

**Private Victor Edmond John Bolger**  
**Regimental Number: 851110**  
**3rd Battalion, Toronto Regiment, Canadian Infantry**

**born: 23 June 1898 – died: 4 March 1918**

Victor Edmond John Bolger was 18 years of age when he enlisted with the 176th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) in Hamilton, Ontario, on 10 March 1917.<sup>1</sup> At that time, Victor was residing on Taylor Street in Niagara Falls with his parents and listed his occupation as farmer. He was not part of the local militia and was 5 ft. 1½ inches tall, had blue eyes, light brown hair, a fair complexion and good teeth. He indicated that his mother, Mrs. Myrtle Bolger, was his next of kin and gave his religion as Church of England.<sup>2</sup>

Victor had been born in June 1898 in Medway, Kent, England,<sup>3</sup> and was one of four children born to Horace and Myrtle Bolger.<sup>4</sup> In researching this soldier it should be noted that Victor's mother is listed in the documentation with a number of different first names. On the parish register for Victor's christening in 1899 her name is given as Nellie Paul,<sup>5</sup> while Victor indicated her name as Myrtle in his CEF documents.<sup>6</sup> The marriage index for her and Victor's father, Horace shows her name as Ellen Victoria Paul<sup>7</sup> but her tombstone lists her given name as Myrtle Annie.<sup>8</sup> On her daughter Jessie's marriage certificates she is listed as Ellen Paul<sup>9</sup> but in the 1921 Census of Canada her name is given as Annie, wife of Horace John Bolger.<sup>10</sup> In July 1921 she is shown on a passenger list as Myrtle Bolger, travelling with Horace Bolger.<sup>11</sup>

The Bolger family was from Medway, Kent. Myrtle/Ellen Paul and Horace John Bolger married in 1899 and Victor was their first child. The family then had twin children, Jessica May and Horace George, born in the fall of 1901.<sup>12</sup> Horace Jr. lived until 1903, when he died at 2 years of age.<sup>13</sup> Victor's sister, Jessie, survived and later in that same year the fourth and final member of the family, Frederick William, was born.<sup>14</sup>

Victor's father, Horace, worked as a labourer in the ship yard in Chatham, Kent and later became a boiler cleaner.<sup>15</sup> In the fall of 1912 the family left England to settle in Canada. The passenger list shows Horace's occupation as engineer's labourer.<sup>16</sup> The family established themselves in Niagara Falls, where Victor's parents lived for the remainder of their lives.<sup>17</sup>

Just over a month after his enlistment, Victor shipped out of Halifax on the SS *Olympic*, arriving in Liverpool on 7 May 1917.<sup>18</sup> On arrival, Victor was assigned to the 12th Reserve Battalion and stationed at S.W. Handling, where he remained in training until transferring to the Front, in France, with the 3rd Battalion in October 1917.<sup>19</sup> The 3rd Battalion was stationed at Haillicourt, Pas-de-Calais, France, when Victor arrived. Toward the middle of the month they moved to Flanders in Belgium, where they participated in the 3rd Battle of Ypres and the second battle of Passchendaele.<sup>20</sup>

In January of 1918 they supported the allies at St. Emile and then at Hill 70. They were there on 3 March 1918 when Victor was wounded.<sup>21</sup>

It was a Sunday night and word had been received that their company would not be relieved for another two or three days. This meant that they would have been ten days in the line, which made for a long tour. There was heavy strife on the Company's left front and seven men in Victor's

company were listed as wounded.<sup>22</sup> Victor was one of them. Of the seven men wounded that day all but one succumbed to their injuries.<sup>23</sup>

Victor survived long enough to have been admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 4 March 1918. He suffered from shrapnel wounds causing compound fractures to his left thigh, lower left leg and left forearm and died later that day.<sup>24</sup>

He was buried at the Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension, 2½ miles southwest of Noeux-les-Mines, France. He is buried in Plot 2, Row E, Grave 3.

Barlin is a village southwest of Bethune between the Bethune–Arras and Bethune–St. Pol roads. The Communal Cemetery and Extension lies to the north of the village on the road to Houchin.

The extension was begun by French troops in October 1914 and when they moved south in March 1916, it was used for burials by the 6th Casualty Clearing Station, largely for Commonwealth casualties. In November 1917, Barlin began to be shelled and the hospital was moved back to Ruitz. The extension was used again in March and April 1918 during the German advance on this front. It was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and contains 1095 Commonwealth, 63 French and 13 German burials from the First World War.<sup>25</sup>

Victor's parents received a scroll and plaque recognizing his sacrifice<sup>26</sup> and continued to live on Taylor Street in Niagara Falls. In the 1921 Census of Canada they were living at 271 Taylor, Welland, with their son Frederick.<sup>27</sup> Victor's sister, Jessie May, had married Percy George Fry and was also residing in Niagara Falls.<sup>28</sup> Victor's father, Horace, was working as a machinist at that time.

Later in 1921, both Horace and Myrtle travelled to England for a visit on the SS *Minnedosa*<sup>29</sup> but eventually returned to their home in Niagara Falls. Myrtle died in 1949 and Horace in 1953. They are buried at All Saints Cemetery in Niagara Falls, Ontario.<sup>30</sup>

Jessie married a second time to Peter Blundy and moved to the United States.<sup>31</sup> Victor's brother, Frederick William, does not appear to have married and was employed as a mill worker.<sup>32</sup> He travelled to England in 1956 on the *Empress of Britain*<sup>33</sup> and again in 1957 on the *Empress of France*<sup>34</sup> to visit family and friends for periods from three to six months respectively. No later records have been located for him.

© 2017 BIFHSGO

---

<sup>1</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>; accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 858-17, Item Number: 51288, Digitized service file: B0858-S017

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "England and Wales Civil Registration, Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 659

<sup>4</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Victor Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Registration district number: 47, Sub-registration district: Gillingham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Household schedule number: 418, Piece: 3936

- 
- <sup>5</sup> “England, Kent, Parish Registers, 1538–1911,” *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 24 November 2016), entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger, Event Type: Christening, GS Film Number: 001473665, Digital Folder Number: 004990955, Image Number: 09175
- <sup>6</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger
- <sup>7</sup> “England & Wales Marriages 1837–2008,” *Findmypast* ([www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Horace John Bolger, District: Medway, County: Kent, Volume: 2A, Page: 823
- <sup>8</sup> “Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s—Current,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace Bolger, Cemetery: All Saints Cemetery, Burial or Cremation Place: Niagara Falls, Ontario
- <sup>9</sup> “Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928, 1933–1934,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Jessica May Bolger, Marriage county or district: Niagara Falls
- <sup>10</sup> “1921 Census of Canada,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace Bolger, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Welland, District number: 138, Sub-district: Stamford (Township), Sub-district number: 18, City, town or village: Stamford
- <sup>11</sup> “UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace and Myrtle Bolger, Arrival Date: 17 July 1921
- <sup>12</sup> “England and Wales Civil Registration, Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 23 November 2016), entry for Jessica May Bolger and Horace George Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 674
- <sup>13</sup> “England and Wales Civil Registration, Death Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 25 November 2016), entry for Horace George Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 353
- <sup>14</sup> “England and Wales Civil Registration, Birth Index, 1837–1915,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Frederick William Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Inferred county: Kent, Volume: 2a, Page: 684
- <sup>15</sup> “1901 England Census,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Victor Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Sub-registration district: Rochester and Chatham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 39, Household schedule number: 141, Piece: 729, Folio: 42, Page: 25 & “1911 England Census,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Victor Bolger, Registration district: Medway, Registration district number: 47, Sub-registration district: Gillingham, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 7, Household schedule number: 418, Piece: 3936
- <sup>16</sup> “New York, Passenger Lists, 1820—1957,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Horace Bolger, Arrival date: 4 November 1912
- <sup>17</sup> “Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s—Current,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace Bolger, Cemetery: All Saints Cemetery, Burial or cremation place: Niagara Falls, Ontario
- <sup>18</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> “War Diaries of the First World War: 3rd Canadian Infantry Battalion 1917/06/01–1919/02/28,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G); accessed 25 November 2016)
- <sup>21</sup> “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9->

---

[52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G); accessed 25 November 2016)

<sup>22</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War: 3rd Canadian Infantry Battalion 1917/06/01–1919/02/28," *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G); accessed 25 November 2016)

<sup>23</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G); accessed 25 November 2016)

<sup>24</sup> "Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914–1948," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Victor Edmund John Bolger, Unit: 3rd Battalion

<sup>25</sup> "Commonwealth War Graves Commission" ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 25 July 2016), entry for Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension

<sup>26</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 30 August 2016) entry for Victor Edmond John Bolger

<sup>27</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace Bolger

<sup>28</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928, 1933–1934," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 30 August 2016), entry for Jessica May Bolger, Marriage county or district: Niagara Falls; and "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Mrs Percy Fry, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Welland, District number: 138, Sub-district: Niagara Falls (City), Sub-district number: 38, City, town or village: Niagara Falls

<sup>29</sup> "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1900," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace and Myrtle Bolger, Arrival date: 17 July 1921

<sup>30</sup> "Canada, Find A Grave Index, 1600s—Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Horace Bolger, Cemetery: All Saints Cemetery, Burial or cremation place: Niagara Falls, Ontario

<sup>31</sup> "New York, County Marriages, 1847–1848, 1908–1936," *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 24 November 2016), entry for Jessie Bolger, Event Place: Niagara, Event Date 11 June 1925 Falls

<sup>32</sup> "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Frederick William Bolger, Arrival date: 7 May 1956 & "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Frederick William Bolger, Arrival date: 20 December 1957

<sup>33</sup> "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Frederick William Bolger, Arrival date: 7 May 1956

<sup>34</sup> "UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 8 November 2016), entry for Frederick William Bolger, Arrival date: 20 December 1957