

Bulger, Lawrence William
Private
North Nova Scotia Highlanders
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
F 96494



Lawrence William Bulger was born 31 May 1923 on the family farm in Portage, a small settlement situated at the northern end of Prince Edward Island in Canada. His father, Gabriel, born 1891, was a farmer of Irish descent and his mother, Annie, three years younger, had Scottish ancestry; they were married 19 November 1912. This large Roman Catholic family lived together on a mixed farm in Portage. Larry, as he was called, had two brothers, Leo and Harold, who also served in the army; he had fourteen sisters. He reported that he had enjoyed a happy childhood. Larry went to the local country school until he was 15, reaching grade VI. He liked to skate and played baseball and softball, both in the centre field position; he also had a mouth organ. After leaving school he worked at times on the farm for his father and mentioned driving a three-horse team. He liked farming and wanted to continue there after the war. He also worked for a building company in Toronto in the period before he joined up.



At the age of eighteen, Larry enlisted in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island on 10 March 1942. At his medical he was found to be a well-developed, friendly young man, of good appearance, 5ft.7ins tall and weighing 152 lbs. He reported that he was not working at the time he joined up but that he had worked fairly regularly as a labourer in the four years since he left school. He felt at his best, working on the farm and, wanted to learn more about mechanics later.

Harold-Reaby Lynch(Bulger)-Lawrence Bulger

For the next eighteen months he remained in Nova Scotia where he received his basic training and then followed various courses for service in the infantry, his chosen preference.

For a few months in 1943, he was stationed in New Glasgow, some 165 kilometres northeast of Halifax, taking a small arms course.

St. Patrick's Church, Halifax, N. S.

In this church on the 2nd day of October 1943

Mr. Lawrence William Bulger

Baptized on the _____ day of June 1942

at _____ year _____ Church

Place Lot 11, P.O. 9

Son of Jehiel Bulger and Annis Kellygan

was joined in Holy Matrimony to

Miss Violet May Bedgood

Baptized on the 2nd day of October 1943

at St. Patrick's Church

Place Halifax, N.S.

Daughter of T. S. Bedgood and Violet May Settle

Witnesses Raymond Sander and Evadne de Roche

Remarks: women is a convert to the faith

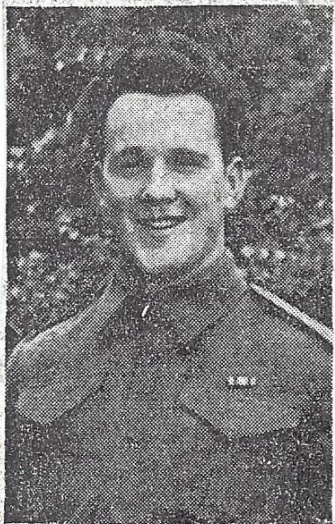
Parish Priest
John McCarthy Curate

During this period, he met Violet May Bedgood from Halifax; she was the nineteen-year-old daughter of T.S. Bedgood and Violet May Settle. They married on 2 October 1943 at St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Halifax; Violet was baptised there on the same day. (Sadly this marriage was not to last)

In September 1943 Larry was allocated to the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps where he was to remain for more than a year. He expressed his disappointment - he had wanted to remain with the infantry. After the initial medical training in Camp Borden, Ontario which he completed satisfactorily, he was found suitable for service overseas and it was thought he would make a good stretcher-bearer.

On 15 March 1944, Larry arrived in the UK and two months later on 16 May, his son Lawrence William James was born. in Halifax NS. While in England, Larry worked for some time as a nursing orderly at the 18th General Hospital. In October he was awarded a badge for Good Conduct and at the end





TRANSFERRED OVERSEAS—Mrs. Laurence Bulger has received word that her husband, Private Laurence Bulger (above), who is serving overseas, has been transferred to the Infantry Reinforcements, from the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, with whom he had been serving for over a year. Private Bulger had been employed with 18th General Hospital in England before he was transferred. In a recent letter telling of his new posting, he wishes to be remembered to all his friends. His wife, the former Violet Bedgood, and baby son, Laurence, reside in Bedford. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Bulger, of Portage, P. E. I.

of 1944, he left the Medical Corps and transferred back to an Infantry Unit. On 17 February 1945 he was flown, probably to the Netherlands where active fighting had begun and was attached to the North Nova Scotia Highlanders, an infantry regiment which was sorely in need of reinforcements.

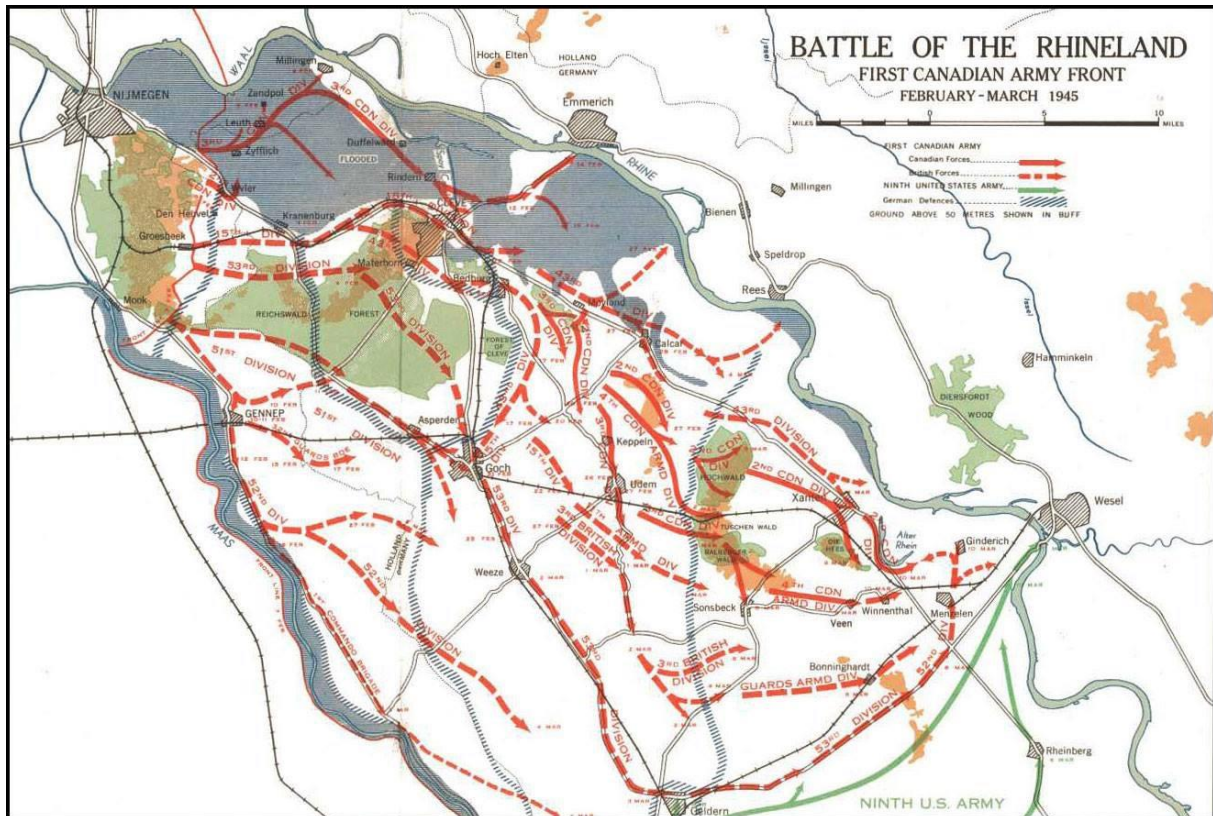


Oswald Murphy and Lawrence Bulger

At this point in January 1945 the Novas, as they were known, were stationed in the Nijmegen area of the Netherlands, situated close to the German border. The regiment had taken part in the D-day landings on 6 June 1944 and fought its way east, more than 400 kilometres across northern France, paying a heavy price in the numbers of killed and wounded. It took a leading role in Operation Switchback and was involved in the liberation of Knokke in Belgium at the beginning of November.

Soon after, the Novas, together with other Canadian regiments were transported overnight 150 kilometres northeast to Nijmegen. A three-month period of relative calm followed as the Allies prepared for the next big action.

The Novas carried out regular patrols on the German border; at the same time, there were skirmishes with the enemy and the occasional shell was sent in the direction of Nijmegen.



On 8 February, Operation Veritable began, a massive action that aimed to clear the enemy from all the German territory between the rivers Rhine and Maas. From the start, conditions were atrocious - a thaw had set in and all the flat land by the Rhine was flooded to a depth of a metre. As the Novas tried to move forward through the Reichswald forest, the ground quickly became a sea of mud because of the constant rain. On 14 February they were on the road between Kleve and Emmerich in amphibious Buffalo vehicles and successfully cleared the village of Warbergen; their activities were concealed from the enemy by an Allied smokescreen. A few days later, a group of soldiers joined the Regiment as reinforcement and one of these was Private Larry Bulger. Towards the end of the month, the Novas were involved in Operation Blockbuster, fighting for the control of the Hochwald forest and the area around Udem. On 6 March, they had reached Sonsbeek but the Germans were already withdrawing across the Rhine bridge at Wesel. By 10 March, there were no more enemy troops on the west side of the river and the last bridge across the Rhine had been destroyed.

Two weeks of preparation followed for the enormous task of transporting an army across more than 400 metres of the swollen river Rhine. Carefully organized, with aerial and artillery support, this operation, named Plunder, took place near Rees on 23 March, using amphibious vehicles and landing craft to ferry men and material across - a formidable undertaking.

The following day in the afternoon, the Canadians came up against stiff German opposition near the village of Bienen; on 25 March the North Nova Scotia Highlanders attacked a determined enemy across open ground. They soon lost the initiative according to the War Diary, *'and contact between platoons was next to impossible, because of the murderous fire and heavy mortaring.'*

43 Novas were killed that day including Lawrence William Bulger. He was buried 11 days later on 5 April in the 3rd Canadian Division temporary cemetery in Rees.

He was later reburied in the Netherlands at the Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek, grave reference: **XVII. E. 12.**

AWARDS:

- 1939-45 Star
- Defense Medal
- War Medal 1939-45
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp



<http://lestweforget1945.org/>

Larry's brother, Lance Corporal Harold G. Bulger, of the Algonquin Regiment, was killed in Belgium on 10 September 1944 and buried in Adegem, grave reference IX. A. 5.



Life story: Gwyn de Jong, Research Team Faces to Graves.

Acknowledgements:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives, Canada

Col. C.P. Stacey: The Victorious Campaign

Diaries: NNSHR of Canada

Photos and information with courtesy of Beverly Jeffery

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

In the church in Bienen: the "Roll of Honour" with the names of all victims of the battle of Bienen: British, Canadian and German soldiers together. In the square in front of the church, a plaque on the wall recalls the battle.

