



Born in Montreal on January 12, 1920. Son of Evariste and Alice Bergeron. He was not the only child. Three brothers: Lucien, Lionel and René and three sisters: Laurette, Madeleine and Yvette completed the family, the moment that Jean Paul enlisted on the 12th of August 1941.

His father and mother had already lost two children at a young age.

The French speaking family was a follower of the Roman Catholic Church.

Jean Paul completed grade 6 in Montreal in 1937. In his spare time, he enjoyed bowling, dancing and reading. On occasion he went to the cinema.

His marks were: length: 5'4", weight: 116 lbs.

Hair: brown, eyes: maroon. Jean Paul stated that he was a "Messenger" before he enlisted.

His first encounter with the army was already in April 1941, based on NRMA 1940, (National Resources Mobilization Act 1940) and active in a Basic Training Centre. After his official enlisting he was transferred to A-12 Basis Army Training Centre in Farnham.

On the night of July 16 to 17, 1941, he gave himself a night off. He was AWL (Absent Without Leave), which cost him 1 day's pay.

In August 1941 Jean Paul was attached to "Les Voltigeurs de Québec".

In December 1941 he was granted 14 days furlough.

The next transfer was in January 1942, taken on strength by "Le Régiment de Hull".

Another entry in his service records reads he is admitted to the Dental Clinic in Colwood BC. He stayed there for quite a long time, from early October 1942 until February 11, 1943. Details of his stay: Complete upper denture; partial lower denture. Apparently quite an operation.

The year 1943 provides few details about his service. At least if we disregard the times, he was AWL.

But one line tells us that Jean Paul was on Kiska, an Aleutian Island, from 12 July, 1943 to 18 January, 1944.

To clarify:

"The Japanese had occupied the Aleutian Islands Attu and Kiska between June 1942 and July 1943. The reason: to protect the north flank of the Japanese Empire.

On August 15, 1943, the U.S. 7th Infantry Division, 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division and the 13th Canadian Infantry Brigade from the 6th Canadian Infantry Division, landed on opposite shores of Kiska. Canadian regiments landed included the Canadian Fusiliers; the Winnipeg Grenadiers; the Rocky Mountain Rangers; and the Saint John Fusiliers. The invasion also involved the first combat deployment of the First Special Service Force, an elite special forces unit consisting of American and Canadian commandos.

When the landings finally went ashore on August 15, 1943, after three weeks of bombardment by ships and aircraft, the troop found that the Japanese soldiers had slipped away.

Both U.S. and Canadian forces mistook each other, after a Canadian soldier shot at U.S. lines believing they were Japanese, and a friendly fire incident occurred, which left 28 Americans and 4 Canadians dead, with 50 wounded on either side. Progress was also hampered by mines, timed bombs, accidental ammunition detonations, vehicle accidents and booby traps that caused further casualties".

Back in Canada he was granted 30 days special leave. Apparently, Jean Paul needed more time. He reported to duty almost two days late. Price: 6 day's pay.

In May 1944 Jean Paul was transferred to the Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment.

Also, during New Year's Eve 1944/1945 Jean Paul had extended his leave on his own initiative. The price was rather high: 14 day's pay and 7 days Confined to Barracks.

In the 11th of January, 1945 he embarked for the United Kingdom and disembarked 6 days later, on the 17th.

Taken on strength by the 9th Canadian Infantry Training Regiment. (CITR)
Jean Paul was shifted back and forth between the 4th and the 9th CITR until early March 1945.

Jean Paul joined the Northwest Europe Theatre on the 2nd of March 1945 and was attached to Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal at a remarkable point of time: March 9, 1945.
To clarify:

The Rhineland Offensive.

In early March, the Canadians were assigned to take Xanten, established by the Romans in about 15 B.C. and the place from which the German 256th Infantry Division launched its 1940 invasion of the Netherlands.

It began with opening approaches to the town by Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal.

Resistance was stiff. On March 3, a direct hit took out the wireless radio set and operator in the lead company.

In a move that would earn him the Military Cross, the signals officer, Lieutenant Bernard Lafleur, lit out for the lead company, carrying a replacement wireless set. Under continuous observation, his movements brought down a hail of heavy artillery and mortar fire.

Undaunted, he reached the company, restoring communications "against seemingly unsurmountable odds (and making) a large contribution toward the success of the operation," reads his citation.

On 22 February, once clear of the Reichswald, and with the towns of Kleve and Goch in their control, the offensive was renewed as Operation Blockbuster to link up with the U.S. Ninth Army near Geldern on March 4, after "Operation Grenade". Fighting continued as the Germans sought to retain a bridgehead on the west bank of the Rhine at Wesel and evacuate as many men and as much equipment as possible.

During the night of 23rd and 24th of March, the Allies cross the Rhine at Wesel and Rees with amphibious vehicles. On March 24, another 16,000 paratroopers landed on the east side of the Rhine. The largest one-day airborne operation ever.

On March 29, the Rhine crossing is completed and the Rhineland is in Allied hands. The Rhineland offensive claims 25,000 Allied and over 60,000 German victims.

After the FMR's participation in the Rhineland Offensives, the regiment moved north. The border between Germany and the Netherlands was crossed.
Much resistance was encountered during the advance to Gendringen on March 31, 1945.

Germany MR 064618 Sheet P1	31 Mar 45	Weather good visibility good Battalion sweeps north again against stiffening resistance this time. Mortaring and shelling. The attack was supported by tanks. Gendringen was entered. MR 064647. Civilians were there as usual cheering like mad and becoming a nuisance with their grateful demonstration.
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The regiment of Jean Paul advanced fairly quickly.

On the 4th of April a strong fighting patrol (one company + carrier platoon + flame thrower section) tested the defenses on the outskirts of Zutphen.

The city was found strongly defended.

On the 7th of April 1945, the fateful day for Jean Paul, the regiment advanced to the Schipbeek Canal between Laren and Holten.

The carrier platoon patrol, along the south bank, engaged machinegun fire and artillery shelling. The enemy had dug in along the north bank.

Lieutenant P.H.Boutin was killed by a sniper.

On April 8, about 08.00 am, the infantry started crossing the Schipbeek Canal under machinegun fire and artillery shelling. The carrier platoon crossed on ferry and helped by securing the bridgehead.

Flamethrowers were used successfully.

Early afternoon the bridgehead was firmly established and the engineers started building a bridge.

The sad outcome of the Schipbeek crossing:

besides Lieutenant Boutin, there were five other victims including Jean Paul Bergeron.

He was buried temporarily at Lochem and reburied in Holten. Reference: 11-F-10.

He was awarded:

1939-1945 Star; France-Germany Star and the War Medal 1939-1945.

