

R.Q.M.S. Harold Burr

Fort Garry Horse, R.C.A.C.

Family Life:

Born on December 9, 1913, to Freeman and Mary Etta Burr, Harold Harrison Burr attended Victoria Public School (now Timothy Christian School) until he was 14. He had one sister, Lillian May. Harold worked at Harrison's Mill, a grocery store on 9th Street East and as a shoe salesman at Wilkinson's Shoe Store before enlisting on June 19, 1940, with the Grey and Simcoe Foresters. On October 10, 1940, he married Mary Edna Wilson.

Service History:

Burr trained at Camp Borden for three years, reaching the rank of Warrant Officer Class II and became a Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant (RQMS).

As the RQMS, Burr was responsible for providing functioning equipment and assisted in ordering, storing and distributing items such as clothing and tents.



Decorations:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France and Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp

Service History:

He was absorbed into the 26th Army Tank Regiment in 1942 and arrived in the United Kingdom with them on June 26, 1943. Upon their dispersal, he was transferred to the 10th Armoured Regiment, Fort Garry Horse. They landed in France on D-Day. RQMS Burr arrived in France on June 19, 1944 as a reinforcement for the regiment.

The 10th Armoured Regiment participated in Operation Totalize, the first major operation planned by the First Canadian Army in Normandy. The objective was to close the Falaise Gap, by breaking through the German defences south of Caen and capturing the City of Falaise. At the beginning of the operation, squadrons of the United States Eight Air Force bombed German positions, providing protection for the advancing armoured columns of 2nd Canadian Corps.

Service History:

Harold Burr was killed on the second day of Operation Totalize, August 8, when supply vehicles of B Echelon were bombed accidentally by Allied aircraft. In a horrible miscommunication in air to ground signals, the flare colour used for identifying targets was yellow, as was the flare colour for identifying Allied units. The mistake in flare colours cost Burr and five other members of the Fort Garry Horse their lives. Harold Harrison Burr was buried in the Bretteville-sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France.