

## Benny J. RYAN

Benny Ryan was born in Newcastle, N.B. in 1918 and joined the army at noon on the 15th of September, 1939, less than two weeks after Canada declared war. Between that date and leaving school, Benny had worked as a grocery clerk in Newcastle.

By early, 1940 Benny had completed his basic training in Petawawa and was sent off to England as part of the 5th Regiment, 2nd Division. As part of the early reinforcements of Britain, he was assigned to the south coast near Dover where a German Invasion might be expected. The defenders were poorly equipped, with little ammunition should an invasion have taken place. As Benny notes, "It's a good thing the Germans didn't come."



At the beginning of July, 1944 Benny took part in the Normandy Invasion, including the battles to take Caen and to close the "gap" at Falaise. He recalls that there was not much to see in the area -- except shell holes and a few trees which were shorn of all of their lower branches by gunfire.

Benny moved with the 2nd Division to Dunkirk, on to Dieppe and through to Antwerp finally spending the early winter of 1944 in the Nijmegen area of Holland.

In the spring of 1945, Benny was part of the invasion of Germany, crossing the Rhine River and moving on to Wilhelmshaven and back to Oldenburg. In July, 1945 he was shipped back to England and then on to Canada in August. He was discharged in Fredericton at noon on the 15th of September, 1945, almost precisely six years from the time he joined up.

Benny went back to the same store that he had worked at before the war --- only this time he took over the store as owner/manager for the next 15 years. He joined the Legion in Newcastle in 1945.

In 1943, Benny married June Pace in Chichester, England, their eldest son being born the day that Benny set sail for Normandy. They settled in Newcastle, New Brunswick after the war and after several moves, settled in Richmond, Ontario in 1969. Benny died on October 4, 1997 and June died on January 24, 1999. They were predeceased by their much loved son-in-law Charles (Chuck) Blanchard (April 10, 1989).



They are survived by their seven children, Tommy and his wife Lorraine, Gill and her husband Morley, Ann and her husband Sterling Ashe, Huntley and his wife Gayle, Carole, Sandie and Wendy; eight grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.