

Bateman, John Thomas

Sergeant

**Royal Canadian Army Support
Corps**

H37667



John Thomas Bateman, known as Johnny to his family, was born in Moose Jaw Saskatchewan on 19 June 1917 to William and Eileen Bateman. He had one younger sister, Susan Mary. The Bateman family were roman catholic and were of Irish descent. When Johnny was five years old, the Bateman family moved to Winnipeg Manitoba.

Johnny spoke English and he attended St Paul's College where he completed grade 9 and part of grade 10 before leaving school to work as a dental mechanic. Johnny's mother died in 1931 when he was fourteen years old.

Johnny married Olive Pearl about one month after his enlistment in July 1940. There is no indication in his records that he had children. After their marriage, Mrs Olive Pearl Bateman moved from Winnipeg to New Westminster, British Columbia.

John Thomas Bateman enlisted in the Canadian Army in May 1940 in Winnipeg, Manitoba at the age of 23. He was 5'10" 135 lbs, he had brown hair, blue eyes and he wore glasses. Private Bateman was assigned to Camp Debert in Nova Scotia and by 15 Jun 1940 he had qualified as a clerk.

He arrived in Liverpool via troop carrier on 19 August 1941. Records show he was attached to the Canadian Section of General Headquarters, 2nd Echeleon. Located in the United Kingdom, this unit operated as a Records

Office for all Canadian military personnel overseas. One of its principle functions was to dispatch reinforcement to Continental Europe.

John Bateman was awarded the Good Conduct stripe in May 1942 and he was promoted to Corporal in June 1942. His promotion to Sergeant came less than one year later, on 4 Jun 1943. While in the UK, Sergeant Bateman gained a qualification as a driver.



Johnny Bateman before he was promoted in 1943.

In early November 1943, Sergeant Bateman was posted to Command Headquarters for the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. He landed in Normandy, France on 6 June 1944 and for the next six months until his death, he was attached to both the 7th and 9th Canadian Infantry Brigade Company, Royal Canadian Army Support Corps (RCASC). The RCASC's main job was to move supplies from the rear areas to the front-lines. They delivered all the rations, ammunition, petroleum products, and all other essentials to the advancing army. Both Companies in which Sergeant Bateman served provided support to the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division.

The 3rd Canadian Infantry Division saw extensive fighting in Normandy at Juno Beach and then fought its way through France and Belgium before finally landing in Nijmegen, Netherlands in late Autumn 1944. The Allies moved so fast across the continent that by August 1944, one of the greatest problems was getting supplies to the forward troops so that they could maintain the advance. During this period, Sergeant Bateman worked for long hours in difficult conditions, the troops of his Company were deployed across an enormously long supply line that extended as far back as the Normandy beaches and ports.

Based in Nijmegen for the winter 1944-1945, Sergeant Bateman's Company was engaged in the heavy burden of maintaining routes and amassing supply for the final push into Germany. Official history notes that the period of November 1944 to February 1945 was extremely wet and cold in North West Europe. This resulted in impassable roads; the Royal Canadian Army Support Corps and Royal Canadian Engineers worked seven days per week (generally at night for security reasons) to maintain the supply routes to support the next big task; Operation Veritable - the Battle of the Rhineland.

At the time of his death, Sergeant Bateman was serving with the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade Company, RCASC. He got wounded and died on 8 February 1945 which coincides with the first day of Operation Veritable. Official history notes that Allied casualties were light on 8 February 1945, nevertheless Sergeant Bateman died of wounds that day. Documents show his death occurred in the Netherlands.

Sergeant Bateman was 28 years old at the time of his death.

Sergeant Bateman was temporary buried in the Nijmegen Canadian Military Cemetery - temporary burial ground.



Winnipeg Evening Tribune



His final resting place is the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **II. D. 14.**

The graves in the beginning, in 1954 the crosses were replaced by headstones. Relatives could add a text.

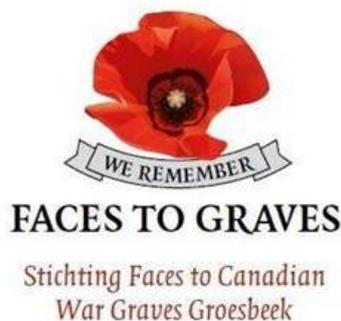
The inscription on his headstone reads:

LOVE'S GREATEST GIFT,
REMEMBRANCE

For his Service Sergeant Bateman was awarded:

- 1939-1945 Star-
- France & Germany Star
- Defence medal
- War medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & clasp
- Commander in Chief Certificate Award "for gallantry and devotion to duty" (posthumously).

In 1974, the Province of Manitoba named a lake in his honour: Bateman Lake (58.61457N, -97.19964W)



Life story: Kimberley Kubeck, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

Photos Katie Matthews

'A Place of Honour' Manitoba War Dead Commemorated in its Geography.

Provided by: Manitoba Geographical Names Program, Provincial Toponymist –

Des Kappel, Manitoba Sustainable Development, Province of Manitoba

Memorial Scrapbook from Sgt Bateman's gravesite

Canadiansoldiers.com

Stacey, C.P. (1948). The Canadian Army 1939–1945: An Official Historical Summary. Official History of the Canadian Army. Ottawa: King's Printer



May 2015 – scrapbook left at his grave – photos Alice van Bekkum.

