

March 26, 2024

RE:

[chemical.study] Public Hearing for LD 2274, Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission

To all concerned:

I am a surviving spouse of a deceased Veteran husband who served in the US ARMY, Maine and Kentucky National Guard and the Tennessee and Maine Army Reserve.

During his 22 years of serving, he was sent with the Maine National Guard 133rd Engineering Battalion, Portland, Maine to Gagetown, New Brunswick, Canada 3 separate times. Purpose: Survey crew and Annual training.

Orders of his time spent there of which I have certified copies are:

Orders 114-27 dated 7 June 1984 (3 days)

Orders 62-2 dated 17 July 1984 (15 days)

Orders 28-2 dated 14 May 1987 (15 days)

In 2018, my husband was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

In 2019, he was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer

In 2020, he was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia.

He died August 7, 2020.

Before he died, he filled out the paperwork in Kentucky, where we were at the time, for a VA claim seeking 100% disability because he believed he was exposed to Agent Orange/Harmful chemicals in Gagetown NB. With his job as a surveyor on a team, he told me of his time in Gagetown thrashing through the woods cutting brush, surveying to make roads, camping out in tents on the grounds. In 2020 when his dementia started, I used my Power of Attorney to continue this VA claim which was open at the time of his death. It was later denied. After his death I moved back home to Maine and continue to look for a way to service connect his illnesses and death to his time in service particularly time spent in Gagetown NB.

For a soldier to be in Gagetown several times and then at age 73 contracts Parkinson's, then Prostate Cancer to Lewy Body dementia in a less than a 3 year span, of which all diseases are on the VA list, there is no way, and I will never believe, he didn't get these diseases from his time there. Several articles online state that Agent Orange was tested and or dumped at that base and it can remain in the soil for decades.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Bilodeau

(Surviving spouse of Sgt. Gerard F. Bilodeau, USA, ARNG)

Unity, ME

207-323-2437 (cell phone)

email: dogisland52@gmail.com

Eleanor Bilodeau

LD 2274

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