

**Buchanan, Borden Alexander**  
**Private**  
**Argyll and Sutherland**  
**Highlanders of Canada**  
**(Princess Louise's)**  
**Royal Canadian Infantry Corps**  
**L/155580**

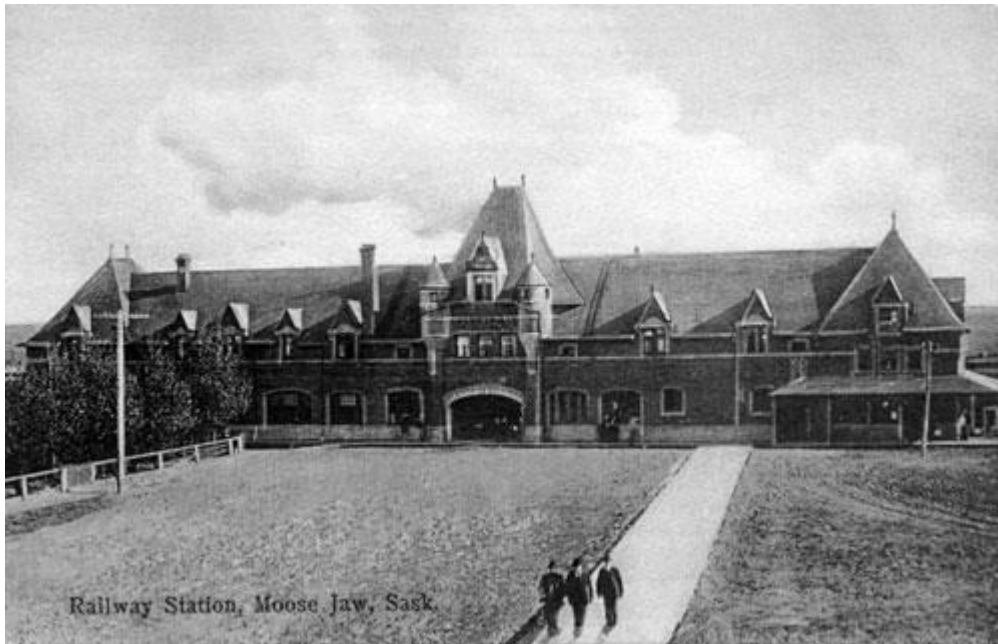


Borden Alexander Buchanan was born in North Battleford, Canada on September 22, 1911. Father Samuel David was born in Ontario and married Mary Ellen Bare, who was born in the USA. The family had six children, 3 girls and 3 sons. Borden has two half brothers, his mother was married twice. They spoke English and attended the Church of England.

Borden went to school up to and including Grade 8. He was then fourteen years old and started working. Borden also worked for Canadian Pacific Railway in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan for five years. Here he was a conductor and train operator and would like to come back here after his military service. The company was established during the period 1920-1922 and operated until 1963. Now it is a historic railway station.

In Moose Jaw Borden married Mary Kathleen, also from Moose Jaw, on October 19, 1940. Their son Robert (Bob) John was born on June 28, 1941.

Moose Jaw is the fourth largest city in the province of Saskatchewan, centrally situated on the Moose Jaw River in the south of Canada.



*Photo: Canada-rail.com*



*The Good Conduct Badge Gorden received because of two years in the Service*

Borden voluntarily signed up for the army in June 1942 with the 1940 National Reserves Mobilization Act (NRMA) in Regina, Saskatchewan. He got Service Number L 606426 and was thirty years old. NRMA was set up for their own country's defence, but as a result of external pressure it was decided in April 1942 that the men could also be deployed overseas. In total 13,000 NRMA volunteers ultimately left the country, but only 2,463 of them actually reached the units in the field before the end of the war in Europe. Sixty-nine men died. Borden was an NRMA soldier from July 23, 1942 until June 7, 1944.

In his medical report dated July 24, 1942 it said that Borden had a white skin, grey-blue eyes and light-brown hair. He was a well-developed man and he was able to drive. In 1938 he was suffering from kidney stones. At the time Borden weighed 210 lbs and was 5 ft 10.5 tall.

OCC. HIS. FORMS COM'D.  
105 43 M.F.M. 103  
200M-5-41 (442) (971)  
H.Q. 1772-39-1828

Page 1  
MILITIA ACT  
THE NATIONAL RESOURCES MOBILIZATION ACT, 1940

N.R.M.A. PERSONNEL  
**ENROLMENT FORM**

M.36056  
JTC  
PHOTOGRAPHED JAN 1  
L.606426  
INDEXED  
155380

N.R.M.A. Serial Number of Notice of Call..... 12

1. Taken on Strength of No..... N.R.M.A. Training Depot.....

2. Surname (Block Letters)..... BORDEN

3. Christian Names (in full)..... Duffield St. W. Moose Jaw, Sask.

4. Present Address..... Canada..... Saskatchewan..... N. Battleford

5. Place of Birth..... Sept 10, 1911 (Country or Province)..... Un. of Toronto, Ont.

6. Date of Birth..... 5 ft 10.5 in 7. Religion..... Gray..... BROWN

8. Physical Description: Height..... Weight..... Small Eyes on back of hand 1st finger at hand

Complexion..... Identification marks.....

9. Married, Single, Widowed..... Kathleen Mary BUCHANAN..... Wife

10. Next-of-Kin..... Duffield St. W. Moose Jaw, Sask. Relationship.....

11. Trade or Occupation..... Nil

12. Previous Naval, Military or Air Service..... (State Units and Dates of Service)

13. Preference, if any, for, R.C.N.?..... Army?..... R.C.A.F.?..... Nil (Arm of Service)

14. Employment in War Industry, if any.....

*B. Buchanan*  
(Signature of Man)

*Edith Carr*  
(Signature and Rank of Enrolment Officer)

July 24th, 1942  
(Date of Signature)

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TRAINING CENTRE PARTICULARS

A. Attached to Basic T.C. No. CAS of I. at Esquimalt, B.C. Date 30-7-42

Completed..... 30 Days Basic Training.  
29-8-42  
*C.M. Luginan* Lieut.  
(Date, Signature and Rank of Recording Officer)

B. Attached to Advanced T.C. No. at..... Date.....

Completed..... Days Advanced Training.

Qualities of Leadership, Positive..... Becoming Evident?..... Dormant?.....

Transferred to..... Date.....  
(R.C.N., formation or unit of the C.A., R.C.A.F.)

(Date, Signature and Rank of Recording Officer)

C. Medical Category on acceptance at Basic Training Centre.....

In Regina he took a thirty-day basic training and from August 31 he was a Gunner with the Canadian Artillery School in Esquimalt on Vancouver Island. On September 9 Borden was transferred to the Headquarters District Depot of the Royal Canadian Air Force on Annette Island, 34<sup>th</sup> Active Army Battery. Here he had further training and on February 17, 1943 he became an "R" Recruit National Resources Mobilization Coast Defence Member. In April that year he had a few weeks' leave and reported with the 29<sup>th</sup> Active Army Regiment of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps. On August 24, 1943 Borden was a Lance Bombardier in Vancouver, British Columbia. After that he returned to Esquimalt and took the Light Anti-Aircraft training with the Special Infantry Company.

On October 8, 1943 Borden was a Gunner with the 28<sup>th</sup> Active Army Regiment in Vancouver. After having been assigned to a number of other regiments, Borden again had a few weeks' leave in April and June 1944.

From June 8, 1944 Borden joined the Canadian army and was active as a Bombardier. He was given a new Service Number: L 155580. For his efforts he was rewarded with the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp on June 24, 1944. This medal was awarded for a two-year period of voluntary service. From July 13, 1944 until August 3 he was in Debart with the Task Group Base Depot. Here he was rewarded with the One Good Conduct Badge as a Signaller on July 24. This badge was awarded after two years' loyal service without any reprimands, punishment etc. The badge was worn on the left sleeve of the soldier's uniform.



Eventually, Borden left for No 2 Transit Camp to prepare for his departure overseas, to the war in Europe.

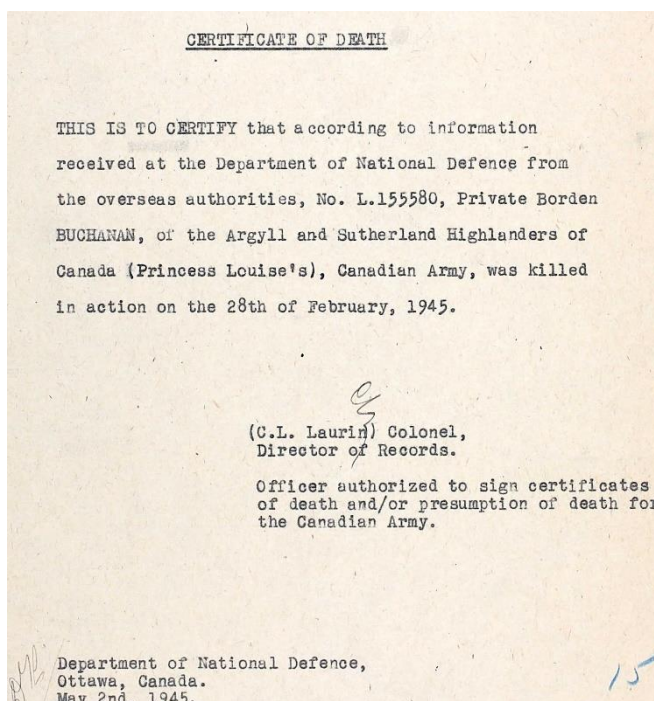
*Borden with his little son Bob before he goes overseas. Photo: Bob Buchanan.*

On August 5, 1944 they embarked and arrived in the United Kingdom on August 10. Borden was then a Gunner with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Artillery Unit. However, on September 2 he was again transferred to the Signals of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Army Reinforcement Unit. He stayed with them until October 13 when he went to the 13<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade (Rocky Mountain Rangers) as a Private. With the Canadian Infantry Corps they departed on November 20, 1944 from the United Kingdom for north-western Europe, where they arrived on November 21. Borden was assigned to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's).

The following winter in Europe was harsh and the men were having a hard time. A heavy battle ensued, which lasted more than five weeks. Finally, on January 31, 1945 the Germans withdrew and they were able to advance to the Netherlands via Belgium. At the beginning of February they were relieved by the Lincoln & Welland Regiment in Waalwijk and they advanced in the direction of Boxtel and Nijmegen, their last stop before reaching Germany. Here they had to provide support during Operation Veritable. Their aim was to push the enemy back towards the River Rhine via Emmen, Rees and Xanten. A fierce battle was raging in the Hochwald area and there were a lot of dead and wounded soldiers. The roads were bad and almost impassable. On February 22 they were on the ridge near Hau, in the vicinity of Kleve, and Operation Blockbuster had started. A few days later, on February 26, 1945 they had to capture a high-altitude area between Kalkar and Uedem. It was only late in the evening that the men reached Kalkar and early the following morning they arrived in Uedem.

From there they went in the direction of Keppeln and at 17.00 hours that day they received orders to enter the Hochwald Gap. The front positions were under heavy mortar and artillery fire and there were a large number of casualties.

Among all these victims during these last few days of February 1945 there was also Borden Alexander Buchanan. He died on February 28, 1945 near Uedem, Germany. Thirty-three years old, leaving behind his family, wife and son Bob, who was then only three and a half years old.



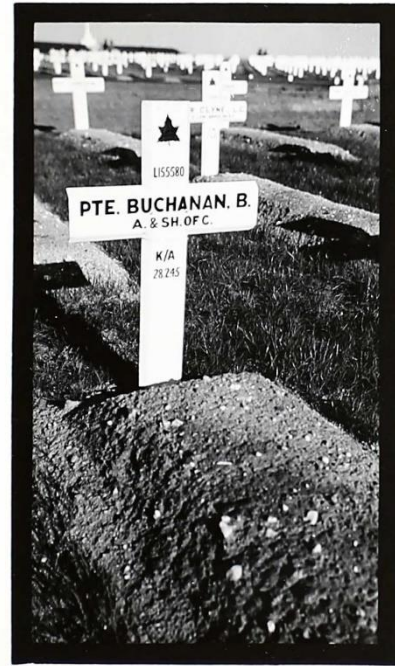
Like so many of his comrades, Borden was temporarily buried at a military cemetery in Xanten, on top of a hill, close to the end of the Hochwald Gap, plot 3, grave 4, on March 6, 1945.

On October 30, 1945 Borden was reburied at the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave reference **XIV. F. 10.**

The words inscribed on his headstone:

A DEAR SON AND HUSBAND  
EVER REMEMBERED AND LOVED  
BY HIS WIFE, SON  
MOTHER, DAD & FAMILY

*Grave as it looked during the first few years. In 1954 the wooden crosses were replaced by headstones. The families were then allowed to supply a personal text.*



Borden Buchanan was awarded the following medals:

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

The Memorial Cross was sent to his wife Kathleen in Moose Jaw and to his mother Mary in Terrace.

Kathleen, Borden's wife, never remarried, unlike many war widows who did. The death of her husband, whom she had been married to for such a short time, left her grief-stricken. Until her death in 1996, at the age of 85, she kept mourning about Borden. She visited her husband's grave in Groesbeek several times.



Life story: Liesbeth Huisman-Arts, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Library and Archives Canada
- Veterans.gc.ca
- History Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada
- Robert John Buchanan, zoon van Borden

\* Do you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)

Moose Jaw War Memorial. Photo: [travelgumbo.com](http://travelgumbo.com)

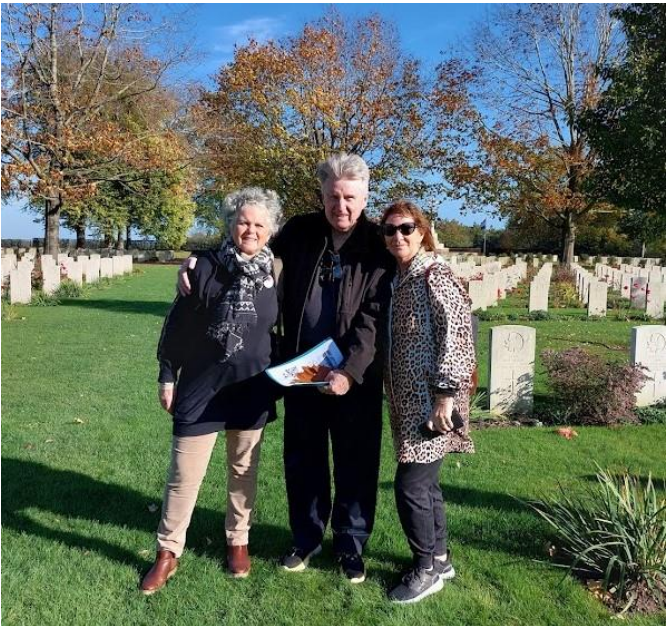


Their son Bob, together with his wife Karen, came to Groesbeek to visit his father Borden's grave on Tuesday November 1, 2022. Bob and Karen were very pleased and touched to visit the grave. Bob never was in Holland before. They are very grateful the way the graves are taken care of and the life stories the people of Faces To Graves are writing to give the soldiers a face. "Here he is never alone" said Karen.



*Bob and Karen at the Cemetery in Groesbeek, november 1, 2022.*

*Photo's: Liesbeth Huisman*



*From left to right: Liesbeth Huisman- Bob-Karen*