



Leslie Mons Wren

Rank: Corporal

Service No.: 5385916

Regiment: 2nd (Airborne) Bn.
Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry

Before Service:

Leslie was born on 8/12/1914 in Ramsgate, his parents were James & Susan Lavinia Wren. James had married Susan Lavinia Morgan at St. Georges Church, Blackheath in 1903. Sadly, Leslie's mother died in 1934.

The 1939 Register shows that Leslie was a Builder's Labourer, living at Longage Cottage, Rhodes Minnis, with his father James (born 4/3/1874) a Coal & Coke Dealer, Hilda E. (born 21/8/1895) Unpaid Domestic Duties and Christopher J. (born 30/8/1912) a General Carrier. Further research has shown that Leslie's wife was Elsie Bugden, born 10/2/1914 in Bethnal Green, Middlesex. The 1939 Register shows that Elsie was living at 9, Belper Street, Barnsbury, Islington, working as a Gown Machinist. Having married in 1942 it appears Leslie and Elsie may have had a son, Ernest Wren in early 1945.

During Service:

As part of Operation Deadstick just before the landings on D-Day on 6 June 1944, D Company, 2nd Ox and Bucks, commanded by Major John Howard as well as Royal Engineers and men of the Glider Pilot Regiment (a total of 181 men), were to land in six Horsa gliders to capture the vital structure which became known as Pegasus Bridge over the Caen Canal and the bridge over the Orne River which became known as Horsa Bridge and was east of Pegasus. Their capture was intended to secure the eastern flank to prevent German armour from reaching the British 3rd Infantry Division that was landing on Sword Beach.

The Ox and Bucks landed very close to their objectives at 16 minutes past midnight (the first Allied unit to land in France). The soldiers poured out of their battered gliders, completely surprising the German defenders, and taking the bridges within 10 minutes. The Ox and Bucks platoons holding the bridges were relieved by 7 Para at 03:00hrs. The Germans attempted to re-capture the bridges but were repulsed. Later in the day, at about 1:00pm, Lord Lovat and elements of his 1st Special Service Brigade arrived to relieve the exhausted defenders, followed by the British 3rd Infantry Division. The operation was immortalised in the film *The Longest Day*.

On 7 June the battalion captured the small village of Herouvillette and then headed south for the village of Escoville where it met some extremely determined resistance. On 13 June the battalion moved to Chateau St Come, approximately one mile south of Breville-Les-Monts, where it remained until 20 June when it moved to Le Mesnil.

Corporal Leslie Mons Wren was the 40th battalion casualty to be killed in action since D Day.

Died: 13th June 1944 Aged 29

The Commonwealth War Graves site shows that Leslie's wife Elsie Vera Wren, was living in Barnsbury, London.

Memorial: Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France. Grave Reference: IA.F.19 & Elham War Memorial

IN MEMORY OF A LOVING HUSBAND MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD. SADLY MISSED BY ALL

Elsie married Leslie's brother, Christopher John Wren in January of 1951.