

**Roach, Patrick Daniel**

**Private**

**North Shore (New Brunswick)  
Regiment**

**Royal Canadian Infantry Corps**

**F89877**



Patrick Daniel Roach was born August 21, 1924, in Reserve Mines, Cape Breton Co. NS the son of Joseph Roach and Lucy Ann Chaisson. Joseph worked in the local coal mines that had been active since 1860. Joseph was also a Veteran's Guard, a Canadian home defense force composed primarily of WWI veterans. Patrick had four brothers John, Russell, Aloysius and Stanley, and four sisters Mary, Annis, Bernice and Manie. Stanley passed away at a young age. Patrick enjoyed hockey, baseball, swimming and skating. He enjoyed reading detective stories, going to movies and dances, and playing cards and pool. His ancestors were French Canadian and his religion was stated as Catholic

Patrick left school at age fourteen after completing grade seven. Records show that he worked for two and a half years as a blacksmith's assistant in a steel mill and also spent time in a wireless operator apprenticeship program. He also worked as a freight porter for CN Rail in Sydney.

In 1941 Patrick enlisted at Glace Bay in the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM). This militia was composed of volunteer soldiers who trained on weeknights, weekends and in summer camps. They were paid and could be called upon for home defense. In September of that same year, Patrick enlisted in Sydney with the Canadian Army for active duty wherever he was needed. He altered his birthdate to August 21, 1922, indicating that he was nineteen when in fact he was actually seventeen. He was accepted and began training at the No. 6 District Depot in Halifax.

Over the next few months, Patrick's father was hurt while working in the mines and was now unemployed. On March 6, 1942, his mother Lucy wrote a letter to a commanding officer informing him that her son was only seventeen. She included his birth certificate and requested that Patrick be returned home to help with the other seven children. Patrick was discharged May 21st for being underage.

On January 11, 1944, Patrick re-enlisted with the Canadian Army in Halifax and was placed in the Canadian Army Basic Training Centre (CABTC) Camp 60 in Yarmouth. In late March he was transferred to the Canadian Infantry Training Centre (CITC) Camp A14 in Aldershot NS.

The following June Patrick was sent overseas, arriving in the UK on June 24th. He was placed with the Canadian Signals Reinforcement Unit (CSRU) and trained with this unit through the summer months. On October 1st Patrick was transferred across the channel to France and on Oct. 10th, placed with the North Shore (NB) Regiment.

The Canadians had just begun the brutal and deadly month-long Battle of the Scheldt. Their task was to clear all German defenses along the 50-mile estuary of the Scheldt River leading inland to the recently captured port of Antwerp. As part of Operation Switchback, The NSR with the Canadian 3rd Division was assigned the capture of an area known as Breskens Pocket on the south bank of the Scheldt, north of the Leopold Canal. Breskens Pocket was captured by Nov. 1st and the entire Scheldt estuary by Nov. 8th. Wikipedia records that the Canadians suffered 6,367 casualties (killed, wounded or missing) completing their task.

In November the regiment moved to Nijmegen, the Netherlands to prepare for the spring offensives.

In January 1945, in preparation for the push into Germany, the Nijmegen area of Netherlands became wildly busy. It resembled England before D-Day with the buildup of troops and tons of supplies. Before launching the offensive, however, Allied headquarters wanted to know exactly where the German army was, its strength and its plans. As a result, there was a constant demand for more information and German prisoners to interrogate. The North Shore, like all regiments, made regular dangerous patrols into enemy territory to obtain both. Lt. Col. Rowley ordered one such patrol, on January 8th at 4 pm, in broad daylight. The target was a nearby enemy trench near Wyler Germany, on the Dutch-German border.

D company under Major Corbett led flame throwing WASPS, and a carrier platoon under Sergeant Horace Boulay, and charged across the snow-covered, mined, terrain wearing white snowsuits. The Germans were caught by surprise but they reacted swiftly with heavy fire. One of the WASPS was destroyed by a mine, another was hit by a German shell and

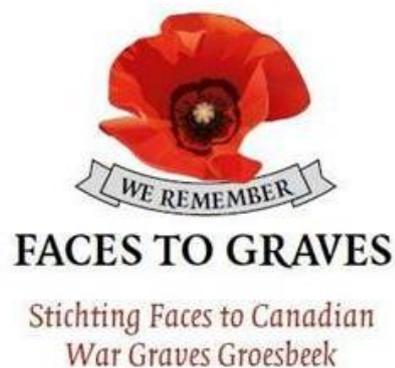
a troop carrier lost one of its tracks, but D company kept advancing. Sergeant Boulay leapt from the carrier and charged straight into a German dugout. Three shocked Germans immediately surrendered and were pushed into the carrier that sped back to the North Shore line. The mission was accomplished and it was all over in twenty minutes, but the cost was high. Nine North Shore soldiers were killed and eight wounded.

One of the fatal casualties of the Raid on Wyler Meer on January 8, 1945, was Private Patrick Daniel Roach. He was 20 years of age.

For his service to Canada Private Patrick Daniel Roach was awarded the following medals; 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, War Medal 1939-45 and CVSM with Clasp. Patrick Daniel Roach is Buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery in the Netherlands, Plot **I. D. 15.**

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Biography by Bruce Morton, [brucehmorton@gmail.com](mailto:brucehmorton@gmail.com)



Biography made available for Faces To Graves, with courtesy of Bruce Morton.

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Mar. 6. 1942

Dear Sir:

Just one word or two to let you know that my son that is in the Army he is not of age he will be only 18 in August. Next and my husband got hurt in the mines and I have 7 children besides him and I got a job for him here that will give me more help than in the Army. I want him home just as soon as he can get his discharge. please try and get him home as soon as possible enclosed you will find his birth certificate. His address is as follows:-

F89877

Commanding Officer  
E Battery  
C.A.T.C. A one

Petawawa Camp  
Ont.

Gunn. Patrick D. Roach  
R.C.A. Unit L 29  
Petawawa Camp  
Petawawa  
Ont.

(over)

Yours Truly  
Mrs Joseph Roach.

address:

Mrs Joseph Roach  
P.O. Box 114  
Reserve Mines  
C.B.

# DIVISION REGISTRAR'S Certificate of Birth.

This certificate, authorized under Section 14 of "The Vital Statistics Act" shall only be given by Division Registrars for a birth not included in the previous Monthly Return made to the Deputy Registrar-General, and in any case shall be given only for a birth registered within the month preceding the issue of this certificate.

Name of Person Born.....	Roach Patrick Denis
Sex.....	male
Date and place of Birth.....	August 21 <sup>st</sup> 1924, Reservoir
Name of Father.....	Joseph Roach
Maiden Name of Mother.....	Luey Ann Chausson
Residence of Father.....	Reservoir
Occupation of Father.....	miner
Place of Birth of Father.....	Chibougamou
and Race.....	French
Name of Attending Physician.....	C. J. Spencer, M.D.
Name and Address of Person making Return.....	Charles Mc Kenzie Reservoir, Division Registrar
Date of Return.....	July 9 <sup>th</sup> 1930

I, Charles Mc Kenzie, Division Registrar for Registration Division No. 24, in the County of Cape Breton, Province of Nova Scotia, hereby certify that the above particulars of the birth of Roach Patrick Denis are duly registered in my office at Reservoir in compliance with the "Vital Statistics Act," 1919, and are not included in any Monthly Return of births made to the Deputy Registrar-General.

Dated at Reservoir, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1930

Charles Mc Kenzie  
Division Registrar

