



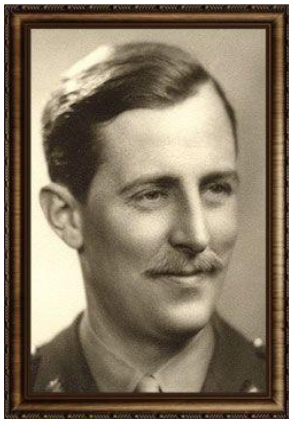
**Captain Raymond Harold Stevens**  
1st (Airborne) Forward Observer Unit  
Royal Artillery  
attached to HQ 156 Parachute Battalion



Compiled by  
Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) G. Pijpers OBE RNLAf



**Raymond Harold Stevens** was



the son of Captain Arthur Harold 'Dodie' Stevens M.C., and Clarinda Stevens, of Kingston Hill, Surrey.

He was educated at Stowe and Trinity College Cambridge and he joined the Territorials (Artists Rifles) after the Munich Crisis in 1939.



*Thursday 14 September 1939*

*Raymond and Edwin depart for Aldershot  
[Still from "In memory of" by Raymond and  
Colin Simonds]*

His initial army training took place at the Honourable Artillery Company, Finsbury Pavement, after a long day's work at Moyses Stevens, the family flower business in Victoria. In

January 1940 he passed out from the Officers Cadet Training Unit at Aldershot before being drafted to 225 Brigade and sent to France<sup>1</sup>.

He got his [emergency] commission<sup>2</sup> on 20 January 1940 in the Royal Regiment of Artillery and fought in the rear guard action from the Albert Canal to Dunkirk, defending the northern flank, until the final evacuation.



*Evacuation of Dunkirk*

The Brigade was reformed in Ireland and he was sent to Egypt with the 4th Royal Horse Artillery, 7th Armoured Division (Desert Rats). On May 25th 1942 he was wounded near El Alamein and evacuated to

<sup>1</sup> "The Story of the Bridge Street Brewery" by Raymond & Colin Simonds. Website <https://simondsfamily.me.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> The war department cancelled all normal 'commissions' (i.e. being made officially an Officer) at the start of WWII and then granted them only for the duration of the war.

Baragwanath Hospital, in Johannesburg, South Africa<sup>3</sup>.

Raymond returned to England weighing only 9 stone and having largely lost the use of his left leg from above the knee. Partly recovered, he was posted to 81/9 Medium Regiment, Southern Command in Felixstowe, Suffolk. He was promoted to Captain in December 1943<sup>4</sup>.



*Captain Raymond Harold Stevens, R.A.  
[Photo by Raymond and Colin Simonds]*

On his return to England he re-applied for active service and having somehow managed to pass fit, volunteered for the airborne forces. Captain Stevens then became a member of the 1st Forward Observer Unit (Airborne), Royal Artillery. His Radio Operator and Assistant were 946892 Gunner G. Buttriss and 876593 Gunner H. Hackett. Both men were on Parachute course 108<sup>5</sup>. Captain Stevens successfully completed his parachute training at RAF Ringway (now Manchester airport) on course number 111 from 10 to 17 April 1944. Stevens was attached to Headquarters Company of 156 Battalion, The Parachute Regiment<sup>6</sup>.

Stevens was an old friend of the Battalion, having been attached previously for their many cancelled operations. He was in an especially pensive mood because he had recently been informed that his younger brother Edwin had been killed in

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<sup>3</sup> "The Story of the Bridge Street Brewery" by Raymond & Colin Simonds. Website <https://simondsfamily.me.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> "The Story of the Bridge Street Brewery" by Raymond & Colin Simonds. Website <https://simondsfamily.me.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> Email from Sergeant (Retd) Robert 'Bob' Hilton, 2 PARA, 13 October 2020.

<sup>6</sup> ParaData website <https://www.paradata.org.uk/people/raymond-h-stevens>

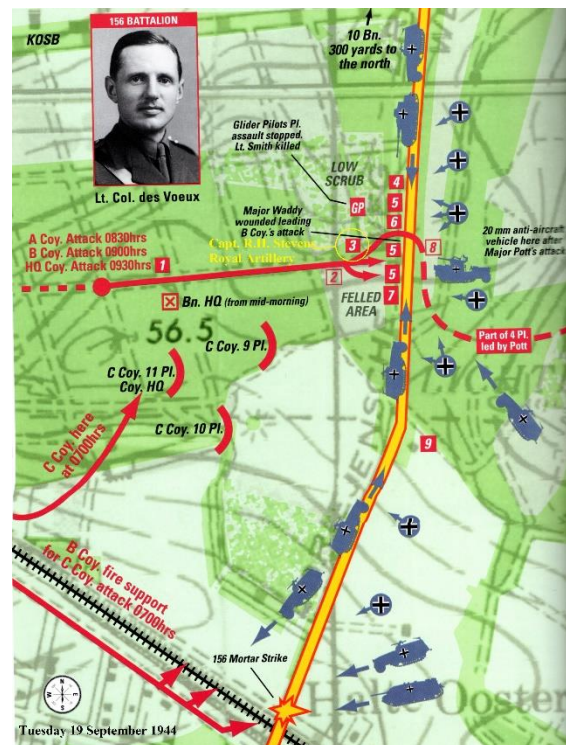
action<sup>7</sup>. He was quietly determined to seek retribution, if at all possible<sup>8</sup>.



*Captain Edwin Mackenzie Stevens, R.A.  
[Photo by Raymond and Colin Simonds]*

On Monday 18 September 1944 Stevens landed with the Battalion<sup>9</sup> on the assigned drop zone<sup>10</sup> and on the next day Captain Stevens was with Battalion Headquarters (Bn HQ) near the Johannahoeve, north of Oosterbeek. Stevens as the Forward Observation Officer was attempting to bring down

artillery fire on one particular tank. It moved before Captain Stevens was able to range onto his target. A hurried correction back to the battery brought down more shells, but again the tank moved position. A most frustrating time for the Forward Observation Officer<sup>11</sup>.



*Position '3' of Captain Stevens  
Tuesday 19 September 1944  
[From Delhi to Arnhem]*

On Wednesday 20 September the 156 Battalion had a hard day fighting through the Wolfheze

<sup>7</sup> Captain Edwin Mackenzie Stevens, 11 (Honourable Artillery Company) Royal Horse Artillery, killed in action 5<sup>th</sup> September 1944, buried in Gradara War Cemetery (Italy), grave 1.B.30.

<sup>8</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, pages 133-134.

<sup>9</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion went into to battle with 590 men.

<sup>10</sup> Ginkelse Heide, east of the village of Ede.

<sup>11</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 167

woods to Oosterbeek. During the day the situation deteriorated further<sup>12</sup>. At the end of the day the Battalion consisted of just three officers, Major Geoffrey Powell, Lieutenant Piers St Aubyn and Captain Raymond Stevens, together with about 50 men.



*Major G. Powell & Lieutenant P. St Aubyn*

They were formed into two platoons and were assigned to defend the north-east corner of the Perimeter. Major Powell led the men up the Stationsweg from the Oosterbeek crossroads and into the houses opposite the Dennenkamp Park. The platoon under Captain Stevens went into the houses of the Paul

Krugerstraat at the crossroads with Mariaweg<sup>13</sup>.

After dark, a jeep towing a trailer pulled up outside. Sent by HQ, it contained fresh supplies including a little more food in the form of Compo rations<sup>14</sup>, together with ammunition, grenades and some weapons. Stevens' platoon was made up to normal weapon strength<sup>15</sup>.

On Thursday 21st September weapons were oiled and made ready. The glass was hurriedly cleared from all windows in the house and barricades built using furniture. Captain Stevens' platoon was being attacked by the Germans at the crossroads on Paul Krugerstraat. Although out of sight, the Germans had infiltrated and were attacking Stevens' platoon<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 209.

<sup>13</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 208.

<sup>14</sup> A composition (Compo) ration is a crate containing food, tea, soap, toilet paper etc.

<sup>15</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 208.

<sup>16</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 211.

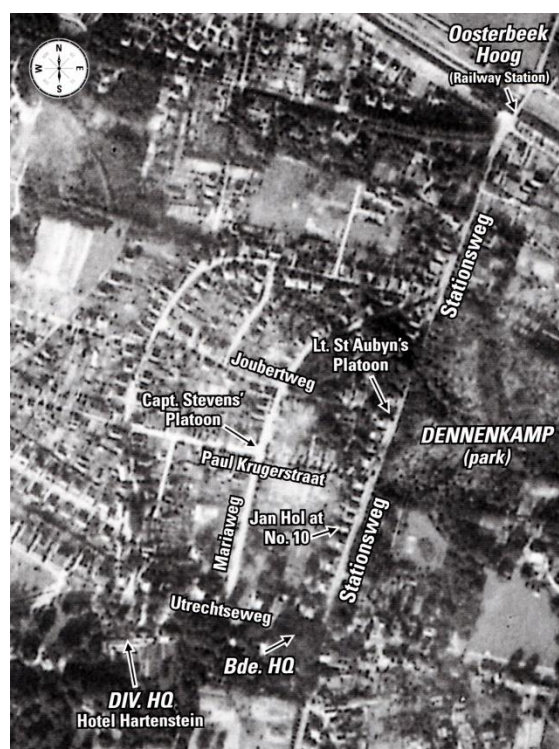


*Crossroads Mariaweg - Paul Krugerstraat.  
Captain Stevens' HQ house on the right*

On a certain moment Major Powell decided during a short lull that the wounded were to be brought into the Hartenstein hotel, which had become the Divisional Headquarters (Div HQ). He himself would supervise the removal of the wounded and request Div HQ that his men be allowed to pull back to the rest of the Battalion on the Paul Krugerstraat. His journey to Div HQ would take him via Captain Stevens' platoon. Powell was keen to evaluate their situation with Stevens. Major Powell left with six walking wounded, but very soon had to order his group to remain still as a party of ten Germans passed<sup>17</sup>.

Captain Stevens and his men were delighted to see Major Powell's party appearing into their house. Captain Stevens

told Powell that he had made strong-points out of a couple of houses. About seventy yards to the west Stevens had discovered a party of the Reconnaissance squadron. Major Powell felt that because of Stevens' charm of manner and determination, the Recce-group and Stevens' men



*Captain Stevens position  
Thursday 21-9-1944  
[From Delhi to Arnhem]*

had been working closely together. Powell felt that this young gunner (Captain Stevens) had done very well. It hardly

<sup>17</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 213.

seemed possible that most of his men hardly knew him by sight yesterday. Today he had welded the survivors of four different companies of a unit of another arm into a tight entity, well capable of carrying on the fight. All day they had held firm, killing and wounding quite a lot of the enemy, but losing only one man themselves, a corporal of 'A' Company whose hand had been blown half off by a flying mortar splinter. Although Stevens' face was lined, filthy, red-eyed and his chin stained with three days' growth of fair, fuzzy down, Stevens still moved briskly, a reminder to all of us that we could still keep going<sup>18</sup>.



*Overhanging chestnut tree (r) in front of Captain Stevens' HQ*

After the update from Captain Stevens, Major Powell continued on to the Hartenstein Hotel with the wounded men<sup>19</sup>.

During darkness Lieutenant St Aubyn's platoon took up positions in three houses east of Captain Stevens' position. Everyone's thoughts now switched to food and foraging parties searched the surrounding areas. A local shopkeeper had turned up and showed Stevens the whereabouts of a jeep loaded with Compo rations and several thousand rounds of .303 rifle ammunition. Everyone was able to eat something, if only a small amount<sup>20</sup>.

Captain Stevens, with his platoon of 156 Battalion men, had occupied a house as his headquarters. This was opposite the bakery (the Crum family) on the north-east corner of Mariaweg and Paul Krugerstraat. It was a large house, with an overhanging chestnut tree in the front

<sup>18</sup> "Men at Arnhem", Geoffrey Powell, 1998, pages 148-149.

<sup>19</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 213.

<sup>20</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 214.

garden. Captain Stevens also sent a section to defend houses to the west of the Paul Krugerstraat and placed some of his men in the house next door on Mariaweg. Captain Stevens and his men had seen significant action during Thursday 21 September as German infantry made repeated attacks on the crossroads from the north. Much of the fighting had been at close quarters, causing several casualties among the 156 men<sup>21</sup>.



*German self-propelled gun in the streets of Oosterbeek*

At first light on Friday 22nd September the normal dawn chorus of birdsong was broken by the horrible and frightening whine of mortar bombs.

German snipers were busy again, but at some distance and were not causing too many problems. A self-propelled gun<sup>22</sup> was approaching, the clatter of its caterpillar tracks on the narrow road clearly audible. It opened fire, punching several holes into nearby houses, before pulling back<sup>23</sup>.

At dawn of Saturday 23rd September the throaty sound of vehicle engines alerted the men that something was afoot. This was heavy armour moving in from the outskirts of Oosterbeek. The first salvo's exploded north of Stevens' area and the next salvo's came right in. The barrage was so intense that each salvo of explosions overlapped with the next. Even more weapons joined in, wreaking havoc across the whole length of Paul Krugerstraat and in the gardens and houses beyond. Although the explosions had caused some casualties, the bulk of the 156

<sup>21</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 220.

<sup>22</sup> Self-propelled guns are mounted on a motorized wheeled or tracked chassis and are combat support weapons.

<sup>23</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 220.

men in the area readied themselves<sup>24</sup>.

The bombardment ended quite suddenly, rather as it had started<sup>25</sup>. In the quiet that pervaded, Major Powell took the opportunity to visit his men and recorded the following: "Two men had been killed and another three wounded in Stevens' platoon. All of them crushed by the side of a house which had collapsed under a direct hit from a shell"<sup>26</sup>.

Around midday the German mortars started again, joined by machine-gun fire. This time a tank supported them. The clattering tracks marked its noisy approach. Seemingly out of place in the narrow street, the tank opened fire, hitting the corner of one of the houses at the crossroads and reducing it into rubble. The second shot took off part of a roof. Whilst Captain Stevens' Bren gunners kept the German infantry's

heads down, Company Quartermaster Sergeant Tony Thomas worked his way around to the side of the tank and disabled it with a shot from a PIAT<sup>27</sup>. As the tank ground to a halt, Thomas took off with as much speed as he could muster<sup>28</sup>.



*Company Quartermaster Sergeant  
Tony Thomas  
[‘From Delhi to Arnhem’]*

In the afternoon Major Powell ordered them to get out of the houses and dig deep slit trenches on the south of Paul Krugerstraat and west of the Mariaweg. Powell also decided

<sup>24</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 232.

<sup>25</sup> "Men at Arnhem", Geoffrey Powell, 1998, page 164.

<sup>26</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 233.

<sup>27</sup> Projector Infantry Anti-Tank (PIAT) was a British man-portable anti-tank weapon developed during the Second World War.

<sup>28</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 234.

to take the initiative and counter attack now that the tanks appeared to have moved off<sup>29</sup>.

The tanks had gone and as yet the Germans did not appear to have occupied the houses. Lying out there in the rear gardens, overlooked from the windows, Powell found they were vulnerable. Soon the mortaring would start again. Then it would be safer back in the ruined buildings. As Captain Stevens listened to the instructions, the young captain's manner was as relaxed as ever. Calm and outwardly self-confident, Stevens somehow managed to give the impression that he was almost enjoying the morning's work. Possibly he was making the point, subconsciously perhaps, that a gunner could always take charge of thirty infantrymen, but there were undoubtedly immense reserves of strength hidden behind that cool exterior. As Stevens lay behind the bed of half-dead pea plants, scanning the houses for any sign of German occupants,

there was no trace of disquiet in his voice as he discussed his orders to counter-attack and clear the street of the enemy<sup>30</sup>.

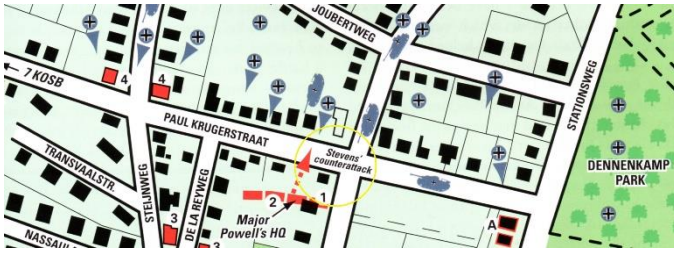
Stevens led his men forward. They filtered through the gardens until they reached the road. Before moving off Stevens had arranged covering fire by three of his Bren-gun teams on the left and one on the right. Stevens, out in front of his men, bent forward as he crossed the road, which was swept by a considerable amount of enemy fire. Just then two more German machine guns opened up from a much closer proximity, supported by rifles. Stevens was hit several times in the chest and fell to the ground. His men scattered, diving for cover as a shower of bullets bounced off the road and homes nearby. The road was a death trap. Stevens' second-in-command pulled his

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<sup>29</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 238.

<sup>30</sup> "Men at Arnhem", Geoffrey Powell, 1998, pages 170-171.

men back and reported the loss of his officer to Major Powell<sup>31</sup>.



*Counter attack by Captain Stevens  
and his men  
[‘From Delhi to Arnhem’]*

‘A’ Troop, under command of Lieutenant John Stevenson of the Reconnaissance Squadron, was still at this time in the house west of the bakery of the Crums’ family. Realising time was short, they carried out a rapid withdrawal. First to the gardens on the south side of Paul Krugerstraat, then west across the gardens under heavy enemy fire, finishing up on 13 De la Reijweg<sup>32</sup>.

Recalling their escape from ‘A’ Troop’s house, Sergeant Maurice Riches (Reconnaissance Squadron) described an incident that occurred en route.



*Lieutenant John Stevenson, OC No.1  
Section, Reconnaissance Squadron  
[‘Freddie Gough’s Specials at Arnhem’]*

“Whilst Lieutenant Stevenson and I ran along the street with enemy fire coming at us, we saw an officer from another unit go down.” The officer was Captain Stevens leading his platoon of 156 men. Riches continued: “We took up fresh positions in the next street (13 De la Reijweg; GP) and it was later in the night that this officer knocked on the door. We opened it and he fell in<sup>33</sup>.” First Captain Stevens was put into a box-bed<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion “From Delhi to Arnhem”, John O’Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 239.

<sup>32</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion “From Delhi to Arnhem”, John O’Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 239.

<sup>33</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion “From Delhi to Arnhem”, John O’Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 240.

<sup>34</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen, granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg; 17 October 2020.

Lieutenant St Aubyn was some distance away at the time of the counter attack by Captain Stevens and his men. “I remember”, said St Aubyn, “my reaction as Major Powell told me that Stevens had been killed. I asked how it had happened and the reply astounded me. I wondered why we had made an attack at this stage of the battle, when we had no idea how many Germans were on the other side of those houses. Conscious of others around, I made no comment at the time.”

In the heat of the battle, a decision had been taken. Did Stevens’ counter attack affect the German advance? The Germans certainly stopped pressing forward beyond where he had made the attack, giving the 156 men valuable time to recover. But still Major Powell was critical of himself. “I should not have done it. The counter attack should never have been attempted. The men were no longer capable of making such an effort<sup>35</sup>.”



Mr and Mrs Valkenburg. On the right is the box bed with the glass windows  
[Photo by Trudi Backelandt-Rusch]

Not long after midnight on Sunday 24 September Major Powell was informed by one of Captain Stevens’ men that Stevens had somehow survived being shot. He was alive but only just. Major Powell went immediately to see Stevens, who had managed to drag himself to safety and was now in the house of the Dutch family of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg at 13 De la Reijweg<sup>36</sup>.

A frightened middle-aged Dutchman answered their knock at the door. The relief of the man’s face was pathetic to see when he recognized us as British. He well knew what the penalty would be for himself

<sup>35</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion “From Delhi to Arnhem”, John O’Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 240.

<sup>36</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion “From Delhi to Arnhem”, John O’Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 244.

and his family if the Germans were to find him harbouring a British parachutist. As the Dutchman led us into the house, we passed the top of the steps leading down to the cellar. At the bottom a flickering candle lit the faces of four children, all huddled together under a quilt, gazing up at the 'intruders' with terrified eyes. The man took us upstairs to the front bedroom. Propped up in the middle of the bed lay Captain Stevens, fully clothed, his filthy shirt ripped open to show the blood-stained bandages wrapped around his chest. Beside him sat a woman, holding Stevens' right hand between both of hers. Captain Stevens was unconscious, his sweat-covered face the colour of old putty and he breathed in great rasping gasps. The Dutchman explained that the British officer had been shot more than once through the chest, but it was beyond the scope of his English to explain how Stevens had come to them. For a couple of minutes Major Powell and the men who were with him stood in silence,

listening to Stevens' terrible efforts to draw breath into his shattered lungs. There was nothing anyone could do for him. As Major Powell turned to go, motioning the others to follow, he reached for Stevens' free hand to squeeze it. When Major Powell was back at his own trench he phoned to Brigadier Hacketts' headquarters asking for a jeep to be found to collect Captain Stevens and take him to the dressing station. They could not get Captain Stevens' body back themselves. There were no stretchers left and even if there had been it was doubtful whether anyone had the strength left to carry Stevens all the way at this time of the battle<sup>37</sup>.



*Riekie Valkenburg*  
[Photo by Trudi Backelandt-Rush]

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<sup>37</sup> "Men at Arnhem", Geoffrey Powell, 1998, pages 176-177.

After Major Powell had left, Lieutenant Stevenson carried Stevens down to the cellar and administered morphine. “He was obviously in dreadful pain”, recalled Stevenson, “with a fracture in one of his arms that was so bad the bone was sticking right out. I remember that the cellar was full of Dutch people and Captain Stevens in one corner. From the look of him, I had a feeling that his deteriorating condition was not simply due to his arm, so I undid his battledress trousers and found all his intestines out in a lump.



*Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and four of their daughters. L-R: Mien, An, Co and Zus  
[Photo by Trudi Backelandt-Rusch]*

I remember that one of the Dutch people said some prayers

<sup>38</sup> “Remember Arnhem” by John Fairley, 1978, page 169.

<sup>39</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen, granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 14 October 2020.

as Stevens lay there and he said something to me about a cricket ground. I had to leave him at that point and the Dutch people said they would look after him as best as they could<sup>38</sup>.” When Captain Stevens was brought into the cellar by Lieutenant Stevenson, Riekie, the youngest daughter of the Dutch Valkenburg family, took it upon herself to take care of Captain Stevens when Lieutenant Stevenson had to leave<sup>39</sup>. Riekie had been a nurse at the hospital in Hoorn, in the north-west of Holland. Due to the threat of famine, she had returned to her parents in Oosterbeek<sup>40</sup>.



*Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and three of their youngest daughters (Co, Zus and Riekie) in their back garden of 13 De la Reijweg.  
[Photo by Trudi Backelandt-Rusch]*

<sup>40</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 15 October 2020.

Many other 'Valkenburg' family members from Oosterbeek had sought refuge in the basement of the Valkenburg family. One of them was Simon Rusch, a grandson of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg. Simon had fled with his parents to 13 De la Reijweg. He still remembers what his grandpa told about Captain Stevens after the war. For example, he tells that after Stevens had died in the basement, grandpa (Mr Valkenburg) and aunt Riekie carried Stevens upstairs and put him outside on the back lawn in their garden.<sup>41</sup>

On Monday 26 September the Germans came into the house at



<sup>41</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 14 October 2020.

13 De la Reijweg and all were ordered to leave. Simon recalled: "They saw the body of Captain Stevens and confiscated all his belongings. Fortunately, aunt Riekie had already taken all his personal belongings out of his pockets before she and her father brought out Captain Stevens<sup>42</sup>."

Captain Stevens was initially buried by the Dutch Red Cross in the grounds of the Hemeldal Sanatorium, near 6 Oranjeweg on 2nd October, then in the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery at grave 29.A.2 on 13th August 1945<sup>43</sup>.



*Grave of Captain R.H. Stevens at the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery*

What exactly happened to Captain Stevens's remains from the moment he was laid out on

<sup>42</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 14 October 2020

<sup>43</sup> "Roll of Honour", 5th revised edition, 2011

the grass and the moment he was buried by the Dutch Red Cross, has not been traced.

Riekie Valkenburg returned the property of Captain Stevens to his parents shortly after the war in 1946<sup>44</sup>. She went to convalesce with the Stevens family in Kingston.



*Clarinda and Arthur Harold 'Dodie' Stevens  
[Photographs by Raymond and Colin Simonds]*

Raymond and Edwin Stevens had two sisters, Helen and Monica. Helen married to Philip Holbrook and had three children, Marilyn, Jane and Robert.

The other sister Monica married to Duncan Simonds and they had three sons, Raymond, Colin and Gavin<sup>45</sup>.



*Philip Holbrook and Helen Stevens  
[From the photo book of Riekie Valkenburg]*



*Duncan Simonds and Monica Stevens  
[From the photo book of Riekie Valkenburg]*

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<sup>44</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 8 October 2020

<sup>45</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 15 October 2020

After her convalescence Riekie became the nanny to Raymond Simonds, Captain



Raymond's namesake and nephew<sup>46</sup>. Her "nanny" job there lasted around four years<sup>47</sup>.

"Mummy and Daddy Stevens", as they were known by the Valkenburg family, were regular visitors in Oosterbeek and visited the grave of their son Raymond. Captain Stevens' father and mother, Harold and Clarinda Stevens, became lifelong friends and supporters of the Valkenburg family after the war<sup>48</sup>.



Captain Raymond Harold Stevens had wanted to emulate his father, who had also

been a Captain and won the Military Cross.

Those who fought alongside Captain Raymond Stevens thought no accolade sufficient for this brave artillery man, who had volunteered to be a Forward Observation Officer. One of the most dangerous jobs. Captain Stevens was considered to be one of the 'mob' (of their own) by those who were with him<sup>49</sup>.



*Edwin and Raymond Stevens  
[Still from "In memory of" by Raymond and  
Colin Simonds]*

<sup>46</sup> "The Story of the Bridge Street Brewery" by Raymond & Colin Simonds. Website <https://simondsfamily.me.uk/>

<sup>47</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 8 October 2020

<sup>48</sup> Email from Mrs Marion Gerritsen-Teunissen. Granddaughter of Mr and Mrs Valkenburg and niece of Riekie; 14 October 2020

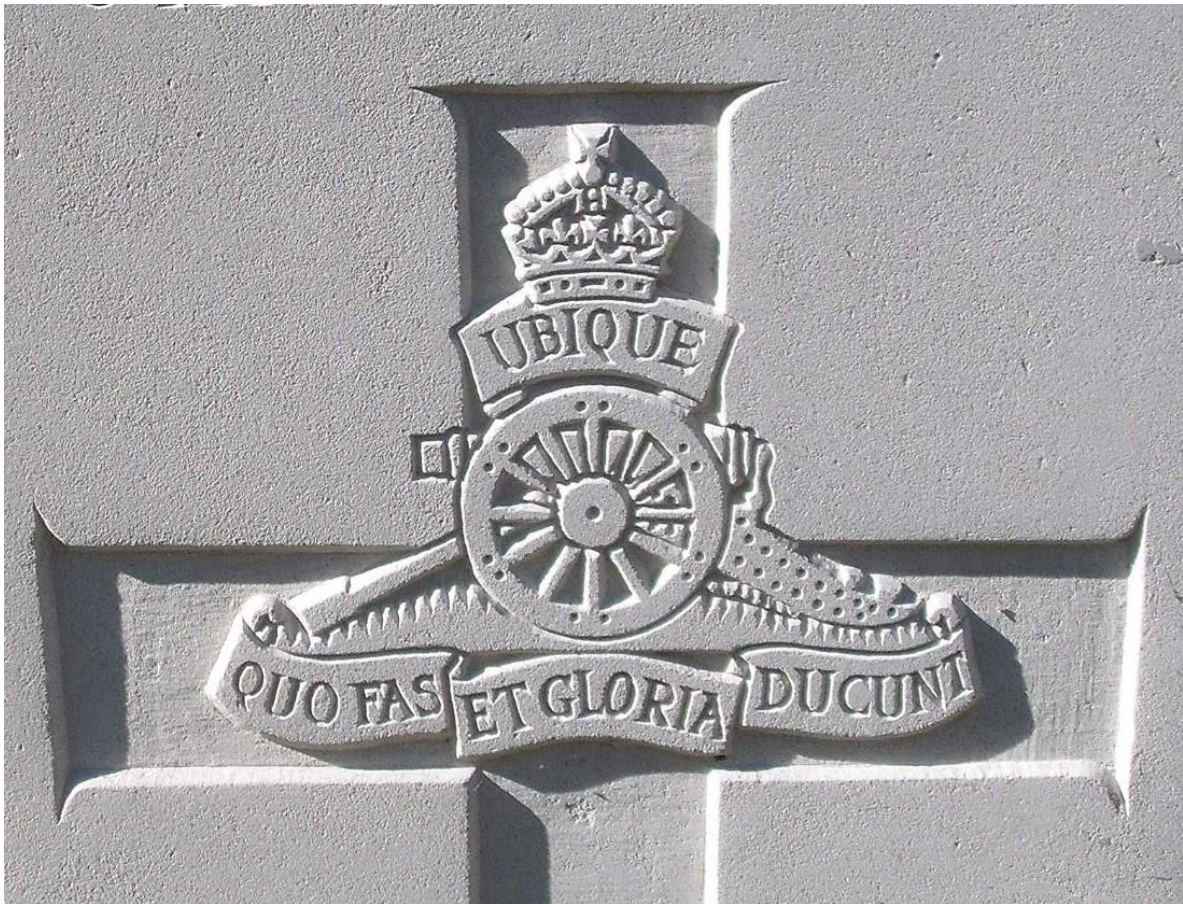
<sup>49</sup> 156 Parachute Battalion "From Delhi to Arnhem", John O'Reilly, 2009, ISBN 978-0-9560444-0-2, page 244.

*"lest we forget"*

*"They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old,  
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn,  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We shall remember them"*



**UBIQUE  
QUO FAS ET GLORIA DUCUNT**



**EVERYWHERE  
THE RIGHT AND GLORY LEAD**