport has to be done via ferries.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division could not move on along the northern route and so the Division had to move along the Mook-Gennepep-Hekkens road and through the Reichswald in order to reach an assembly area south and east of Cleve.

On 19 February the Division was heavily engaged to the south, along the road joining Goch and Calcar. This road was of great importance to the enemy since it covered the approach to the ridge between Calcar and Udem, an essential feature of the Hochwald defences.

The Germans had brought in fresh troops and launched fierce counter-attacks. The Infantry Divisions suffered heavy losses but managed to conquer the road on 22 February. On 21 February 1945 Lance Bombardier Ralph Henry George Bartlett was killed by an enemy bomber while manning his gun.

He was buried in Bedburg, Calcar, Germany and on 20 September 1945 reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **X. F. 8.**

The inscription on his gravestone:

RALPH  
SACRED TO THE MEMORY  
OF OUR BELOVED SON  
EVER REMEMBERED, EVER LOVED

Awards:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France & Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp



*Photo Else Schaberg.*



Ralph Henry George Bartlett's name is mentioned in the Saskatchewan Virtual War Memorial. This project commemorates Saskatchewan's war dead, those men and women who perished in service to their country for the high ideals of peace and freedom. They are honoured by a geographic location.

The location for Ralph Bartlett: the Bartlett Lake, Saskatchewan, Canada.



Life story by Else Schaberg, Research Team Faces To Graves.

References:

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 Saskatchewan Virtual War Memorial - Bill Barry  
<https://svwm.ca/casualty-display/?ID=A000006627>



*Ralph Bartlett and Nancy*



*Bombardiers of the 4th Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), writing and sewing in front of their house, which is made of sand-filled*



*Gunners of the 4th Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), boiling cobs of corn for dinner*



Saskatchewan War Memorial - honouring those who fell to protect us



War Memorial Waldron

This memorial commemorates the residents of Waldron who were killed or missing in World War I and World War II.