

Hyde, Carl Alfred

Corporal

B 39844

Royal Canadian Engineers

2nd Battalion, RCE



Carl Alfred Hyde was born on 15 October 1915 in Georgetown, Ontario, a rural community 60 km west of Toronto Ontario. His father, Alfred Hyde, was born in England on 10 March 1873 and had served for 13 years in the British Imperial Army in South Africa (during the Boer War), India (during the mutinies) as well as Egypt and Arabia. His mother, Rhoda Symons, was born on 24 March 1886, in England. The couple was married in 1904 and immigrated to Canada in 1915 where they settled on a farm in the Georgetown, Ontario area. Besides farming, Alfred had several other businesses including rural mail delivery and dynamiting.

Carl had three brothers and a sister. William John (Bill) Hyde was born on 19 November 1905, Walter Hyde was born on 26 September 1907, Winnifred Maude Hyde Arthurs was born on 3 March 1910, and Ernest Thomas Hyde was born on 21 May 1918. Walter served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during WWII.

Carl left school at 14, with a grade eight education, that was typical at the time. He married Agnes Isley (born 10 January 1919) in Acton Ontario on 28 November 1936. They had two children, Winnifred Anne (born 11 January 1937) and Rodney Carl (born 31 October 1939). Before enlistment,

Carl was employed by a plumbing and heating contractor in Georgetown and identified his occupation as tinsmith, plumber and electrician during enlistment.

Carl enrolled in the Canadian Active Service Force (CASF) with "A" Company, 2nd Canadian Pioneer Battalion, Royal Canadian Engineers on 1 July 1940 at Camp Borden Ontario. At that time, the Battalion was composed of six companies that had formed from all across the country. From 1 July to 22 August 1940, the new soldiers spent time completing basic military training, learning to march, weapons training, issuing of equipment and clothing, as well as working with civilian tradesmen to construct living accommodations instead of tents.

At the end of August 1940, the unit boarded trains for the trip to Halifax, Nova Scotia where they embarked for Great Britain on the troopship "MV Georgic". Fully loaded with Canadian troops, the ship sailed on 4 September 1940 from Halifax to Clyde River in Scotland. They landed at Helensburgh late at night and boarded trains that took them to Aldershot in southern England. This was during the Battle of Britain and progress south was very slow as the trains reacted to numerous "Alerts" by making frequent stops until the 'all clear' was given.

Once in Aldershot, the unit spent the next four years continuing to train while, at the same time, constructing buildings where they worked and lived. In November 1940, the word "Pioneer" was dropped from the name of the Pioneer Battalions. Thus 2nd Pioneer Battalion RCE became the 2nd Battalion RCE as of 7 December 1940.



The unit moved around southern England as the Allied armies prepared for the upcoming battle with Germany. They were busy with unit training as they learned to work as a unit. In May 1941, they were assigned major projects to construct a camp on Ludshoc Common while at nearby Headley, they built a Canadian detention barracks.

Personal training continued during the unit employment and construction training projects. When Clyde became a qualified Plumber "B" in June 1941 he became entitled to a trades pay of \$2.10 a day. Clyde also attended a

Heavy Bridging course that was conducted by the Royal Engineers and a minefield course in 1943 that was conducted by 1 Bn RCE.

Carl was promoted several times during his several years in England. He was promoted Acting Lance Corporal on 5 November 1942 and then to Lance Corporal on 4 February . He was subsequently appointed Acting Corporal on 29 March 1943 and confirmed in the rank of Corporal on 29 June 1943.

The 2nd Battalion RCE crossed the English channel to Normandy on 30 July 1944 and joined those units already engaged in battle with Germany. The Battalion was immediately involved in what was to be the routine for the rest of the war - construction and maintenance of major bridges, as well as road repairs and construction. Their first tasks were the reconstruction of the Carpiquet Airdrome and the construction of the Caen ByPass.

After the break-out from Caen, 2 Battalion was engaged in such major projects as "Pons Asinorum" (the Bridge over the Seine at Rouen), the "Ottawa" and "Washington" Bridges at Antwerp, "Elson" Bridge at Beeringen, the "Durnin" Bridge over the Albert Canal at Stockroie, and the bridge at Papenhoven over the River Maas

During March 1945, 2 Bn RCE was working in the Cleve area of Germany doing route maintenance. This included repairing roads, removing obstacles - including mines. Corporal Hyde was killed instantly at 15:30 hours, 13 March 1945, while trying to defuse a Teller 43 (Anti-tank) mine. He was 30 years old and was buried in the cemetery at Materborn E882541 with the service being conducted by the unit padre, Capt Fargey.

Corporal Carl Alfred was initially buried in Wyvern Military Cemetery, Temp 883543 P.3 R.2 Gr.20.

Temporary grave, Wyvern





Later he was moved to the Nijmegen Canadian Cemetary. Eventually, his grave was moved to the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek Netherlands, grave reference **XXV. E. 6.**

Photo Alice van Bekkum

Carl was awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal (CVSM) and clasp, the 1938 – 45 Star, the France and Germany Star, the Defence Medal, and the War Medal .

Corporal Carl Edward Hyde is commemorated on Page 527 of the *Second World War Book of Remembrance*. The eight Books of Remembrance are kept in the Memorial Chamber of Canada’s Parliament Buildings.



His name is included on the Cenotaph in Remembrance Park, Georgetown ON.



Biography: Warrant Officer John MacPherson, CD (Ret'd), Canadian Military Engineers for Faces to Graves.

* Do you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact info@facestograves.nl

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