

LANCE BOMBARDIER L.G.H. RYDEN

872082 Lance Bombardier Lionel George Henry Ryden of the British 1st Airborne Division (Royal Artillery Airborne Division), under Major-General R E Urquhart, was killed on 20 September 1944 taking a direct hit during "Operation Market Garden" - the ill-fated Battle for Arnhem in the Netherlands (17-30 September, 1944) - when the elite of four armies met in battle. Here, the actions by the British are said to have been "unsurpassed for courage and self-sacrifice by any other during World War II". About one-third of the 34,876 men who fought between Eindhoven and Arnhem were lost during the battle.



Allied forces entered the Netherlands on 12 September 1944. Airborne operations later that month established a bridgehead at Nijmegen and in the following months, coastal areas and ports were cleared and secured, but it was not until the German initiated offensive in the Ardennes had been repulsed that the drive into Germany could begin.

Ryden is celebrated on panel 2 of the Groesbeek Memorial, Gelderland, Netherlands. Groesbeek is located 10 kilometres south east of the town of Nijmegen close to the German frontier. The Groesbeek Memorial stands in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery which is 3 kilometres north of the village and 1.5 kilometres east of the main road to Nijmegen.

Most of those buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery were Canadians, many of whom died in the Battle of the Rhineland, when the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions and the 4th Canadian Armoured Division took part in the drive southwards from Nijmegen to clear the territory between the Maas and the Rhine in February and March 1945. Others buried here died earlier or later in the southern part of the Netherlands and in the Rhineland. The cemetery contains 2,610 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, and nine war graves of other nationalities. The Groesbeek Memorial commemorates by name more than 1,000 members of the Commonwealth land forces who died during the campaign in north-west Europe between the time of crossing the Seine at the end of August 1944 and the end of the war in Europe, and whose graves are not known.

Ryden, born in October 1922, was the only son of George Henry and Shelagh May Ryden of Colwyn Bay, Denbighshire.

In December 1934, Scout Lionel Ryden of the 1st Colwyn Bay (St. Paul's) Group was awarded the Boy's Scout Association Silver Gallantry Cross by the Rev. A J Costain (County Scout Commissioner) on behalf of the Chief Scout. On the 15th October 1934 he had saved a boy aged 8, Richardson, from drowning off the pier in Colwyn Bay.



Lionel Ryden at the time of being awarded the Boy's Scout Association Silver Gallantry Cross

Later, Ryden was awarded posthumously the France and Germany 1944-45 Star; the Africa Star; the Italy Star; the Defence Medal; the War Medal 1939-45, all. His parents retained to their end the tribute letters of condolence from George VI, the Under-Secretary of State for War and the Borough of Colwyn Bay.

His numismatic possessions came on auction at Dix, Rosen & Webb in 1998.

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