

Myles, John. Corporal.

2-D-9



Shettleston, Scotland, is where John was born on July 20, 1918. *(In the 1920s, Shettleston, Scotland, was a village on the outskirts of Glasgow, now a suburb of Glasgow.)*

On September 22, 1923, John arrived in Canada on the ship "SS Metagama." He must have been traveling with an adult.



His name was not on the passenger list.

Two women are mentioned, and it was stated that they had a child with them.

Upon his arrival, it was recorded that he was going to visit his grandmother; his destination was listed as Ladysmith, a town on the east coast of Vancouver Island in the Canadian province of British Columbia. His father had paid for the trip.

The rest of the family must have followed him. The 1931 census recorded that Thomas and Elizabeth Myles lived in Vancouver and that they had four sons and a daughter. John was the second youngest.

A note in John's file states that he served as a reservist in the 1st Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada in 1935. He worked for a certain Roan Williams at the time; it is unclear what kind of work he did exactly.

John enlisted early in the war; he enlisted on August 29, 1940. He was registered as "married"; his wife's name: Viola Myles.

According to his medical report, John was 6'1" tall and weighed 185 lbs.

The description continued: fairly dark build with blue eyes and dark brown hair.

Two scars were noted: one from an appendectomy and one from a kidney stone operation.

After a month of service at the depot in Vancouver, BC, he was assigned to the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps at Camp Borden, Ontario.

For a very short time, about a month, John was assigned to the 2nd Canadian Motorcyclists Regiment. He remained at Camp Borden until October 1940, when John crossed over to the United Kingdom, arriving there on October 12.

He was assigned to the Canadian Troop Ammunition Company (CTAC).

John apparently wasn't a great writer for the home front. In October 1940, his wife wrote a letter to the authorities asking for the whereabouts and address of her husband. She had only received a telegram informing her that he had "safely" arrived in England.

John remained in the United Kingdom until mid-June 1943. In June 1941, he was promoted to Lance Corporal, and at the end of July 1941, he was reversed to Private. He was moved around between various units during 1941.

John likely became somewhat frustrated, as in October 1941 he was given a 14-day "Confined to Barracks" order for grossly insulting a superior.

In March 1942, John was transferred to another transport company.

In the summer of 1942, he spent some time in hospital, though the reason remains unclear. In September, he was reported for active duty again.

He was granted a few weeks' leave and posted to CMHQ, the Canadian Military Headquarters.

He remained there until mid-May 1943. His file then indicates that, just before his transfer to the Southern European front, he was assigned to the Canadian Public Relations Detachment.

To clarify:

War news and public relations (PR) were crucial for the Canadian troops during the Second World War. The Canadian Army developed its PR apparatus from nothing into an efficient publicity machine by the end of the war.

Canadian Military Headquarters in London appointed the first PR officer in January 1940.

The Dieppe Raid on August 19, 1942, marked a low point in both the accuracy of war news and the involvement of Canadian PR.

Mountbatten's headquarters minimized the involvement of Canadian PR in the planning. The result: early reports called the raid "successful."

The British censored a more honest explanation of the Canadians.

The campaigns in Sicily and Italy provided a valuable learning experience for the PR units. In Sicily, reporting on the Canadians was a public success, but PR struggled to gain national recognition.

Even before the official landings in Sicily (July 9, 1943), John was registered "elsewhere." According to his file, it was from June 29, 1943.

Little about his Italian experiences can be found in John's files.

In March 1944, it is recorded that he was taken to No. 15 Canadian General Hospital, at the time in El Arrouch, Algeria. The nature of any injuries is not recorded.

In mid-June 1944, John was transferred to the active forces and was reassigned to the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada (SHoC).

He landed in southern France on November 15, 1944, well before the troops were moved. He was promoted to corporal on March 18, 1945.

John Myles's file does not provide any specific information about 1945.

The only entry is a note on April 25, 1945: "Missing, probably killed."

Digging through the SHoC reports reveals the following:

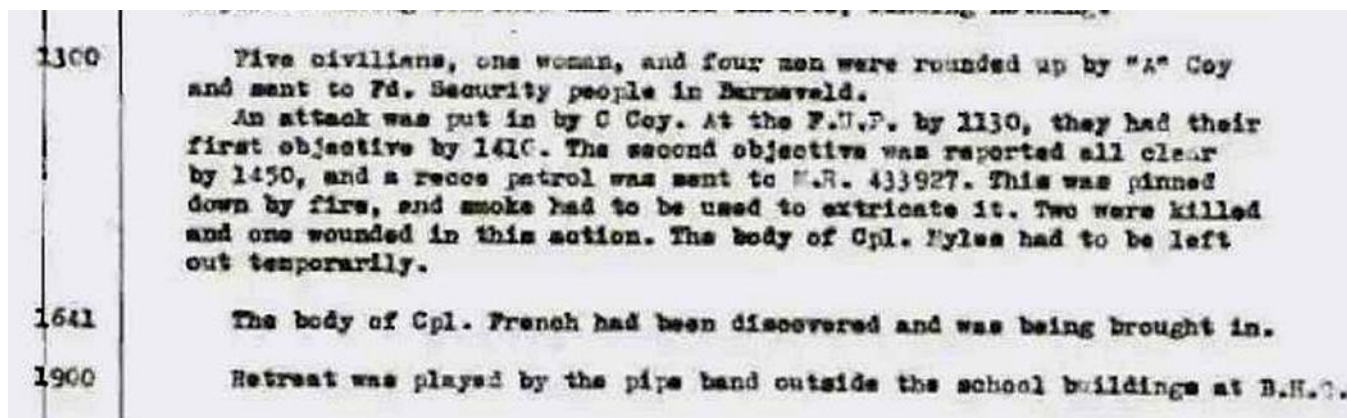
"In March 1945, the regiment sailed from Italy to Marseille and travelled by trucks to Belgium. They would be deployed in the further liberation of the Netherlands.

Assigned to the 1st Canadian Division, Operation Cannonshot (IJssel crossing) became their first major operation, which began on April 11, 1945, near Gorssel.

While the SHoC encountered little resistance on the left flank after the crossing, the men of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) faced more difficulty.

The SHoC advanced further: Stroe, Garderen, Voorthuizen and Achterveld."

John Myles was "Killed in Action" near Achterveld. The database also includes an eyewitness account.



In the SHoC war diary, we found this entry from April 25, 1945.

John Myles's body could only be recovered later. A "Missing in Action" (MIA) message was likely sent quickly to his Homefront.

In his file is a letter from John's mother requesting further information about the circumstances under which he was reported missing.

A letter from John's father, dated May 5, 1945, also mentions a MIA message. The father writes that John's wife appears to have received a death notice, although she hadn't really cared for her husband in recent years.

Finally, there is a letter from Viola, John's wife, dated December 1945, in which she states that she is serving in England with the CWAC (Community Welfare Assistance Committee) and has no permanent address. She requests that correspondence be sent to her mother in British Columbia, Canada. She would also like to be informed about what she needs to do to apply for her late husband's benefits.

John Myles was initially buried in Gorssel, but was later transferred to the CWGC Canadian Cemetery in Holten.
Grave reference: plot 2; row D; grave 9.

He was awarded:

the 1939-1945 Star, the Italy Star; the France-Germany Star; the Defence Medal; the War Medal 1939-1945 and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp.

