



## Bordeleau, Joseph Aureli

C40009

Joseph was born on October 19, 1920 in Ottawa. He is a French-Canadian. His parents are Arthur and Alda, they married on January 1, 1920 in Ottawa. Father Arthur died in 1940. Joseph was the oldest child. He has 4 brothers: Roger, Lionel, Jean Bernard and Gerard. Roger and Lionel were probably twin brothers. He also has 2 sisters: Jeanine and Therese. His brother Roger serves in the Canadian Air Force and dies on 23-11-43 in a plane crash at L'Ancien Lorette, Lionel bivouacs at Camp Militair Val Cartier Quebec.

Joseph goes to the Lower School, the Guigues and Breboeuf Schools. He gets Grade 9. In 1937 he is a school leaver at the age of 16.

In his free time he likes dancing, pop music and reading. He also sports: swimming, bowling, badminton. He enjoys the soldier's life and would prefer to remain in the army for the rest of his active life.

Immediately after leaving school, Joseph enlists in the Governor General's Foot Guards. Given his age, he is probably part of the Non-Permanent Active Militia. On 26 May 1941, he states that he worked for Mr. Charrette, who had a transshipment company, as a labourer for 2 years from 1937 to 1939. It is also stated that he was a clerk.

On 3 September 1939, he enters active service in the Governor General's Foot Guards, an infantry regiment that is later converted into the 21 Canadian Armoured Regiment, a tank regiment. Joseph is then 1.80m tall and weighs 66 kg. He has brown eyes and brown hair. Joseph is described as a dark boy who is slightly underweight. With the exception of 3 weeks in February, Joseph remains with the Governor General's Foot Guards. From 3 September 1939 to 1 February 1940 he follows basic infantry training with the Governor General's Foot Guards. From 1 to 19 February 1940 he is a clerk with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. After that he returns to the infantry of the Governor General's Foot Guards for unit training.

The regiment is transformed into the 21st Canadian Armoured Regiment on 20 February 1942. Joseph follows various training courses. On 10 August he qualifies as a loader.

Joseph arrives on 7-10-42 with 21 CAR in England, as a loader with squadron 3, troop 1.

In England he follows tank training with the crew. He qualifies as a gunner and tank driver. His task remains loader.

On 22 July 1944 the regiment goes to France.

During Operation Suitcase, the 21st Canadian Armoured Regiment took part in the battle for Wouwse Plantage, among other things. Parts of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division (4 CAD, armoured division) advance from Essen to Bergen op Zoom, via Wouwse Plantage.

On 23 October at 11:00, the Superiors and 21st CAR take over the attack from the Argylls and the 22nd CAR. They are dealing with Kampfgruppe Dreyer, the left wing of Kampfgruppe Chill. The Canadians take the most direct route to Wouwse Plantage, the Mariabaan. Too bad for them, that is indeed the most logical choice but also exactly the place where Dreyer expected the attack. In a few minutes, the leading carrier of the Superiors and the first 3 tanks of 21 CAR are disabled by Sturmgeschütz, from an ambush. One tank after another from the rest of the squadron is hit. An anti-tank shell hits the rear tensioner of Smith's tank, the squadron leader, and the ball bearings spray in all directions. Arriving at a farm driveway, the command tanks turn into it and scatter between the buildings, which offer little cover. With German artillery systematically blasting the buildings, the farm is not a safe place.

Despite the incoming fire, Smith decides to stay there with the other two tanks of his staff while the rest of No. 1 Squadron continues on the road. At 15:30, all the tanks of the squadron are knocked out.

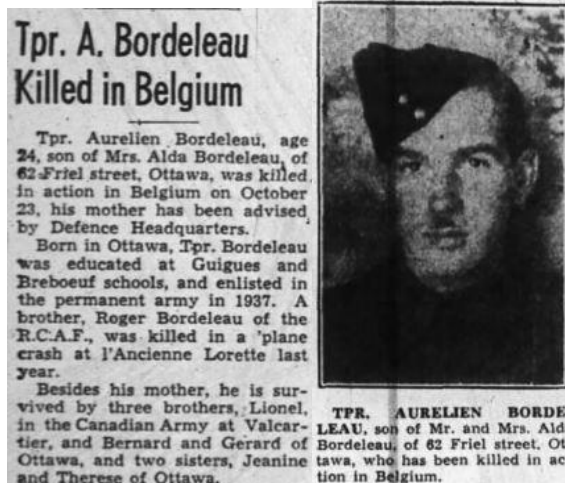
At the farm, Major Smith follows the developments, over his radio. Major Smith decides to attempt a breakout to help the infantry. As the tanks leave the farm, all three are hit by Sturmgeschütz. A shell pierces the gun turret of a Sherman and L/Corporal Lionel Lalonde and Private Joseph Bordeleau are both killed. A second salvo grazes the gun turret of Smith's tank, preventing the turret from turning. The captain's Sherman, who is in radio contact with regimental headquarters, is knocked out and L/Corporal Roland St. Amand dies in this tank. At 18:00, Smith withdraws his tank to

regimental headquarters. There the tank catches fire, difficult to extinguish.

Joseph is 24 years old. He is temporarily buried in Essen, at the Velodreef-Scherpheuvelstraat.

On April 27, 1945 he is reburied at the Canadian cemetery near Bergen op Zoom on plot 2, row B, grave 12.

Joseph Aureli Bordeleau was awarded the 1939-1945 Star, the French-German Star, the Defence Medal, the War Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.





Sources:

Terrible Victory – First Canadian Army and the Scheldt Estuary Campaign  
September 13- November 6 1944. Mark Zuehlke. Douglas&McIntyreLtd  
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<https://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2641495/bordeleau,-joseph-aurelien/>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/12724058/joseph-aurelien-bordeleau>

Autumn Gale / Herbststurm –Pantzergruppe Chill, schwere Heeres  
Panzerjäger Abteilung 559 and the German recovery in the autumn of  
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