

**Bull, George Kenneth**

**Sergeant**

**The Black Watch (Royal Highland  
Regiment) of Canada**

**A29034**



George Kenneth Bull, (he went by the name of Ken), was born in London in Southwestern Ontario, on February 22, 1915, to Loetta May Moyer and John George Bull. His parents were married in London, Ontario on September 6, 1912. Loetta Bull died on Feb 17, 1920 at the age of 29 years old.

Ken was the middle child. He had two sisters Marion Rose (Smith) was younger, and Helen Louetta (Nesbit) was older. Ken Bull spent most of his childhood at 366 Hamilton Road, London. According to his military documents, he belonged to the Methodist church.

Ken attended Chesley Avenue public school from 1923 to 1929 and London technical school from 1929 to 1933. He attended school until Grade 11. He then went to the technical day school in drafting and printing for four years, and attended one year in technical night school in sheet metal drafting and pattern making. According to his grandson Nicolas Walmsley, Ken was

trained as a Coppersmith but pursued a music career playing the trumpet in a band before he enlisted.



*Ken at 19.*



While he was serving in the military, Ken Bull married Ellen Laura Thompson on January 13, 1940, in London, Ontario. The couple had two children: Terrance Gregory Bull, who was born on December 12, 1938, and Coral Ellen Bull, who was born on November 3, 1940.

According to his occupational history records, Ken worked as a coppersmith for six years with various companies.

Under the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM), Ken trained with the Canadian Fusiliers in London, Ontario from 1931 to 1936. In 1934, he took a Signalling Instructor Course at Camp Borden, Ontario, where he spent six weeks training. During the years 1937 to 1939, Ken trained with the Royal Canadian Artillery, in the 55<sup>th</sup> Battery which, after Ken left the unit, would deploy overseas as a part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.

On September 5, 1939, at the age of 24, in London, Ontario, Kenneth enlisted in the Regular Force component of Canadian military when he was serving in the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps (RCOC) with the 1<sup>st</sup> Army Field Workshop in the trade of a sheet metal worker.

According to a medical exam upon his enlistment, he was described to be five-foot five tall weighing 137 pounds with blue eyes and dark hair.

According to a 1943 promotion report, Ken's commanding officer described him as a "very diligent," hardworking individual who "possessed initiative and confidence".

He underwent numerous training courses. On November 21, 1941, Ken was sent to a course at the Army Gas School in the Tregantle wing of the institution. He was then enrolled in an Anti-gas course. From November 9 to December 21, 1942, he completed the Platoon Weapons course.

At enlistment, he started in the military rankings as a Private. He was promoted to Acting Lance Corporal on October 1, 1940, and was officially promoted substantive to the position of Lance Corporal on January 1, 1941.

Kenneth Bull was sent overseas late in 1940 disembarking at Glasgow, Scotland on December 26. He underwent more training during 1941 and 1942. On January 30, 1943, Sergeant Bull was assigned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade Workshop which was attached to the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers regiment. Ken was promoted to the rank of Acting Staff Sergeant, in February, 1943, and later promoted substantive to the official rank of Staff Sergeant on May 9, 1943.

With the Allied Forces establishing a beachhead on D-Day, June 6, 1944, in Normandy, various regiments were transferred from the United Kingdom.

Staff Sergeant Bull disembarked in France on D-plus-30 (6 July 1944) with the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade Workshop (RCEME).



*This picture was taken June 16th, 1944, in France with the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade Workshop.*

Through July and August, the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade Workshop moved through France. For September and October, the unit was stationed in various cities throughout Belgium. On 10 November 1944, the Workshop had entered Holland where it stayed for four months.

However, on November 4, 1944, Sergeant Bull was transferred to the infantry regiment, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada. The Black Watch was stationed near Nijmegen in the eastern Netherlands. By February, The Black Watch was engaged with other Allied regiments in the Battle of the Rhineland as they crossed over the Maas River into Germany.

The day before Ken died, March 2, 1945, according to the war diary of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, the report stated, "The houses hereabouts have been reduced to a mass of rubble by our shells and bombs, and as a result we are all constrained to live in dugouts. At 2100 hrs. an O Gp[Orders Group]. was held at Bde [Brigade Headquarters]. Lt-Col. B.R.RITCHIE and Lt. J.B. MULHEARN were 50 minutes late in presenting themselves there, owing to the muddy condition of the roads - one jeep and one carrier having bogged down, and Shank's mare having to be resorted to, to get them there. The O Gp. presented us with quite a surprise as the intention has been changed and THE BLACK WATCH will now relieve THE ALGONQUIN REGIMENT and the remnants of THE LAKE SUPERIOR REGIMENT, who had been in some very hard action, in the gap south of the HOCHWALD Forest."

Staff Sergeant George Kenneth Bull died on March 3, 1945, at the age of 30.

On the day of his death according to the war diaries of the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, the report stated, "The vehicles of F Ech [Fighting Echelon] were strung out along the roadway, awaiting orders to move and were spotted by the enemy who immediately opened— fire with his Nebelwerfers [rocket launchers] - fortunately causing no material damage". On March 3, 1945, the Fusiliers Mont-Royal passed through The Black Watch to carry on the advance.

Sergeant Bull was temporarily buried in Germany in the Udem Canadian Cemetery.

Sergeant Ken Bull was awarded these medals:

- War Medal,
- 1939-45 Star,
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp
- France-Germany Star.
- Defence Medal.



Sergeant George Kenneth Bull is buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands. The grave reference is **XXIV. E. 14.**



The inscription on his headstone reads  
THERE IS A LINK  
DEATH CANNOT SEVER,  
LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE  
LAST FOR EVER

Sergeant Bull's wife, Ellen, and his daughter, Coral, travelled to the Netherlands to visit his grave in June of 1964. It was a Canadian government-sponsored trip. According to his great grandson Nicolas Walmsley, they stayed with the Schurman family in Nijmegen, close to the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery. The photos below were taken at the 1964 ceremony at Groesbeek.







## FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian  
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story written by Petal Anike and John McCauley, students from All Saints H.S. Kanata, Canada for Faces to Graves, courtesy of Vanessa Kirtz, teacher at All Saints H.S.

### Sources

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Canadian Virtual War Memorial
- Library and Archives Canada
- Ancestry.ca
- Project '44
- Photos and information provided by great grandson Nicolas Walmsley
- [https://electriccanadian.com/forces/RCEME\\_Individual\\_Unit\\_Histories\\_v3.1\\_Nov\\_2010.pdf](https://electriccanadian.com/forces/RCEME_Individual_Unit_Histories_v3.1_Nov_2010.pdf)

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