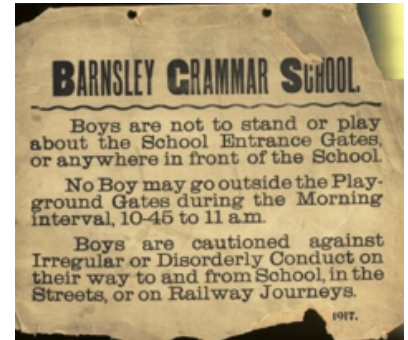




George Platt was born on November 5, 1911, in Cudworth, Yorkshire, England. He is the son of Wright Platt and Ellen Platt (née Sykes). After George, the couple had two more sons. His father was a railwayman who worked for the Midland Railway Consortium. The family attended the Church of England, and English was the language spoken at home.

George receives his primary education at the Pontefract Road First School in Barnsley.

In 1923, he moves on to Holgate Grammar School, a boys' secondary school—also in Barnsley—known for its strict rules. He leaves the school in 1931.



It is unclear exactly when George crosses the Atlantic to Canada, though records show he is enrolled at Emmanuel College in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, from 1938 onwards.

In the 1930s, Emmanuel College operated as an Anglican theological college integrated into the University of Saskatchewan campus in Saskatoon.

During the Second World War, the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) contingent of the Canadian Officers' Training Corps (COTC) required all physically fit male students over the age of 18 to undergo mandatory military training. The program shifted from peacetime instruction to training active combat officers for the war effort.

George enlists for active service in the Canadian Army on February 22, 1941, he is registered as a "theology student" and a 2nd Lieutenant.

From 1938 until early 1941, he has completed training and courses organized by the university.

His medical record reads that he is 5'8" tall and weighs 133 lbs, has brown hair and brown eyes. He has pockmarks on his left arm and has been wearing glasses for just over two years.

George military time starts at the district depot—in his case, Saskatchewan.

After a month, he is sent to Farnham, Quebec, for a 'refresher course'.

His infantry skills undergo further training during May and part of June 1941, as his crossing to the United Kingdom (UK) has already been scheduled.

George departs from Halifax on a troopship and arrives in Gourock, Scotland, on July 2, 1941.

Although he is slated to join the 14th Canadian Hussars, he is initially assigned to a so-called 'Holding Unit' of the Canadian Forces (HUCAC)—a unit without a specific destination at that stage.

The 14th Canadian Hussars was a light cavalry and later an armoured reconnaissance regiment. Its nickname was 'The Bucking Horse Regiment'. Their deployment was crucial in Northwest Europe during World War II. Its operational designation was the 8th Reconnaissance Regiment, often abbreviated as 8th Recce.

George, along with many others, travel directly by train to the south of England. The HUCAC was stationed in the military area around Crookham, Hampshire. For the remainder of 1941, George's file records only that he is allowed a week's leave on a few occasions.

In January 1942, George starts on the training path intended for him: the course for prospective leaders of a reconnaissance unit—specifically, the 8th RECCE.



Humber Mk 4

A 'RECCE' (short for reconnaissance) unit is a military formation dedicated to operational reconnaissance—in this instance, for military purposes.

During an advance, they move ahead of the regular troops to scout and observe the terrain, gathering intelligence on enemy strength, capabilities, and positions.

They operate in lightly armored wheeled or tracked vehicles.

Such as, for example, a Humber vehicle.

Commanders required exceptional initiative and outstanding command abilities.

Leave and specialized training alternate for George: field exercises, a brief introduction at headquarters, and a special attachment to an anti-tank battery. He qualifies for all the training courses and is granted nine days' leave in October 1942.

In mid-January 1943, George receives a remarkable 'assignment'.

He travels to Chatham House in London to attend an ABCA conference.

During World War II, the British Army Bureau of Current Affairs (ABCA) worked closely with Chatham House in London to organize educational courses for Allied military officers. These programs, which were widely offered in 1943, were designed to inform commanders about international affairs so that they could lead weekly discussion groups for their troops. Winston Churchill was deeply suspicious and critical of the Army Bureau of Current Affairs (ABCA). He viewed it as a waste of military time and resources that fostered a left-wing political bias among British soldiers during the Second World War.

After this 'detour,' George is assigned to the 14th Canadian Hussars, and training continues. In November 1943, he is briefly posted to an anti-tank regiment; his file describes this as a 'refresher course.'

George then takes the next step in his personal life.

On December 4, 1943, he marries Diana Rosalind Gould from Birmingham.

He is awarded the Voluntary Service Medal with Clasp in January 1944.

The first half of 1944 is spent on training and, in part, on coastal defense duties in southern England.

George's file then jumps forward significantly to his arrival in Normandy on July 6, 1944, assigned to the 8th Recce.

After the landing, the 8th RECCE operates briefly as infantry unit, but soon resumes its reconnaissance role.

The unit particularly distinguishes itself during the advance to and crossing of the Seine, the fighting around Caen, and the battle of the Falaise Pocket.

It also excels during actions at the Antwerp-Turnhout Canal.

George's file contains little to no information regarding these actions.

It does, however, record his promotion to captain in late January 1945.

The war diaries of the 14th Canadian Hussars provide a general overview; they serve as the 'eyes and ears' of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division.

George's file records that he is back in the UK on February 22, 1945.

He has then a function at the RECCE depot.

In March 1945, he is granted two weeks' leave.

On April 16, 1945, he returns to the European mainland by ship.

The penultimate entry in George's file reads as follows:

as of May 5, 1945, he is deployed for 'investigative work' in Germany; the reference is EAR2/745.

*The code EAR2/745 (or in full: European Axis Report 475/745) refers to a specific historical intelligence document from the *European Axis Signal Intelligence in World War II* series. These reports were compiled in May 1945 by TICOM (Target Intelligence Committee), a joint secret project of US and British intelligence agencies.*

Immediately following the German surrender in May 1945, special Allied teams traveled through occupied territory to seize German cryptographers, intelligence officers, encryption equipment (such as the well-known Enigma and Lorenz machines), and secret archives.

The final entry in George's file is dated June 17, 1945:

Died of injuries sustained in a car accident.

The investigation reports reveal:

On June 17, 1945, Captain George Platt was driving to the area near Noordbroek in Groningen, Netherlands. A truck—likely belonging to the 8th Recce—had ended up in the canal there. Captain Platt was accompanied by Major Cowans and Trooper McKay, both from the 8th Recce; Captain Platt was driving.

Near Winschoten, they found themselves in a slow-moving line of trucks, and Major Cowans told Captain Platt to pick up speed and overtake them.

While they were overtaking, one of the trucks swerved to the left to avoid a pothole. Captain Platt also steered left but struck a concrete post on the verge; his vehicle was flung to the right and slammed into the truck. All three occupants were thrown from the vehicle, and Captain Platt became trapped between the car and the truck.

All three were taken to the medical post of the 17th Field Regiment, Canadian Artillery, near Winschoten. The medical officer could only confirm Captain Platt's death and treat the other two injured men.

Captain George Platt is initially buried in the cemetery at Winschoten.

On April 12, 1946, he is laid to rest in his permanent grave at the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten: Plot 11, Row G, Grave 16.

He is awarded the following:

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



Sources:

www.cwgc.org; www.ancestry.com;

www.canada.ca/library-archives; Wikipedia;

wartimesproject.com; War Diary of the 14th Canadian Hussars