

VETERAN OF THE WEEK 25

(10-16 October, 2022)

L104387 Private Melvin Olaf Bakken

Essex Scottish Regiment

2nd Canadian Division

Royal Canadian Infantry Corps

Second World War



L104387 Private Melvin Olaf Bakken of Bracken, Saskatchewan was born on the 20th of July 1922 in Bracken, Saskatchewan. He enlisted with the Essex Scottish Regiment and trained as a signalman. Pte. Bakken landed in Normandy on the 6th of July 1944 and saw active service during the Normandy campaign, specifically seeing action at Caen. On his twenty-second birthday (20 July 1944), Pte. Bakken was captured by the Germans and was taken Prisoner of War. While as a Prisoner of War he was forced to work in a coal mine in German occupied eastern Europe.

Towards the end of the war in order to escape the rapidly advancing Red Army of the Soviet Union the Germans forced the POWs in their care to march from the camps back towards Germany in what would become known as the Death March. Pte. Melvin Bakken was one of the many Canadian and allied soldiers to be on the Death March. He would eventually be liberated on the 24th of April 1945 in Roding, Bavaria, Germany. After the war Pte. Bakken returned to the family farm at Bracken. Pte. Melvin O. Bakken would pass away at the age of seventy-eight on the 12th of February 2001. This week we honour the service of L104387 Pte. Melvin Olaf Bakken of Bracken, Saskatchewan. Thank you for your service, Pte. Bakken.

Lest We Forget.