



Charles was born in London, England, on Christmas Eve, December 24, 1925. At a young age, he emigrated to Canada with his parents, John Augustus and Annie Amelia Cridland. They settled in Vancouver, British Columbia. In addition to Charles, the family included an older and a younger brother. During Charles' military service, the eldest, John Alfred, served with the Canadian Army in Europe, while the youngest, Leslie Stuart, was still studying. The family belonged to the Church of England. Charles attended Dechumpsey Public School in Vancouver, where he completed grade 8 and part of grade 9. At the age of 16, he started working, first as a baker's assistant for a year and later for over a year at Canadian Fish Co. in Vancouver.

On June 13, 1944, Charles enlisted in the Canadian Army in Vancouver, although he retained his British nationality. He received his driver's training first in Red Deer, Alberta, and later in Debert, Nova Scotia. His captain gave him a very positive assessment: *"a pleasant fellow, with a very helpful attitude, who will do an excellent job in the army."*

In early February 1945, he was sent by ship to the United Kingdom, and on April 10, Charles arrived at the front in the Netherlands. Charles was assigned to the Royal Canadian Army Service Corp. The RCASC moved supplies from the rear areas to the front-lines. They delivered all rations, ammunition, petroleum products, and all other essentials. They did so with a variety of vehicles ranging from three- to ten-ton trucks, and forty-ton tank transporters.

As part of this unit he then entered Germany for the final weeks of the war. After the German surrender, the Canadian army was still assigned important tasks in liberated Western Europe, including Charles' regiment. On May 16, 1946, a year after the liberation, Charles and three colleagues were on their way from Grave to Oldenburg (Germany). Just outside Nijmegen, something broke in the steering mechanism of their truck, causing it to become uncontrollable, veer off the road, and crash into a wall. Two soldiers were seriously injured, and Charles Gridland and Frank Dougan did not survive the crash. They were first buried temporarily in Groesbeek and reburied a month later at the Canadian Cemetery in Holten. Charles' grave is in plot 10, row H, number 15.

