

MARTIN, Charlie

# Martin survived to tells us of Canada's role on D-Day

When Charlie Martin returned in 1989 to the scene of his company's attack on Juno Beach on D-Day, he vowed then and there to write a book about his memories of the fierce battle.

Five years later, in time for the 50th anniversary of the famous battle, Martin published *Battle Diary: From D-Day and Normandy to the Zuider Zee and VE*. The book was a critical success and received heavy praise as an accurate reflection of the tumult of war from Martin's many former colleagues who helped storm the beach early on D-Day.

Mississauga resident Martin, 79, died this week after a short illness.

*Battle Diary* chronicled Martin's battle experiences with the Queen's Own Rifles in Normandy, Holland and Germany.

The sergeant-major, who was wounded five times during the war, won the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal for his heroism. He told *The News* when his book was published, "I think the reason I wrote the book was to try and point out that these men were very brave and heroic."

"You had to see them carry their wounded comrades when they had been in a mine field or they had been machine gunned. This takes a lot of courage."

*Peel Bio. Oct. 15/97 MD*

Martin led his A-company of 125 as part of an 8:20 a.m. assault of 1,000 Canadian soldiers June 6, 1944.

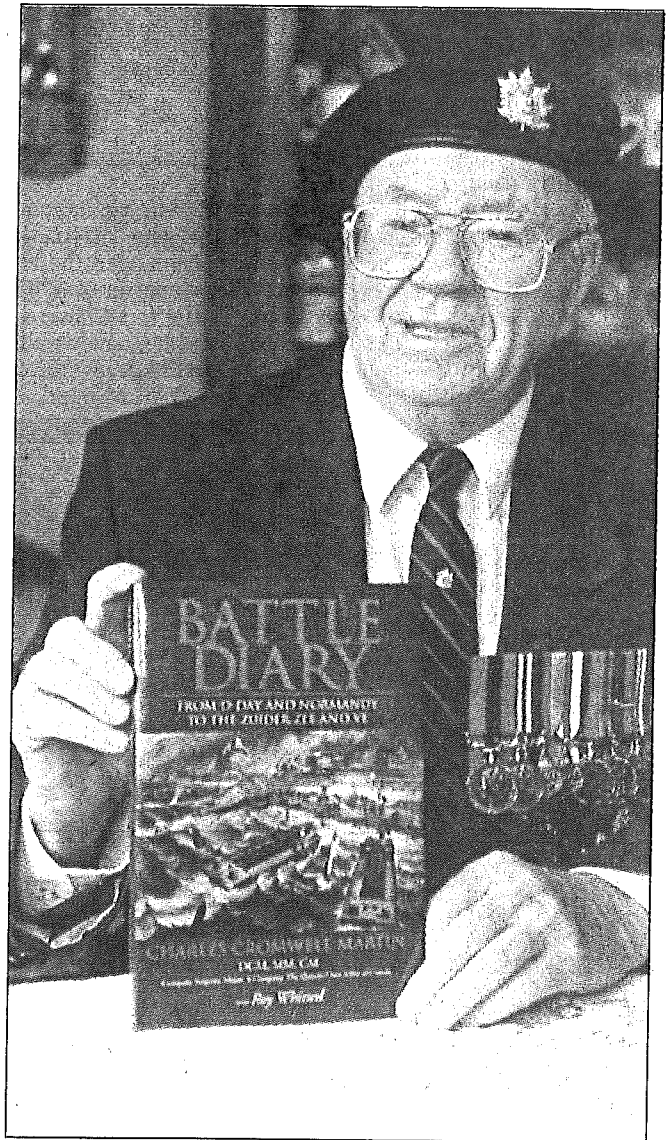
Martin himself was wounded immediately by the heavy machine gun fire which greeted the landing. It was a minor injury and Martin pressed on. About half the company was wounded or dead by time they reached a mine field. Martin cut the wire and guided about a dozen men into tall grass and out of the line of fire. By night they had secured their objective.

Although he indicated that preventing the war would have been the best solution, Martin commented that, "the price was not too high for our freedom. If these men hadn't fought and died, many of us would be in concentration camps or gas chambers or just plain dead."

Charles Cromwell Martin is survived by his wife of 54 years, Vi, and by children Stuart and Rick. He is also survived by six grandchildren, his three sisters and his brother.

Visitation is today from 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. at the Turner and Porter Peel Chapel at 2180 Hurontario St. A funeral service will be held tomorrow at 3 p.m. at the same location.

Donations to the Lung Association would be appreciated by the family.



Charlie Martin, seen here with his book, died this week after a short illness.