

Bradford, Gerald Anderson

Gunner

6th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment

Royal Canadian Artillery

C/34810



Gerald Anderson Bradford was born on April 22, 1919, in Smiths Falls, Ontario. He was the son of Sarah Lillian Payne and John Robert Bradford who married in 1907. Gerald was the youngest of the seven children who were William, David "Harold", Merril, Garnet, Lawrence and his half brother Henry "Harry" Bradford. Gerald was a member of the United Church.

Gerald had attended public school for six years in the nearby village of Jasper and in Smiths Falls but he quit school at age 16 to obtain employment. He worked as farm hand at George McGrath's farm in Easton's Corners from 1935 to 1941. Gerald had also worked at the Fairfield Cheese factory in Easton's Corners as cheesemaker's helper.

In his military documents he was described as being "hardworking, very willing, and could withstand considerable strain. Good husky build and a happy nature." Gerald stood five feet six inches tall and weighed 138 pounds. He had blue gray eyes and brown hair. Gerald liked swimming and played hockey as a goalie and as an outfielder in softball. His personnel report stated that Gerald planned to become a machinist after the war and that he was able to drive a car.

In Cornwall, Ontario, Gerald had attended the Canadian Army (Basic) Training Centre from October of 1940 to November of 1941. Gerald enlisted in Cornwall, Ontario with the Royal Canadian Artillery on November 26, 1941. He was transferred to Petawawa Camp on January 7, 1942. On March 8, 1942, he was attached to the 6th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, R.C.A.

Gunner Gerald Bradford left Canada on October 28, 1942 and he arrived in the United Kingdom on November 5, 1942. He remained in England until his regiment was sent over to France on July 9, 1944 for the Battle of Normandy.

The 6th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, R.C.A. went across Northwest Europe from France, up the channel country through Belgium, and into the Netherlands for the liberation of this country.

It was around Nijmegen that Gerald Anderson Bradford died on December 29, 1944 at the age of 24.



*NOTE Colville painting is dated Dec 20 1944 for the 6th LAA Regt. at the Nijmegen bridge.
Credit: Alex Colville, Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Canada*

He was initially buried in the Nijmegen Canadian military cemetery.

His remains were later moved to Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery.
Grave references are **II. F. 9.**

On his headstone is inscribed the words:

WITH A CHEERY SMILE
AND A WAVE OF THE HAND
HE HAS WANDERED
INTO AN UNKNOWN LAND

Gunner Gerald Anderson Bradford was awarded the following medals:

- 1939-45 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp

A few weeks later, his father Robert Bradford died on January 3, 1945 at the age of 66 years.



May 2017 – photo Alice van Bekkum



Gerald's nephew Gerald Richard Bradford and his great nephew, Donald Gerald Bradford were named after him in his memory.



Life story written by Ryan Cliffe and Christopher Clarke, students from All Saints H.S, Kanata, Canada for Faces to Graves courtesy of Vanessa Kirtz, teacher at All Saints H.S. Additional research and editing provided by Kurt Johnson.

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

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Canadian Virtual war Memorial
- Library and Archives Canada
- Pictures provided by Donald Gerald Bradford, great-nephew of Gerald Bradford

Gunner G. A. Bradford


C/34810

Gerald Anderson Bradford was the youngest son of John Robert and Sarah Bradford of Eastons Corners, Ontario. After attending school in Jasper and Smiths Falls, Gerald enlisted in the Royal Canadian Artillery, training at Cornwall, Camp Borden and on the Pacific Coast. He went overseas in November, 1942, and saw action in France, Belgium and Holland, serving with the Essex Scottish Regiment.

Gunner Bradford was wounded on November 23, 1944, and died of his wounds on December 29 at the age of 24. He is buried in the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands, (Grave reference: 11.F9).

A memorial service was held in the Eastons Corners United Church and was attended by members of the Canadian Legion from Smiths Falls and Merrickville. Merrickville O.Y.B. No. 71 of which he was a member was present and was joined by members of the Richmond O.Y.B. No. 33.

Gunner Bradford is commemorated on page 256 of the Second World War Book of Remembrance.



Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery,
Netherlands

Photo courtesy of the Merrickville Remembers Committee
Photo fournie gracieusement par le comité de Merrickville Remembers

Two letters Gerald sent home to his brother David "Harold" and Janet. The first letter is dated October 25th of 1944, the date of the other letter is unknown.

Dear Harold & Janet -
Receive your most
welcome letter the other day & glad to
hear from both of you. I also got
300 cigarettes which I want to thank
you very much for. I having got
your box yet but it could I hope
and I know I'll enjoy every bit
of it. I do hope the breed gets here
all). It is rain out to - night and
the air about just went. I see by
sunday paper where the big thing
be on before the 1st of march every-
thing to get the war over. I am going
on leave to - morrow I think I'll
go to Glasgow & Manchester. it
cost to much in London but you see
you have a good time. I having
our father Dick for over a week
one I know what to thank or he
int be to busy to write but he
could have been more. Harold is
taking my chess to Ottawa this
fall. I hope you continue on you 94.
My will sure made good for the 1st
year maybe being such. Has
Garnet hear anything more from
the army. or have you been down



234810 Oct. 25th/44
Gnr. A. Bradford.
1st. L.A.A. Bty.
6th. L.A.A. Regt.
Cdn. Army Messengers

Dear Harold & Janet.
Just a few lines
to-day in answer to your most
welcome air mail letter receive the other

should have written sooner but
putting it off. I receive your
cigarettes & the box of chocolate.
Thank alot I guess I be out
cigarettes alot if it wasn't for
& Janet. I got 300 from Janet
a some time ago when I was
a prisoner of war cage on guard.
We are up in Holland now I
see a lot of country in pass two
years & saw thing I don't want to
again it won't be long till
we are in Germany & hope the
war will soon be over.

I glad to hear you got new
tires & be able too get down
home. You know how mother
goes she can't realize nothing.
I suppose you think in the