

Barlow, Charles Elmer

Trooper

12th Manitoba Dragoons

18th Armoured Car Regiment

H 77670



Charles Elmer Barlow was born on October 20, 1921 in Fisherton Manitoba Canada as the son of Charles Alonzo and Grace Lilian Barlow (née Mabb). Father Charley was born on July 2, 1878 and died February 17, 1975. Mother Grace was born on November 29, 1882 and died March 16, 1946. They married in Illinois USA on December 3, 1901 and the family was affiliated with the Church of England.

Charles Jr. had three brothers: Harry Alden, born July 15, 1903, he died at a young age on March 28, 1928; Glenn Leroy (from about 1905) and Clifford Earle (1911). Brother Harry was already married when he died and had a daughter Beatrice of almost two years old. Since Harry's wife also died early, the girl was raised by her grandparents Charley and Grace in Fisherton.

Charles was 16 years old when he left school and started working as a tractor driver at a mixed farm in Manitoba. After his military service he wanted to do this work again because he liked working with machines.

When Charles entered service at the age of 19 on August 1, 1941 he was 150 lbs and was 5 ft.11 tall. He had blue eyes and brown hair.

On January 25, 1944 Charles married Alice Adelaide Withoff during his service in Lancashire England, and together they had a daughter Leslie Denise born on January 1, 1945. Charles was never to see his daughter, since he died on March 5, 1945, one day before he had been given leave to go back to England to see her. Alice remarried in 1948 with an American soldier, Adolph Burelli, who adopted daughter Leslie as Leslie Maria Burelli, and on February 9, 1950 the family moved to New York.

Alice died in 2016 at the age of 95. Daughter Leslie had 2 children and 6 grandchildren.

Charles joined the Army as a Private on August 1, 1941 at the 18th Manitoba Armoured Car Regiment in Winnipeg Canada. He received his training at Camp Border and in December 1941 he was on leave for a few weeks. On June 20, 1942 he became a Qualified Driver 1C in training camp Debert Nova Scotia. During his training, he was hospitalized twice in Shilo Camp Manitoba for an infection on his finger and later for one on his upper lip. He left for Halifax where he embarked on the "Letitia" on August 22 for departure to Europe. There he arrived in Glasgow, Scotland on August 31. On November 26, 1942 he was assigned to the 18th Armoured Car Regiment in England until January 28, 1943. The Manitoba Dragoons stayed in tents in Bramley Park, Surrey UK. Not until July 7, 1944, the Manitoba Dragoons left by ship from England to mainland Europe.

On July 8 they arrived at Juno Beach in France together with 72 Staghounds. A Staghound was a modern armoured wheeled vehicle that could be used as a scout car. The 18th Armoured Car Regiment and 12th Manitoba Dragoons were a self-contained regiment and a long range reconnaissance regiment, equipped with a wireless transmitting and receiving set.

Each combat troop was equipped with two Staghounds and a reconnaissance car driving together in front. The Dragoons were part of the 2nd Canadian Corps during the tour of Europe. They were, as it were, the scouts of the troops and looked out for the best roads. They usually did not participate in combat but used their speed to choose the right path. Their information over the radio was of great importance to the troops that followed, often miles after them.



Staghounds on the way.

That first month in France, the Manitoba Dragoons devoted themselves to infantry duties because the conquered area was still too small to explore. In February, Charles and his unit arrived in Germany via France, Belgium and the Netherlands, where fierce fighting took place and several Dragoons were killed.

This was also the case with Trooper Charles who touched a mine with his Staghound in the Hochwald on 5 March 1945, and both occupants died. The Stag was destroyed by the impact.



Charles 2nd from the left. Source: Information Centre Holten Cemetery.

Charles Elmer Barlow was initially buried in a corner of a garden along a hedge in Wesel Germany. On June 4, 1945 Charles was reburied in the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XXV. B. 3.**



Photo Liesbeth Huisman.

Awards Charles Barlow:

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

In 1995 an islet was named after Charles: Barlow Island, located in Egenolf Lake, an almost uninhabited islet about 1320 miles north of Ottawa, Canada.



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

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Library and Archives Canada
- Find a Grave
- a Place of Honour Manitoba Wardead
- Manitoba Dragoons museum