

Carroll, Roger Joseph Leon
Major
Royal Hamilton Light Infantry
B Compagnie
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps



Semper Paratus- 'Always Ready'

Roger Joseph Leon Carroll was born in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, USA, on Monday 9 January 1911. Son of Irenee Joseph Carroll and Laura Carroll (Dupont). His mother died on Monday 27 February 1928 and was only 42 years old. The family also consisted of four brothers, Leo, Albert, Henry (Hank), who were born in Canada, and Norman, and four sisters, Laurette, Gloriette, Lilian and Dora Carroll, who died at birth. In 1916 at a young age, Roger moved with his parents to Brantford, Ontario, Canada, coming from Middleborough, Massachusetts, USA. They lived in Brantford at 42 Abele Avenue and later moved to 132 Dalhousie Street. As a religion, the Carroll family belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. Brantford was located on the Grand River. The city was also called Telephone City after Alexander Graham Bell had established the first telephone connection from here with the nearby town of Paris. Father Irenee worked at the Niagara Silk Company as a foreman. He then worked at the Bodega Hotel as a receptionist for 26 years. The Bodega Hotel was lost to a major fire on Sunday, March 4, 1962.

Roger's brothers, Leo, Norman, Albert and Henry (Hank) were decent pranksters. His sisters Lillian and Gloriette were nice too. Laurette was stricter and a little more reserved than the rest. Norman worked for the Cockshutt Plow Company in Brantford, where he made war parts during the war. The Carroll family enjoyed life to the fullest.

Roger Joseph Leon attended elementary school at St. Mary's Separate School and graduated from the Collegiate Institute (now known as Brantford Collegiate Institute) in Brantford, Ontario, Canada.



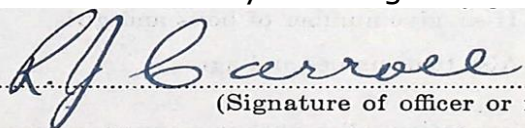
*Collegiate Institute-Bron :
Brantford Collegiate Institute*

He was a brilliant athlete during high school. After finishing school, he worked as a salesman at the Hurley Printing Company, Brantford, Ontario. Roger enjoyed outdoor sports such as rugby with the Ontario Rugby Football Union, and baseball and basketball. He was also secretary-treasurer of the Brantford Senior Baseball Club.

Furthermore, he was an active member of the Brant-Norfolk Aero Club, despite wearing glasses. In addition to English, he also mastered the French language. He had brown eyes and dark hair, weighed 122 lb. and was 5 ft.5 tall. Furthermore, he was a healthy young man, was well developed and had good teeth.

In 1935, he enlisted with the Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles, nicknamed the "Duffs", a reserve unit based in Brantford, Ontario. There he became a Lieutenant in 1936.

On June 1, 1940, he was posted to the No 2 Infantry Training Center at the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry in Hamilton, Ontario.



(Signature of officer or man)

On June 13, 1940, he was assigned to the Canadian Army Rehabilitation Training Center at Camp Borden, Ontario.



On June 15, 1940, Roger requested leave to marry Evelyn Cecilia Moriarty of Paris, Ontario, Canada. She was born on November 10, 1912. They lived at 64 Main Street in Paris, Ontario.

Evelyn

He went with his unit overseas to Scotland on July 24, 1940 and arrived in Gourock on August 2. From there he went to Aldershot in the south east of England. There he received further training and on July 5, 1942 he was promoted to Captain. After three years in England, Roger Joseph Leon returned to Canada in October 1943. He was assigned a job as an instructor at Camp Ipperwash, located in Lambton, Ontario. In the meantime he had been promoted to A/Major, on August 19, 1943.

(13)

CANADIAN ARMY (OVERSEAS)

RECOMMENDATION FOR

Name in full Roger Joseph Leon CARROLL
Surname last in BLOCK CAPITALS

<p><u>Present Status</u></p> <p>1. Rank A/Major</p> <p>2. Unit RHLI (Instructional tour - Canada)</p> <p>3. Appt</p>	<p><u>Recommended for</u></p> <p>1. Rank Major</p> <p>2. Appt Instructional tour - Canada</p> <p>3. Eff Date 19 Nov 43</p>
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How vacancy was caused (giving date, authority, etc, if applicable).
To take seniority in C.I.C. from 19 Aug 43

Remarks: I consider this offr in every way fit to be confirmed in his present rank.

This officer's standing on the Gradation List of his Unit or Corps is 8 in his rank. In making this recommendation I have taken into consideration any others who may be senior to this officer.

Date 24 May 44

Signature: OC Unit
(W.D. Whitaker) Lt-col, Comd 1 RHLI

Signature: OA Corps

CMHQ 1000-3c
40/P & S/1384 (3432)

In January 1944 he went to the Camp Borden A10 Canadian Infantry Training Center. On March 17, 1944, he qualified as Driver Class III (Wheeled) and was promoted to Major on June 28, 1944. After several months in Canada, Roger again went overseas to England on October 4, 1944 and set foot there on October 12. He was assigned to the 3rd Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit and then again to the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry. On November 3, 1944, he left England for northwestern Europe and arrived there on November 4. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry was near Goes at that time and had just fought in the Battle of the Scheldt.



On November 7, Major Roger Joseph Leon Carroll returned to the regiment and with him it became a reinforcement post of ten officers and twenty-three soldiers. They received new orders and on November 9 they went to the Groesbeek-Grave area. There were many patrols and they found shelter among other things in a number of Horsha gliders that were used during Market Garden. Enemy positions were in most cases no more than a hundred yards from the forward positions and the Germans used police dogs to send out on patrols.

On November 23, they received orders to head in the direction of Mook. The next day the men enjoyed a Canadian Show in Nijmegen or in the Beaver Club in Grave. On November 25, the area was under shell and mortar fire from the enemy.

Fortunately there were no casualties. In the evening there was a party in the officers' mess, attended by all officers of the unit.

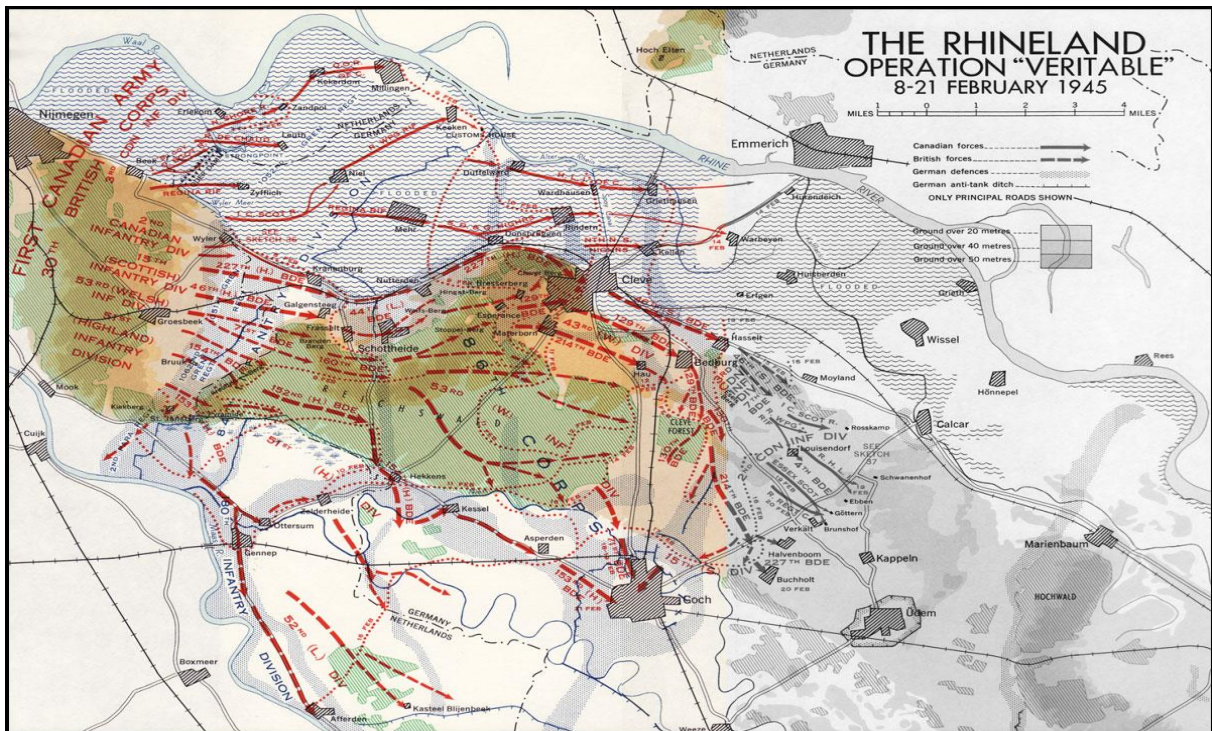
This was the first time all the officers of the battalion were together in the officers' mess since their arrival in France, and the opportunity arose to introduce the officers to each other as there had been so many changes in the staffing of the officers since the battalion was in action. A delicious buffet lunch was served and the evening was considered a success, making the junior officers feel at home and getting them to know the senior officers of the battalion. In December 1944 new orders followed to return to the Groesbeek area. As the A Company moved into the new area, it came under enemy shellfire and suffered six casualties. The unit spent the next day clearing their company areas and improving their dugouts and cutting through trenches.

All companies reported that their areas were in a dirty state, especially at the B Company, where Roger Joseph Carroll was Major, there was a lot of garbage and old army equipment. The next days were spent on patrol and the enemy was active with snipers and mortar fire. Until Christmas Day 1944 they stayed in the vicinity of Groesbeek until they received orders to go to Driehuizen where the men enjoyed a well-deserved Christmas dinner.

On December 21, Major Roger Joseph Leon Carroll and Captain G.A Marron discovered that the winds were favorable for an expected German Paratrooper landing. A plan was drawn up, the surveillance was doubled and 50% of the men were warned. Fortunately, there was no paratroop landing. However, an attempt was made to check a story about two German pilots dressed in Royal Canadian Airforce Force uniforms who allegedly landed in their area.

On December 29 orders followed to go to Boxtel, where they arrived at 11:30 pm. The Essex Scottish Regiment paraded with their bagpipe band

to celebrate the New Year 1945. Spaces for reading and watching movies were enjoyed these first days of the new year. The condition of the troops was also maintained and the training of the new reinforcements was completed. On January 6, they left for the vicinity of Driehuizen, to the area where they had previously been.



Without Major Roger Joseph Leon Carroll, however, he had been hospitalized for illness. There followed a training program for the companies with marches, weapons training and a series of lectures.

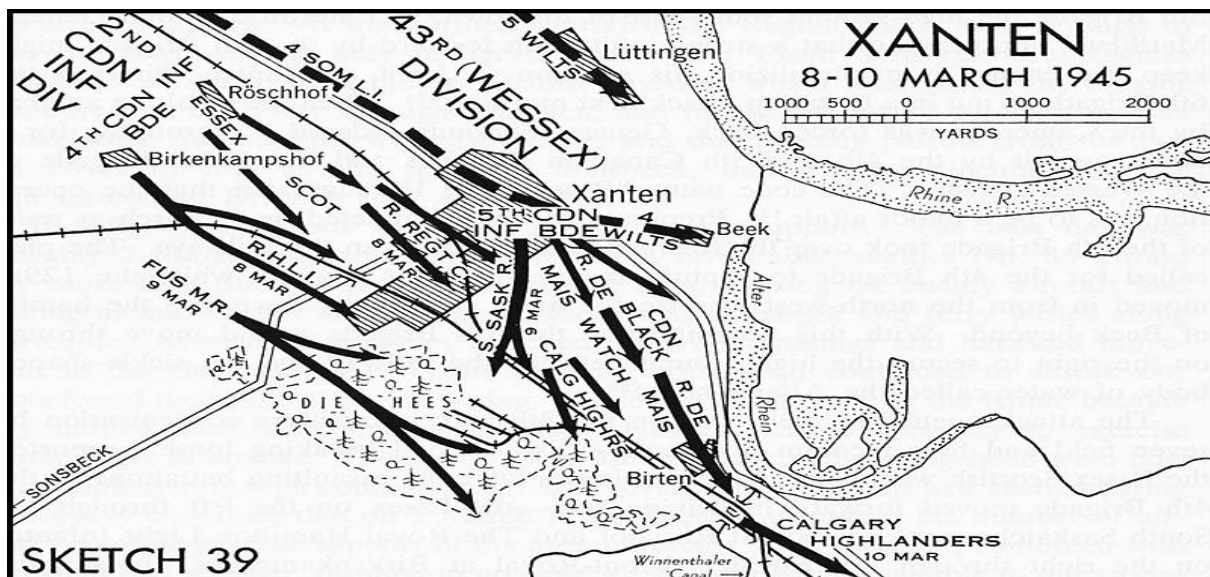
The time was further used to gather strength for Operation Veritable, which erupted on February 8 with massive artillery fire. It was the largest attack ever made from Dutch territory. Operation Veritable was part of a larger plan, the Rhineland Offensive, to capture the left flank of the Rhine, cross the Rhine and advance further into Germany. The regiment moved in the direction of Nijmegen on February 12.

On February 14 there were orders to cross the border and go to Kalkar and Xanten. Rising water and shell and mortar fire delayed the regiment's next operation, on February 17, for 48 hours to clear the forest of the enemy at Goch/Kalkar. On February 19 at 11 am the attack was launched with the A and B Companies, on Kangaroos, the C and D Companies following on foot and a platoon of Carriers supporting the flanks with Bren machine guns and flamethrowers.

The attack was successful despite the loss of a number of officers and soldiers, who were buried in the Bedburg cemetery.

"During these heavy operations against the German army, the morale of the troops has been exceptionally high and a huge factor in its success. This battalion has been fortunate to have officers as company commanders who have been with us in England and during the campaigns in Europe. Their leadership has been of the highest order and it is deeply regretted that some will no longer be with us in the future," their War Diaries said on February 28, 1945.

On March 1 the battalion was put on readiness to move to the Hochwald, but it was postponed, due to the fact that the Essex Scottish were facing heavy opposition. The next morning they were ordered to head towards the Hochwald and 60 German soldiers were taken prisoner of war. On March 5, a temporary rest was held and the troops could catch their breath. On March 6, they received orders to prepare and move to a concentration area near Xanten at 1 p.m.



Major Roger Joseph Leon Carroll returned to the unit that evening. He had left a few months before due to sick leave when the unit was located in Boxtel. Major Carroll once again took command of the B Company.

On Thursday, March 8, 1945, the Canadian artillery put down a very effective barrage that lasted sixteen minutes and preceded the infantry attack on Xanten. The A and D Companies attacked, followed ten minutes later by the B and C Companies that formed the second wave. The Germans used an effective form of tactics in their defense of this area by allowing the two leading companies to pass through their positions and then opening fire on them from behind with MG42 machine guns and field guns. This considerably slowed down the attack and caused many casualties on the Canadian side.

One of these was Roger Joseph Leon Carroll who died from shrapnel at the age of 34, two days after he had come back from sick leave.

He was temporarily buried in Xanten and on Tuesday 21 August 1945, Roger Joseph Leon Carroll was reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **III. H. 16**.



Christine Carroll writes:

Roger's brother, Hank (Henry), was a former non-commissioned intelligence officer with the South Alberta Regiment during the war. He doesn't talk much about the war. We have some of his medals, beret, helmet and binoculars that we have given to the Royal Canadian Legion in Waterford, Ontario. I remember my Uncle Hank telling me how he found out that his brother was killed and that he was buried along the road. He

was in a bar at the time and some other guys were talking about Major Carroll. He asked them to take him to the place where his brother Roger Joseph Leon Carroll was buried. My uncle arranged for his brother's remains to be taken to the cemetery."

Awards Roger Joseph Leon Carroll:

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



Life story: Gijs Krist, Research Team Faces to Graves.

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves
- Library and Archives Canada
- Canadiansoldiers.com
- Information supplied by Project '44-The Road to Liberation'
- Christine Carroll

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



Major Roger Joseph Carroll

Major Roger Joseph Carroll was killed in action on March 8, 1945, when his battalion of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry was taking part in a large-scale attack on Xanten, Germany. As Officer Commanding "B" Company, Major Carroll's objective was to secure part of the town to prevent enemy ferry service across the Rhine. He was instantly killed by shell fire, just before this was attained, but

his courage and gallantry had such an inspirational effect on everyone with him, that his company went on, in spite of terrific opposition, to successfully take their objective.

Major Carroll, in spite of his youth, had had a successful army career. As early as 1935, he enlisted as a private in the Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles (N.P.A.M.) and later received his commission. As soon as his battalion mobilized, he went on active service, enlisting in May, 1940, and, after a brief time at Borden with the 2nd Canadian Division, went overseas in July with the R.H.L.I. After three years in England he was returned to Canada in October, 1943, where his experience in battle manoeuvres was used to advantage in the instructor's job to which he was assigned at Camp Ipperwash. After eight months in Canada he returned overseas and went into action. Born at Middleboro, Mass., January 9, 1911, he moved with his family to Brantford when quite young. He received his primary education at St. Mary's Separate School and graduated with his matriculation from the Collegiate Institute. He was a brilliant athlete during his High School days and distinguished himself on the rugby field, the baseball diamond and the basketball floor. After his school days he continued his interest in outdoor activities, playing for the O.R.F.U., serving as Secretary-Treasurer for the Brantford Senior Baseball Club. He was one of the most active members of the Brant-Norfolk Aero Club, and if it had not been for defective eyesight, in all probability the Army would have lost a fine soldier to the Air Force. He was on the staff of the Hurley Printing Company. In 1940 he was married to the former Miss Evelyn Moriarity, Paris. Major Carroll's mother pre-deceased him, and his father, Mr. I. (Ray) Carroll resides at 132 Dalhousie St.

Evelyn remarried with Walter J. Crawford of Cambridge, Ontario, Canada. She passed away on Saturday 25 September 1993 at the age of 80 and was buried in Cambridge.