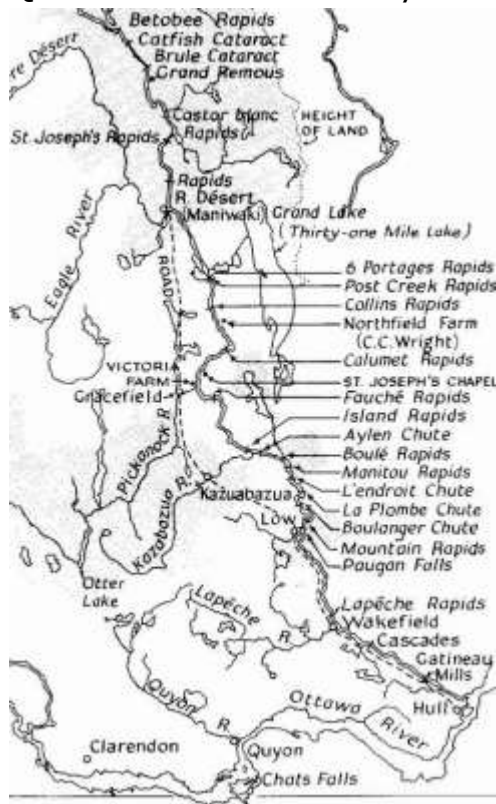


**Chamberlain, Douglas Cecil**  
**Rifleman**  
**The Regina Rifle Regiment**  
**Royal Canadian Infantry Corps**  
**C/34202**



Douglas Cecil Chamberlain was born 27 May 1923 at Kazabazua, a village in Quebec's Gatineau Valley. His father Elmer Edward Chamberlain was of English stock, born in Quebec. He was working as a blacksmith when he attested with the Canadian Expeditionary Force 159<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Sudbury, Ontario during World War One. Elmer served overseas in France as a driver for 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division and suffered from rheumatism to his back and shoulders when he was discharged in 1919. Elmer married Violet Jane Chamberlain (her maiden name) at Kazabazua in 1920. The Presbyterian couple had two children, Douglas and Emily, before Violet sadly passed away in 1930.



*Gatineau Valley, Quebec*

*Ottawa Citizen, 1930*

**CHAMBERLAIN**—At a local hospital, on Wednesday, Oct. 8, 1930, Violet Jane Chamberlain, aged 35 years, beloved wife of Elmer Chamberlain. Funeral from McEvoy Bros' Funeral Home, 471 MacLaren St., on Thursday, Oct. 9, at 8 a.m. for service and interment at Kazabazua, Que. 96½



*Kazabazua, Quebec 1924*

The remaining Chamberlain family moved to nearby Low, Quebec sometime after Violet died. Douglas received just three years of public school education and consequently had a low level of literacy. He liked playing baseball, hockey, and swimming as a boy plus enjoyed fishing and hunting as he grew older. Douglas performed farm labour and did bush work in the local logging industry. His father remarried Barbara Groves and the couple had three half-siblings to Douglas and Emily: Rufus, Betty, and Edward. Douglas apprenticed as a blacksmith under Elmer before he decided to join the Army.

Douglas attested 16 July 1941 at Ottawa, Ontario, misstating his birth year so that he appeared to be 19, the minimum age for overseas service. His medical examination described Douglas as 5'9" tall, 133 lbs with dark complexion and brown eyes. When asked why he was enlisting, Douglas said it was for "patriotism, travel, and adventure". Given his logging experience Douglas was allocated as a Canadian Forestry Corps (CFC) reinforcement and sent to Three Rivers, Quebec (QC) for basic training.



Douglas was assigned to Camp Valcartier, QC for advanced training 13 November 1941 and then entrained to Halifax for overseas deployment,



disembarking at Gourock, Scotland 11 January 1942. Douglas joined 23 Company CFC there and worked in a lumber mill doing woodcraft and stacking. His Company also spent a portion of their time devoted to military training and preparing defensive positions in cooperation with Scottish troops in the event of a German invasion.

*CFC Lumbermen posing in Scotland WW2*

Douglas was transferred to the Royal Canadian Engineers December 1943 and became a Sapper with 7 Construction Company. He remained in the UK during the D-Day attack and was remustered to Infantry in the fall, assigned

to The Winnipeg Grenadiers 2 September 1944. Douglas crossed the English Channel the next month, landed in Belgium and was taken on strength with The Regina Rifle Regiment (RRR) 24 October 1944.

The RRR, also known as the 'Farmer Johns' or Reginas, along with the other 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade battalions (The Royal Winnipeg Rifles and The Canadian Scottish) of 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division were among the first Commonwealth infantry units to land at Juno Beach (Courseulles-sur-Mer) and suffered heavy D-Day losses. The RRR battled their way through Normandy and helped liberate Channel ports. Douglas joined them as a replacement Rifleman during the Battle for the Scheldt and they finally cleared the Germans from Breskens Pocket 2 November.



*Regina Rifle soldiers, Ghent Belgium Nov 1944*

The RRR and 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade were tasked with static operations for the winter near Nijmegen, Netherlands 8 November where they spent the next three months patrolling and sniping against a well entrenched enemy. Douglas was appointed Lance Corporal 14 December with "D" Company, then reduced rank to Rifleman 3 February 1945 following an infraction.



*Personnel of the Regina Rifles preparing to attack enemy in Moyland Wood near Calcar, Germany, 16 February 1945.*

They finally moved out with their 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade and 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division 8 February 1945 under First Canadian Army as part of Operation VERITABLE. They advanced through bombed out Cleve, Germany mounted on Kangaroo armoured personnel carriers and spent five days clearing the Germans from Moyland Wood 16-21 February 1945. First The Regina Rifles and then The Canadian Scottish

had attacked but were stalemated and repulsed by determined German paratroopers. It fell to The Royal Winnipeg Rifles to finish the job. In summarizing events for February, the Regina's War Diarist commented that in addition to a number of casualties, they also experienced a high percentage of Battle Exhaustion cases.



The RRR and 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade were out of action during the next phase of the Rhine offensive, Operation BLOCKBUSTER.

The Allies decided to seize two crossings over the Rhine River with the main effort in the north in the Emmerich-Wesel sector for Operation PLUNDER. The Reginas were on the move the evening of 27 March, crossing the Rhine by means of a pontoon bridge that the engineers had constructed.



*Rhine River pontoon bridge 1945*



Priority turned to securing Emmerich and the Hoch Elten ridge so that a maintenance route across the river could be established at Emmerich. The 7th Brigade opened the attack on Emmerich's eastern approaches on the night of 27-28 March, and the Canadian Scottish took Vrasselt, pressing on in the dark. The Regina Rifles occupied Dornick the next morning. Both units were able to reach the outskirts of Emmerich without meeting serious resistance. Units of the 6th Parachute Division and 346th Infantry Division were established in the city, however. The 7th Brigade continued its attacks inside the built-up area and the woods to the north while the 8th Brigade was ordered to pass through and attack the Hoch Elten ridge.

The Canadian Scottish, along with a company of Regina Rifles, attempted to expand a bridgehead over the Landwehr Canal on the night of 28-29 March, managing to do so in the face of heavy fighting. Engineers managed to bridge the canal in darkness, and further thrusts into the city followed. In peacetime a city of 16,000 people, Emmerich had been severely bombed such that only a single street had intact buildings remaining. The enemy used

*the rubble to good effect, fortifying houses. On the morning of 29 March, the Regina Rifles attacked into southern Emmerich with tank and Crocodile support, finding the Germans again in fortified buildings and with tank support. Progress was slow as the ruins had to be carefully searched, and road blocks and rubble made it difficult for tanks to manoeuvre. The Royal Winnipeg Rifles made steady progress in the northern portion of the city and turned back a German counterattack early on 30 March, the same day that the Canadian Scottish took over the lead of the divisional advance and secured a large cement works west of the city. In three days, the battalions of the 7th Brigade suffered 172 casualties, 44 of them fatal.*

*Courtesy Canadiansoldiers.com*

*Canadian Scottish Regiment with Sherbrooke Fusiliers tank near Emmerich, Germany 30 March 1945.*



LAC PA-131818

Douglas Chamberlain was one of the Regina Rifle casualties 29 March, killed in action age 21.

Listed as killed are Rfn. Roger J. Monette, son of Elie Monette of 15 Cedar street, Eastview; Cpl. Earle F. Wright, whose wife lives at 6 Garneau street, Hull, and Rfn. Douglas C. Chamberlain, son of Elmer Chamberlain of Low, Que. All three men are members of Eastern Ontario regiments.

*Ottawa Citizen, May 1945*

Rifleman D.C. Chamberlain was temporarily buried at Vrasselt, Germany and was later relocated to Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands, grave reference **XX. G. 5.**

The inscription on his headstone:

A SOLDIER BRAVE & TRUE  
WHO DID NOT SHUN  
HIS MASTER'S CALL  
AND FOUGHT UNTO THE END

Douglas Chamberlain's campaign medals:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp.



Photo credit [www.lestweforget1945.org](http://www.lestweforget1945.org)



Douglas Chamberlain's name is included with their local WW2 fallen on the Maniwaki, Quebec War Memorial.

*Maniwaki, Quebec War Memorial*



**FACES TO GRAVES**

Stichting Faces to Canadian  
War Graves Groesbeek

Biography by Jim Little, Research Team Faces to Graves.

#### Sources Consulted:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

Veteran Affairs Canada – Canadian Virtual War Memorial

Ancestry public trees

Newspapers.com

Gatineau Valley, Quebec map and picture

[https://www.communitystories.ca/v1/pm\\_v2.php?id=story\\_line&lg=English&fl=0&ex=00000369&sl=5528&pos=1&pf=1#21](https://www.communitystories.ca/v1/pm_v2.php?id=story_line&lg=English&fl=0&ex=00000369&sl=5528&pos=1&pf=1#21)

Canadian Forestry Corps WW2 information

<https://www.canadiansoldiers.com/corpsbranches/forestrycorps.htm>

Canadian Forestry Corps badge and picture

<https://www.elinorflorence.com/blog/canadian-forestry-corps/>

Regina Rifles WWII information <http://www.reginarifles.ca/index.htm>

Regina Rifles Moyland Wood picture and War Diary

<https://www.junobeach.org/canada-in-wwii/articles/liberation-of-the-netherlands-and-capitulation-of-germany/regina-rifle-regiment-war-diary-16-18-february-1945/>

Reid, Brian (2010). *Named by the Enemy - A History of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles*

Rhine River pontoon bridge 1945 picture

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pontoon\\_bridge\\_Rhine\\_River\\_1945.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pontoon_bridge_Rhine_River_1945.jpg)

The Rhine Battle Map 23 March – 1 April 1945 and Operation Plunder information

<https://www.canadiansoldiers.com/history/battlehonours/northwesteurope/rhine.htm>

Zuehlke, Mark (2010). *On To Victory – The Canadian Liberation of the Netherlands, March 23 – May 5, 1945*

Maniwaki, Quebec War Memorial picture

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/national-inventory-canadian-memorials/details/3852>

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



Douglas's father Elmer died in 1946. His sister Emily wrote the Army Estate Department advising she was his new next of kin and wanted information about doing a personal inscription on his future gravestone. Emily married Joseph Murdock and had six children with him, naming their eldest son Douglas after her brother.

July 29th 1946. Low RR 101  
Quebec

405-C-6510  
Estates 30-5-46

Dear Sirs:

In reply to the letter and map sent to my father Mr Elmer Chamberlain who is deceased from the map shows where my father William Douglas Cecil Chamberlain C34202 was buried I thought I would answer and let you know I am the only next-of-kin now you mention in the letter that there is to be a permanent headstone set up at his grave later on and we have our own choice for engraving let me know when and how you are ready and I will submit a short personal inscription for engraving. Thanking you for your kindness.

Yours truly,  
Mrs Emily Murdock (L1250K)

Low RR 101  
Quebec

Director of Records  
A.C. Branch  
AUG 1 1946  
Nat. Archives (C)  
Ottawa - Canada

CHAMBERLAIN—In memory of my dear father, Elmer Chamberlain, who passed away March 16, 1946. You're not forgotten, father dear. Nor ever shall you be. As long as life and memory last, I shall remember thee.  
—Daughter Emily. 21

Ottawa Citizen, March 1951

**MURDOCK, Emily Pearl**  
On Thursday, May 14, 1992, Emily Pearl Chamberlin, age 67 years. Widow of Joseph Nelson Murdock. Dear mother of Douglas (Pauline), Sheila (Jack), Ernest (Gienna), Leona (Gaston), Pamela (Vincent) and Marvin. Lovingly remembered by 10 grandchildren. Sister of Elizabeth, Edward and Ethel. Predeceased by a grandson Clayton and brothers Douglas and Rufus. Funeral Saturday from the Kelly Funeral Home, 585 Somerset Street (centretown), to Low United Church, Low, Quebec, for service at 3 p.m. Interment Low United Cemetery. In memoriam donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation appreciated.

Ottawa Citizen 1992



Courtesy findagrave.com