

## **PARKER, WILSON LOGGIE**

**Corporal**

**Regina Rifle Regiment, R.C.I.C.**

**G/60786**



Wilson Loggie was born 9 February 1921 in Lower Derby, Northumberland County, New Brunswick, Canada. His Presbyterian parents, Loggie William Parker and Rae Allen Knight of Millerton NB had married in 1913. Wilson was their third child, the only son, and he was brought up with five sisters. His father was a lumberman by the Miramichi river on the eastern side of this thickly forested province. Loggie's grandfather had emigrated to Canada from England around 1850.

Wilson went to the rural school in Lower Derby for eight years until the mid 1930's. He had a good attendance record and reported that his best subject was history and his weakest grammar. After leaving school, he followed in his father's footsteps and worked as a lumberjack, taking part in the spring drives and qualifying as a truck driver. He said later that he would want to return to the lumbering firm after the war was over. He laid no claim to hobbies but he liked to go out a lot and enjoyed parties and dancing. He went hunting and described himself as a fair shot.

Glen Parker remembered his cousin Wilson, eight years older than he, from family get-togethers, he described him as being taller than the rest and quite nice looking. Everybody loved him; he never bullied his playmates as others sometimes did.



*Wilson October 1942*

## MILITARY HISTORY



At the beginning of November 1942, Wilson, then aged 21 was called to a clearing depot under the National Resources Mobilisation Act. He formerly enlisted 12 December in Fredericton, New Brunswick and was assigned to the No.70, Canadian Army Training Centre.

At his medical examination he was said to be 5ft 10ins tall, weighing 145lbs, with a fair complexion and blue eyes; he was graded A1 health-wise. After spending a month training in Fredericton he was sent to Elkins Barracks in Halifax, Nova Scotia for a three month's anti-aircraft gunners course. At this point Wilson applied for permission to marry his fiancée whom he had met sixteen months earlier.

Bessie Belle Mullin was a Scots girl, born 31 December, 1924, living in Sevole, New Brunswick. Their daughter, Edna Margaret was born in February, 1944.

Stationed in Windsor NS for a month, Wilson was then sent to Halifax and embarked for the Atlantic crossing to England 10 June 1943. There he was assigned as Rifleman to the Regina Rifle Regiment whose members were often referred to as the Farmer Johns in the second world war. This regiment was scheduled to take part in the coming invasion of Europe and spent the next year training for it. In November of that year Wilson became an NCO, an acting Lance Corporal . On D day, 6 June 1944, in rough weather, facing stiff enemy opposition, he took part in the landings on Juno beach; by evening the small seaside town, Courseulles had been captured.

During the next weeks the regiment remained in the same area, fighting round the city of Caen. A month later on 9 July, during Operation Charnwood, Wilson was wounded twice, seriously enough to be sent back to England, where he remained for the best part of the next four months. By the time he returned at the end of October, having been promoted to acting Corporal, his regiment had been taking part in the Battle of the Scheldt and the Breskens Pocket, in the heaviest fighting since D day.

*May 1943, Wilson on the left and a comrade.*



The Germans surrendered 2 November and the Regina Rifles went back to Ghent in Belgium for a few days well-earned rest.

After three days in Schelderode, the regiment moved to the Nijmegen region in the Netherlands on 11 November, a journey that took them some fifteen hours. Accommodated first in an empty old people's home in Nijmegen, they moved to various sites in the Groesbeek area until the end of January, 1945.

Meanwhile Wilson's rank as a full Corporal was confirmed. As winter approached, the main task of the regiment was one of reconnaissance and sorties to ascertain the strength of the enemy forces and their exact whereabouts. Weather conditions were hard; the river level was high and frequent rain meant that low lying land was flooded, sometimes to depths of three feet, making movement difficult and the use of amphibious vehicles essential. There was however time for further training and also for entertainment although living conditions were often uncomfortable with, for example, lodgings in ruined houses without electricity. In December the diary recorded the general situation as static, a different kind of warfare from that after D day, not as strenuous but a strain on the nerves. By early February forces were on high alert; Operation Veritable had been planned to start 8 February with the intention of clearing the German army from the area between the rivers Maas and Rhine and occupying the whole west bank of the Rhine. The Regina Rifle Regiment crossed into Germany near Kleve and remained on hold for the first week of the operation, during the initial barrage. On 15 February they moved south, some in vehicles, some marching, to the Kalkar area and Moyland Wood. Here the Farmer Johns were embroiled in a fierce three day battle beginning 16 February, 1945; they were trying to clear German paratroops from the surroundings. On that day the war diary reads: ' A Coy and C Coy are encountering considerable opposition for enemy is in the woods. Seem to be large numbers of enemy there despite fact that posts of enemy had been previously cleared by British units. B Coy moves up at 16.30 hrs but encounter enemy in woods North East of road approx Map Reference MR 9585.

In the afternoon of 16 February Wilson Loggie Wilson was first posted as missing and soon after reported killed in action. He was interred in the cemetery of Bedburg Hau; in September 1945 his body was transferred to the Canadian Military Cemetery, Groesbeek, plot **XI. G. 16.**

## AWARDS

1939 -45 France and Germany Star

Defence War Medal: Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp

In September 1949, Wilson's widow, Bessie Belle wrote to the authorities asking them to send the war medals he had earned as she wished to give them as a souvenir to their crippled daughter, Edna Margaret. Sadly the little girl died in January 1950, not quite six years old.

12th March, 1945.

Mrs. Bessie B. Parker,  
Millerton,  
R.R. #1, N.B.

Dear Mrs. Parker:

It was with deep regret that I learned of the death of your husband, G60786 Corporal Wilson Loggie Parker, who gave his life in the Service of his Country in the Western European Theatre of War on the 16th day of February, 1945.

From official information we have received, your husband was killed in action against the enemy. You may be assured that any additional information received will be communicated to you without delay.

The Minister of National Defence and the Members of the Army Council have asked me to express to you and your family their sincere sympathy in your bereavement.

We pay tribute to the sacrifice he so bravely made.

Yours sincerely,

A. E. WALFORD  
Major-General  
Adjutant-General

MAR 10 1945  
(A.E. Walford),  
Major-General,  
Adjutant-General.

*Widow's  
mother  
15.3.45*

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## **FACES TO GRAVES**

*Stichting Faces to Canadian  
War Graves Groesbeek*

Life story by Gwyn de Jong, Research Team Faces To Graves

Source:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
Library and Archives Canada  
Loggie's cousin Glen Parker  
Information Gary Silliker