

# Bernard Anthony Payne 1909-1944

By Mahmoud Abo Ali/Paul Batenburg

## Introduction



## His face is to be found....

Bernard Anthony Payne was killed on October 31, 1944 and is buried in Nederweert. Born in 1909, he was 35 years old when he perished near Leensel, North Brabant, Netherlands.

In January 2021 Mahmoud became the official adopter of Bernard's grave. For him as a status holder adopting a war grave is a new and special way of paying tribute. Paul Batenburg helps Mahmoud, and his family, with the search for information.

At the Foundation Adoption Graves Nederweert hardly any information was available.

## The life of Bernard.

Through the forum of the site [www2talk](http://www2talk), the composition of the Payne family was revealed:

Bernard Anthony Payne  
Birth 1909 Letchworth, Hertfordshire, England  
Residence 2 Apr 1911 Letchworth, Hertfordshire, England  
Death 31 Oct 1944 Netherlands

Father Joseph Aloysius Payne (Born 1865)  
Mother Mary W Butler (1871-1953)

Mary Nora Payne 1893-1963  
Alfred George Payne 1895-1915  
John Payne 1896-  
Mary Cecilia Payne 1896-1898  
Cyril Francis Payne 1899-1967  
Maurice Charles Payne 1902-1923  
Leo Francis Payne 1905-1992  
Hugh Joseph Payne 1908-1987  
Bernard Anthony Payne 1909-1944  
Kathleen Cecelia Payne 1916-2003

No photos either

His birthplace is Letchworth in the county of Hertfordshire. That lies just above London.

Of Bernard are so far no pictures or images found.

Also from the period until October 1944 nothing is known.

[On the Roll of Honour of the British Ministry of Defence and The Royal British Legion](#) is the found entry:

1: The complete publication of Drs. J.W.M. Schulten Luitenant-kolonel Verbindingsdienst can be sent on request. Mail-to [adoptiegravennederweert@gmail.com](mailto:adoptiegravennederweert@gmail.com)

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**PAYNE**

**Bernard Anthony**

Aged 35. Date of Death 31/10/1944 Gunner, Royal Artillery, 97 Anti-Tank Regt, No 14370715 Son of Joseph Aloysius Payne and Mary Payne, of Letchworth, Hertfordshire.

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## October 1945

The reconstruction of what happened at the end of October 1944 comes from 3 sources. Firstly the registration Graves Concentration Report form D/55GCU/107:

GRAVES CONCENTRATION REPORT FORM										
concentrated here :-										
of Cemetery) <u>NEDERWEERT BRITISH CEMETERY</u>										
Map Reference) <u>Sht 3 1/250.000 E. 615003.</u>										
<u>HOLLAND</u>										
<u>Nationality: British</u>										
(1) No.	(4) Name & Initials	(5) Rank	(6) Date of Death	(7) K/A, D/W or Died	(8) Plot	(9) Row	(10) Grave	(11) Date of Reburial	Previous location of grave	
									Place & Map Ref.	Report Number *
15	✓ PAYNE B.A.	Gnr	31.10.44	K/A	III	A	1	30.8.46	LEENSEL, Holland 663124 Sht 27 NW 1/25.000 663124	D/55GCU/16147.
2	✓ FEROY C.F.F.	L/Sgt	30.10.44	"	II	F	12	" "	RINDVELD, Holland 6651361 Sht 27 NW 1/25.000 6651361	D/55GCU/16153.
19	GREIG	TPR	30.10.44	"	"	"	"	" "	LEENSEL, Holland 663124 Sht 27 NW 1/25.000 663124	20852
4	✓ UNKNOWN H.W.	TPR	30.10.44	"	II	F	13	" "	LEENSEL, Holland 663124 Sht 27 NW 1/25.000 663124	D/55GCU/16147.

Het getal 663124 is de plaats waar Bernard is begraven. Dat getal is een Engelse kode.

Then there are 2 War Diaries.

The first one reports from unit 8 RS: a description from a wider view what happened on that current front. There is a report of heavy fire from the Germans on 31 October around 14.45 hours many (52) killed and wounded are reported. Exact positions of HQ at 663125, A coy at 663123, B coy 666123, C coy at 665120 and D coy at 668120 are mentioned.

NEAR LIESEL	31st		Situation normal during the morning. A & B Coys still under comd 2 Glas H.	
		1200	Bn 'O' Gp at Bn HQ.	
		1445	8RS incl A & B Coys with in sp One Sqn 4 TK GREN GDS occupy promontory of wood 6612. No enemy encountered but during the operation there is intense fire from enemy arty, mortars, and nebelwerfers. This op cost the Bn in casualties 4 offrs and 48 ORs killed and wounded. Locations: Bn HQ 663125, A Coy 663123, B Coy 666123, C Coy 665120, D Coy 668120.	
		2100	Patrol from C Coy finds suspected enemy post at 664117 had been evacuated, and posn occupied.	A Walker Capt IO

The second report is from the 97th anti-tank regiment itself of that day. (Page 1333 till 1336 of the 1767 pages War Diary HQ 15 (S) Inf Div G (Ops)). It is reported 1 killed and 1 wounded.

In the Fd	31		Reported by Sqn 46 2000 hrs: Lt. T.J. Hogarth, RA and Lt. G. Simpson, RA plus two Gun Fitters leave for Courses in England. 46 Bde plus 6 KOSB, less 2nd Glas H advance S.E against stiff opposition. 159 Bty report one O.R killed and one wounded. 161 Bty report one O.R killed, Carden Loyd Carrier burnt out and a Quad heavily damaged by shell-fire. 159 Bty report a Quad damaged by shell-fire. See Trace No 5 for 159 Bty's new position.	
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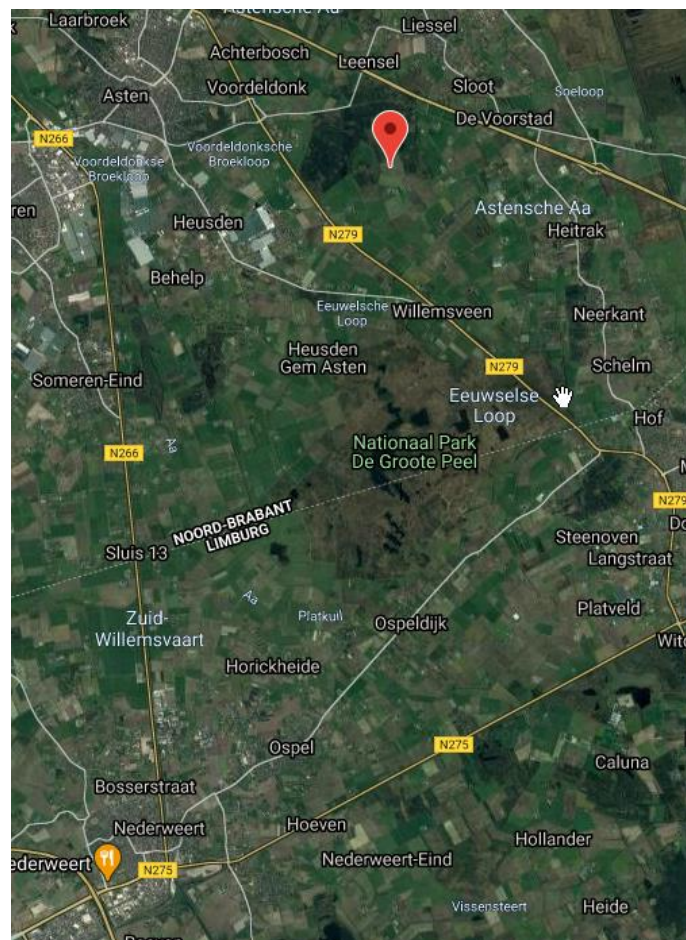
From these three sources, the following emerges:

	Battle coordinate/decimal coor.	Decimal coordinates
Forest	6612	
HQ Headquarters	663125 51.39601 / 5.81548	<a href="http://mapq.st/3kOKyWI">http://mapq.st/3kOKyWI</a>
Field Grave Bernard Payne	663124 51.39512 / 5.81552	<a href="http://mapq.st/3kLSqle">http://mapq.st/3kLSqle</a>
Coy A	663123 51.39422 / 5.81555	<a href="http://mapq.st/3bjTPTn">http://mapq.st/3bjTPTn</a>
Coy B *	663123 idem	ditto
Coy C	665120 51.39157 / 5.81854	<a href="http://mapq.st/3c5RTNo">http://mapq.st/3c5RTNo</a>
Coy D	668120 51.39163 / 5.82285	<a href="http://mapq.st/2Pt48vO">http://mapq.st/2Pt48vO</a>

- Coy B is reported at position 666623. That is incorrect because that position refers to the area northwest of Nijmegen. It is assumed that the position is the same as Coy A 663123.

In the picture, that is:

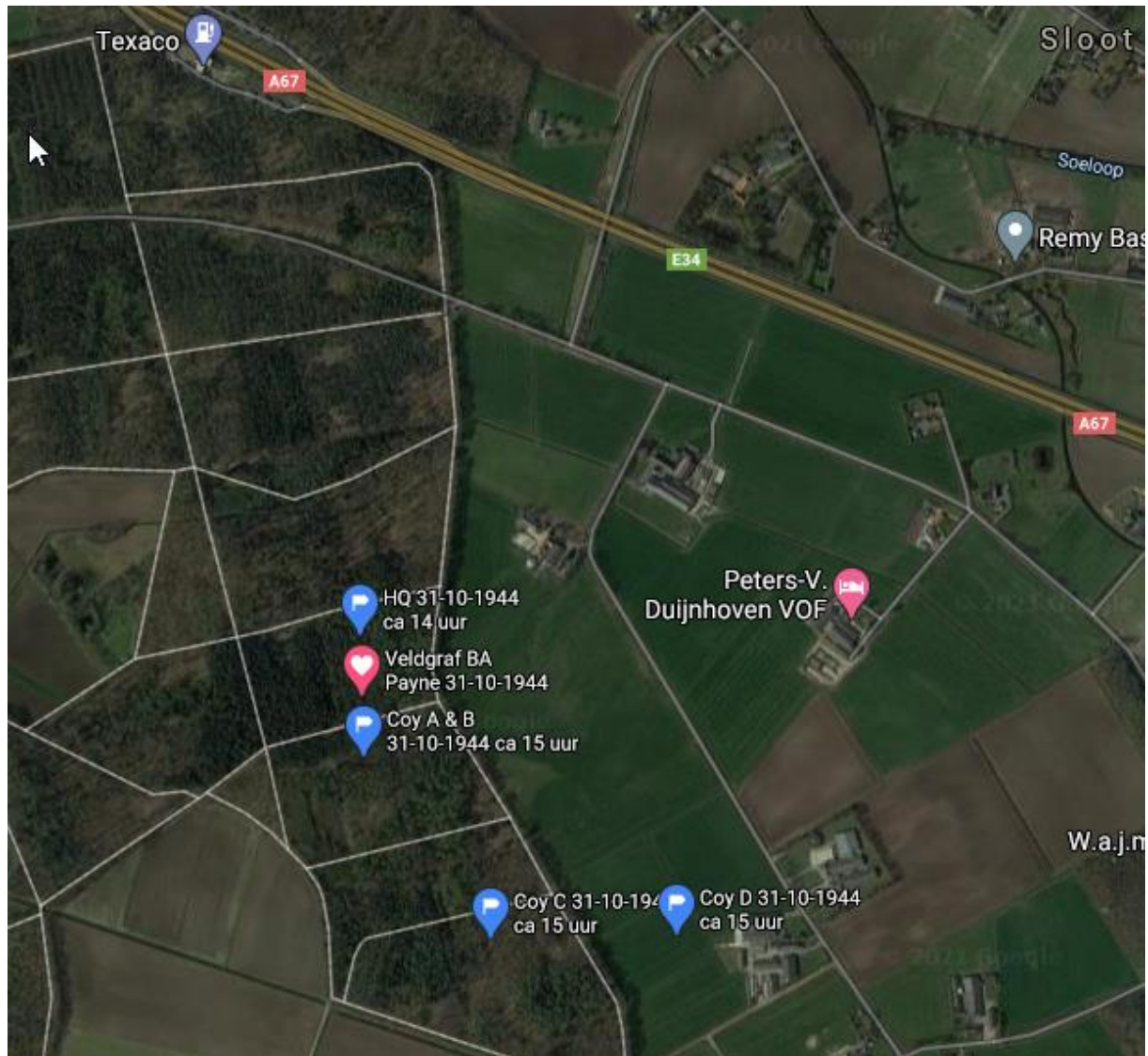
Location of the forest in relation to the wider surroundings



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Detail picture of the indicated positions Headquarters, positions companies A, B C and D and the field grave of Bernard.



From the reports it is not clear which group Bernard was in (A/B, C or D) when he died.

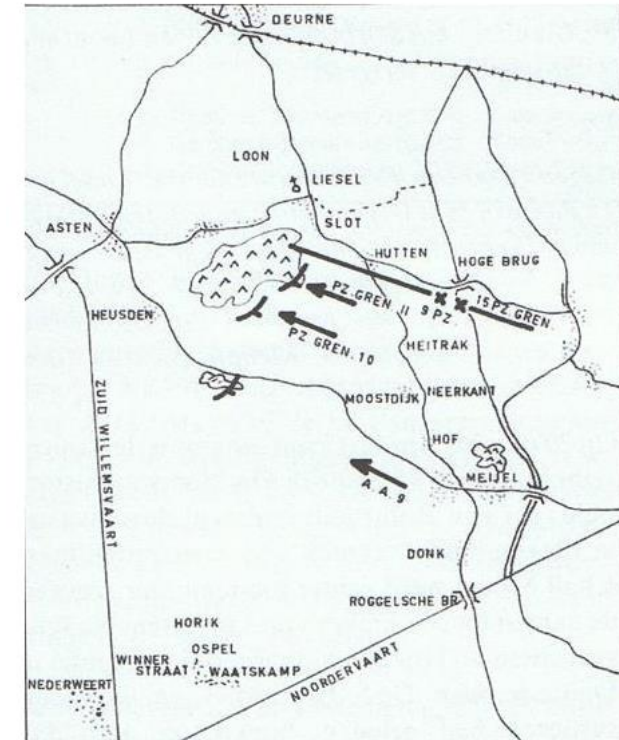
After the war the body of [Bernard](#) was [moved to the British cemetery in Nederweert](#).

An extensive story about the battle near Meijel was published by Lieutenant-Colonel J.W.M. Schulten<sup>1</sup>. What exactly happened during the battle in which Bernard Payne was killed is also described in that publication.

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## Bernard Anthony Payne 1909-1944

An overview map in the publication gives a good view of the positions. The counter attack in which Bernard was killed on 31 October.



Left: Image2: the German counterattack on October 27, 1944

Page 9 of the publication<sup>1</sup> states:

*In the night of 30 to 31 October, the 15. Panzergrenadierdivision was taken out of action and replaced by the Fallschirmjagerregiment Hubner. On 31 October, the 46 (Highland) Brigade captured Liesel and Slot. The attack on Liesel took place with two battalions in front line. After an initial bombardment, the Seaforth Highlanders attacked with two companies; one company followed the Loon-Liesel road while the other fought its way through the open country east of Liesel. The Royal Scots Fusiliers supported this attack by attacking Liesel from the west. When Liesel was taken, the attack was continued by the King's Own Scottish Borderers with two companies in the*

*direction of Slot. At 3 p.m. on 31 October, together with a squadron of the 4 Armoured Coldstream Guards, they penetrated the 7 Seaforth's positions and advanced towards Slot with two companies in front line on both sides of the road. After destroying two German tanks, they went on the defensive just south of Slot. The reconnaissance platoon of the Coldstream Guards bumped into the German defence line, which ran from Kleine Heittrak to Hoge Brug, just past Hutten. The Scottish attack was aborted.*

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