

Burton, Arthur Wilfred

Trooper

Royal Hamilton Light Infantry

2nd Canadian Infantry Division

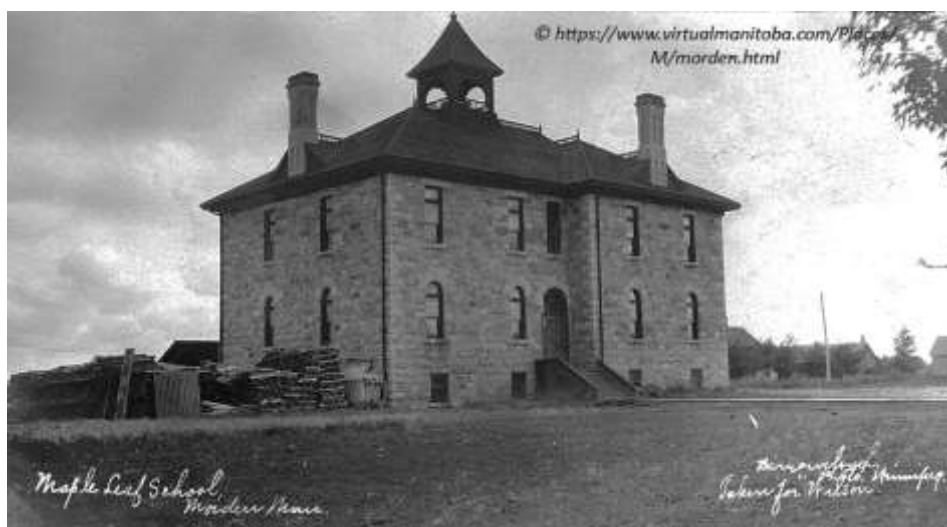
H 18162



Arthur Wilfred Burton was born in Morden, Manitoba, Canada, on 9 February 1925. He grew up in a big United Church family. He was the son of Mrs. Mary Burton and Mr. Charles Burton. His mother was Canadian from Manitoba, Hamiota and his father was from England, Leistershire, Shire. Arthur's parents married on July 9th, 1920.

Arthur has one brother George Alfred and five sisters, Mildred, Florence, Iris, Lorna and Ina.

Arthur grew up in Morden, Manitoba, Canada and went to a very small school in Morden. He had difficulties with geography and history but was a good student who caused few problems.



He had to redo Grade 5, and when he completed Grade 6 at the age of fifteen, he left school.

Around this time, the Burton family moved to another village about 250 km away, Napinka, a small farming village. Arthur worked here on a farm, in three years he worked for four different farmers. When Arthur was



about seventeen years old he started working on a farm 16 km away, in the village Melita.

He was employed by Mr Charles Desender, he helped on the farm and learned to drive a tractor. He was a hard worker and gave all he earned to his family. They went through hard times in the dry periods because the harvest was low.

Since he was a kid he enjoyed tinkering with trucks and cars. He was not very good at sports and was too shy to dance, but he did his best.

Arthur also really liked the outdoors and he wanted to start his own farm in Manitoba after the war, a mixed farm (a farm with agriculture and livestock). Or he wanted to become a truck driver or a mechanic.

On 19 November 1943, at the age of eighteen, Arthur travelled 310 km to the nearest recruiting station. This was the #10 District Depot in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

First he got a medical examination. Arthur was a very healthy boy who was 5 feet and 8 inches tall, and he weighed 141 pounds. He had blue eyes and light brown hair. He also had a scar on his left flank. One day later on the 20th, Arthur officially enlisted in the army. He stated that he would like to drive a truck in the army. And that he would rather be in the Canadian Armoured Corps (vehicles) than the Infantry (foot soldiers).

From 20 November to 6 December he followed basic training.

On 6 December Arthur was transferred by train from Winnipeg, Manitoba to Canadian Army Basic Training Centre in Orillia, Ontario. One day later, his training started in Orillia. He attended this basic training until 24 December, then he went on Christmas leave until the 28 December.

After his Christmas leave, he continued training at Camp Orilla. On 8 February a few days before his transfer to Camp Borden, a report was written about Arthur. This report contained all the advice of the superior. The officer wrote that Arthur kept his cabin clean and was pretty quiet compared to the other soldiers. The officer stated that Arthur was a hard worker but slow to react, this made him an average soldier. It was also stated that Arthur had asked to become a Gunner so he could be together with his buddy Bloomer. However, the officers found him more suited as a driver of a truck or a tank.



Three days later on 11 February Arthur completed his basic training and the next day he was transferred to Canadian Armoured Corps Training Regiment in Camp Borden, Ontario. He became a Qualified Driver i/c Class III. On 6 April, in a follow-up report it was stated that Arthur was anxious for overseas service and he really liked the driver training. The supervisor advised Arthur suitable for the Armoured Corps as a driver and ready to go overseas.

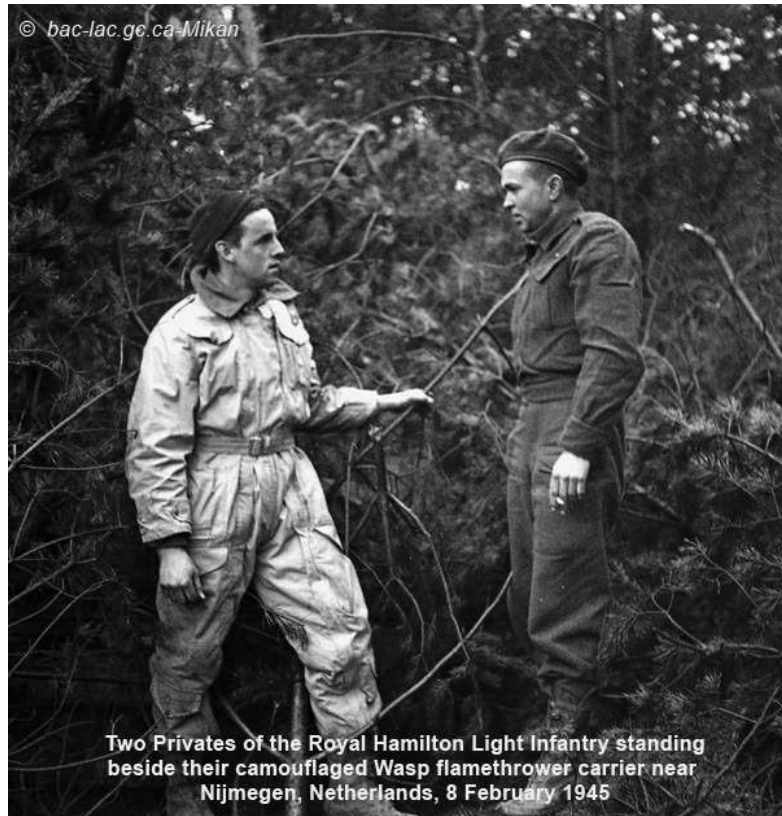
After one month of further training in Borden, Arthur received shipping leave from 7 May till 22 May. After his leave, Arthur had another month of regular training in Borden and then left Camp Borden on 23 June. They travelled two days to the harbour and there Arthur was shipped to

England on 25 June 1944 at the age of nineteen. They arrived in England on 3 July.

On 1 August Arthur joined another regiment, he joined the 3 Canadian Armoured Corps Reinforcement Regiment. One month later Arthur changed regiment again, he joined the Rocky Mountain Rangers, an Infantry Regiment (foot soldiers). Here Arthur trained in running patrols. On 16 October 1944 Arthur was shipped to Belgium. A week later Arthur changed regiments for the last time and he joined the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry.

The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry (RHLI) advanced slowly from Malines in Belgium to the area around Nijmegen. In December they were around Mook and Cuijk, in January the regiment was mainly in Boxtel and Groesbeek.

On 19 February the RHLI was partially in the Reichswald in Germany. It was a gray day with dark clouds indicating rain. In the morning, an attack was planned on Cleve.



Two Privates of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry standing beside their camouflaged Wasp flamethrower carrier near Nijmegen, Netherlands, 8 February 1945

Fighting started at 9:45 am with shelling on known enemy positions to weaken them.

At 11:00 am Company A and Company B attacked and Companies C and D supported.

The attack continued throughout the night and Company C was particularly hit hard, especially by flying grenades.

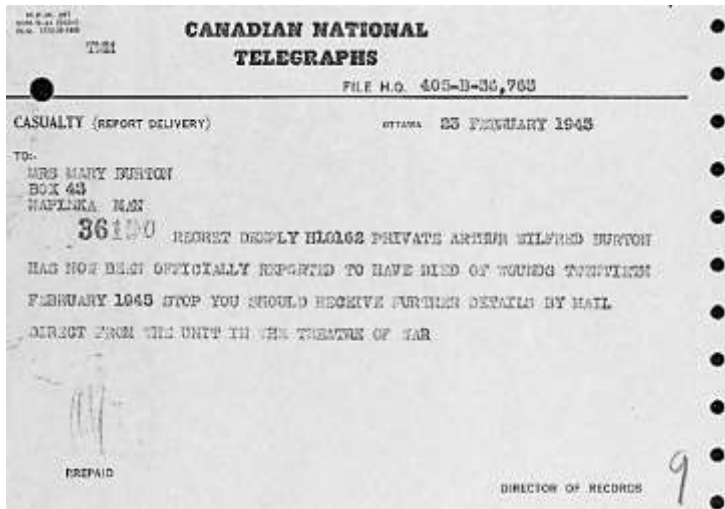
Around 7:25 pm Arthur was hit in his chin by a grenade shrapnel in his nervous system.

At 7:40 pm he was picked up by the field ambulance and at 7:45 pm he was in the field hospital.

He got 1 dose of morphine at 7:50 pm.

At 10 pm, Arthur was given an X-ray. And at 10.30 pm, he was given a final dose of morphine.

Private Arthur Wilfred Burton died on 20 February 1945 a few hours after midnight, in 213 Field Hospital from his wounds. He died at the age of twenty years.



On 23 February Mrs. Burton received a telegram stating that her son had died of his wounds in the war.

He was temporarily buried in St Michielsgestel cemetery and later he was buried in the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave **XVI. H. 6.**

On his tombstone is the following text:

HOPE FOR THE NEW WORLD
ISAIAH 65, 17-25
REVELATIONS
CHAPTERS 19.20.21 and 22

Arthur received the following medals:

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



In 1995, the Government of Canada decided to name places, rivers etc. in Canada after fallen Canadian soldiers in World War II. The project: "A Place of Honour: Manitoba's War Dead Commemorated in its Geography."

More than 4,000 casualties from Manitoba are commemorated in this project. Burton Point is named after Arthur Wilfred Burton, it is located in Goose Lake in Manitoba, the coordinates are: 59° 57' 30" N 100° 29' 11" W



FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story written by:

Isa van de Weert en Meggel van Rennes, Canisius College, Nijmegen.

Supported by door Else Schaberg – Research Team Faces To Graves

* If you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact info@facestograves.nl

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Library and Archives Canada
- 'A Place of Honour': Manitoba's War Dead Commemorated in its geography. Provided by: Manitoba Geographical Names Program, Provincial Toponymist – Des Kappel, Manitoba Sustainable Development, Province of Manitoba
- <https://www.virtualmanitoba.com/Places/N/napinka>

