

# Lieutenant James Martin

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, RCE

### Family Life

James was born to Eliza and William Martin on October 10, 1916, and raised in Bognor, Ontario. He attended Meaford District High School and after graduation studied to become a civil engineer at Queen's University. During this time, James married Irma Leonard, and the couple planned to remain in Kingston. James enlisted with the Royal Canadian Engineers in October of 1941. He was one of six siblings who served overseas in Canada's armed forces.



### Decorations

- 1939-1945 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp
- War Medal 1939-1945

### Military Service

Lieutenant Martin's unit landed in France on July 8, 1944, during the Battle of Normandy. The 23rd Field Regiment along with Second Canadian Corps closed the Falaise Gap in mid-August and swiftly made their way across France towards Belgium and the Netherlands. Operation Market Garden was an attempt by 1st Allied Airborne Army and 2nd British Army to punch a hole through the German defenses in Holland and make a crossing across the Nederrijn (Neder rin) River at Arnhem.

Unfortunately, even though the British and Polish paratroopers fought valiantly, their position deteriorated and they were ordered to retreat from Arnhem. Lieutenant Martin was killed in action on September 26, 1944, while leading a group of storm boats from 23rd Field Company across the Nederrijn attempting to rescue British and Polish paratroopers, who had been trapped during Operation Market Garden. He was later interred at Holten Canadian War Cemetery, the Netherlands.