



Bedford, Devonshire, Engeland noteerde een klerk van het Canadese Leger toen Charles Prouse zich op 5 januari 1942 in Timmins, Ontario aanmeldde voor actieve dienst. Dat bleek een schrijffout; Charles was op 5 november 1914 geboren in Bideford, Devonshire, Engeland als zoon van Jack en Rose Jane Prouse. Hij was als enige van het gezin (een broer en twee zussen) als 14 jarige naar Canada geëmigreerd. Vandaar dat hij als adres opgaf Sandy Falls, Ontario.

Toen hij zich op 5 januari 1942 aanmeldde in Timmins, Ontario, had hij al vele jaren werkervaring. Op dat moment werkte hij voor Nabob Mines in Timmins als machinehelper bij de goudwinning. Volgens eigen opgave, was hij geboren op een boerderij en had hij ook al zo'n zes jaar ervaring als werkmans op diverse boerderijen.

In februari 1943, in een tweede interview na de voltooide basisopleiding, werd meer over hem bekend. Charles bevestigde dat hij na 6 jaar lagere school gestopt was. Rekenen had hij het mooiste vak gevonden. Voetbal was zijn favoriete sport en in de spaarzame vrije tijd speelde hij weleens pool biljart of las fictie boeken. Bij gelegenheid dronk hij graag een alcoholisch drankje en hij rookte. Vooruitkijkend gaf Charles aan dat hij tijdens zijn dienstdienst graag bij een carrier peloton ingedeeld zou worden en voor na de oorlog was zijn wens op een melkveehouderij te werken.

De eerste militaire ervaringen heeft Charles opgedaan bij het Algonquin Regiment in Niagara Falls. Aanvankelijk had dit regiment een "home defense" rol" zeg maar: bewaking eigen grondgebied. Van februari 1942 tot begin februari 1943 was het ingezet in Newfoundland.

In oktober 1942 was Charles nog een dag of tien in het Botwood Hospitaal. Reden van opname is niet te lezen door het onduidelijke handschrift.

In mei 1943 kwalificeerde Charles zich als chauffeur III voor rupsvoertuigen. In juni 1943 ging het regiment, met Charles in de gelederen, naar Engeland. De aankomst was op de 19e van die maand. In 1943 werd hij verder opgeleid tot brenschutter op een carrier en in december mocht hij zich ook officieel carrier-chauffeur noemen.



Botwood Hospital

Half januari 1944 werd hem de Canadian Volunteer Service Medal met gesp toegekend. Of hij dit gevierd heeft is onduidelijk, wel is opgetekend dat hij een dag onwettig afwezig is geweest. De soldij werd wel ingehouden, hij kreeg verder geen straf.

In mei 1944 meldden de servicerecords een verblijf in No. 13 Canadian General Hospital in Cuckfield, Engeland. Reden daarvoor: blindedarmoperatie.  
Op 21 juli meldde hij zich hersteld en werd ingedeeld bij het Essex Scottish

| Place                                                                          | Date            | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Re to |
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| Lv CL VE<br>Ref Nijmegen<br>1:25000<br>Ar Near CALCAR<br>Ref Calcar<br>1:25000 | 17<br>Feb<br>45 |      | At 0630 hrs final timings were issued for the attack and just before 1100 hrs the bn moved off to an assembly area between CLEVE and CALCAR. At 1100 hrs and 'O' Group at Brigade HQ set 'H' Hour at 1500 hrs. By 1200 hrs the battalion had reached the Assembly Area and deployed. At 1350 hrs word was given that the time for the attack had been delayed. 7 Brigade was given the job to firm up the Brigade Start Point before our attack was launched. Some shells landed in the area and two men of 'D' Coy were slightly wounded. Otherwise, there was nothing of note and much of the idle time was spent plucking feathers and carving steaks from the local poultry and live stock. |       |

Regiment (ESR).

De volgende fase in zijn militaire loopbaan was de oversteek naar Normandië. Charles landde daar op 25 juli 1944, anderhalve maand na D-Day. Op 29 juli 1944 werd hij als "gewond" gemeld. Het was een schotwond aan de rechterheup. Voor behandeling ging hij wederom naar een ziekenhuis in Engeland.

Na zijn revalidatie kwam hij op 7 september 1944 weer bij zijn eenheid. Het ging goed tot 2 oktober 1944, toen raakte Charles voor de tweede keer gewond. Dit keer rechts aan de borstkas, hij bracht krap 2 weken in het hospitaal door. Hierna werd Charles ingedeeld bij een aanvullingseenheid. Over die tijd werden geen bijzonderheden genoteerd in zijn servicerecords.

De War Diary van de Essex Scottish meldden tot en met januari 1945 hun

| Place                                    | Date            | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Re to |
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| At GROESBEEK<br>Ref Groesbeek<br>1:25000 | 8<br>Feb<br>45  |      | Before dawn broke, the preparation for the attack on the RICHWALD Defences had started. At 0600 hrs the entry "All Hell Broke Loose" crisply describes the thundering of a thousand guns which softened the resistance of the enemy for the attacking forces. The morning of the attack was a cool gray one and the air of quiet confidence present with the Scottish Troops was very inspiring. In spite of some shelling of our own area in retaliation for the terrific hail of steel shells and rocket projectiles directed against Jerry, the battalion was an enthusiastic audience for the show which developed during the day pretty much according to plan. At night 'D' Coy provided a covering party of two sections for English sappers, otherwise there was very little activity on our own part. The war was moving past us. |       |
| At GROESBEEK<br>Ref Groesbeek<br>1:25000 | 9<br>Feb<br>45  |      | The weather was not designed to assist the operation in hand. It rained heavily and visibility was poor. In spite of great efforts on the part of the Engineers to turn tracks into roads, they could not do away with the mud and traffic movement became a real problem. The Battalion spent the day stretching it's legs after a long session in slit trenches. We could not leave the area, not because of operational commitments, but rather because there was no road space available totroops not immediately concerned with the attack. An informal patrol from 'C' Coy investigating some wrecked gliders sprung some mines and three soldiers were injured. Contact patrols were no longer required by Brigade - normal security guards being maintained in Sub-Unit Areas.                                                     | Ap    |
| At GROESBEEK<br>Ref Groesbeek<br>1:25000 | 10<br>Feb<br>45 |      | The weather followed the previous days forecast - cloudy with intermittent rain and showers. News of the advance was eagerly awaited when the hourly BBC newscasts rolled around. News of the advance came regularly, however. At 0630 hrs word came from Brigade to concentrate as previously planned. This, being interpreted, meant a scurrying for available accommodation in or near GROESBEEK. Most of the companies managed to squeeze into buildings which after a little hasty patching kept most of the unit dry. The Paymaster and the YMCA arrived in the battalion area to administer their respective "comforts" to one and all.                                                                                                                                                                                             | App   |

aanwezigheid in een gebied bij Groesbeek. Er is patrouillegang, kleine schermutselingen tijdens de verkenningen in bezet gebied en bijna constant slechte weersomstandigheden.

Het Essex Scottish Regiment werd ingezet bij Operatie Veritable in het Rijnland Offensief, de opmars door het Reichswald richting de Rijn.  
De eerste paar dagen van de operatie ging voor de Essex Scottish zonder

gevechten voorbij.

Half februari was relatieve rust voor het regiment. Er was een verplaatsing naar een verzamelgebied tussen Kleef en Kalkar voor hun volgende inzet. Die werd echter doorgeschoven en aan een andere eenheid opgedragen. De vrijgekomen tijd werd door de mannen gevuld met kippen vangen en slachten.

Interessante aantekeningen daarna zijn de inzet van Charles regiment bij de aanval op het Hochwald in de laatste dagen van februari 1945.

| Place                                              | Date            | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (Continued)<br>Near KEPPLEN<br>Ref UDEN<br>1:25000 | 27<br>Feb<br>45 |      | under small arm resistance to secure our start line. During the day our 'A' Coy relieved 'D' Coy of the RHLI in order to make firm the left flank. The RRCs were at this time being harrassed by high velocity weapons, mortars and snipers which were apparently coming from the HOCHWALD. Patrol was maintained as before.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Near KEPPLEN<br>Ref UDEN<br>1:25000                | 28<br>Feb<br>45 |      | The weather was clear and a good day for the Tac Air Arm. The C.O. again proceeded to Bde for an 'O' Group - time 0930 hrs. On returning an 'O' Group was ordered at 1430 hrs where we discussed our operations for the attack on the HOCHWALD. At 1830 hrs an 'O' Group was again called to put Coy Comds in the latest picture. Around 2000 hrs we moved off with 'A' Coy leading and 'D' Coy behind taking the right axis of the advance. On the left was 'B' Coy leading with 'C' Coy behind. At 2100 hrs 'A' & 'B' Coys were both plassing the start line. They moved forward and attained their objectives with very little opposition and passed beyond 500 yds where both forward coys began to run into heavy mortar fire and small arms. Few casualties were suffered, mostly leg wounds. 'B' Coy attained their second objective while 'A' Coy experienced more difficulty however with use of flame and 8 pdrs were able to consolidate on objective. At 0240 hrs 'B' Coy as instructed sent out a Recce in force to edge of the HOCHWALD and reported wire and trench system covered with MMG and mortar fire. This sub-unit had to withdraw. Around 0400 hrs we got the result of 'A' Coy's patrol who reported enemy in strength 200 yds ahead. Tac HQ moved to a new location in DELSANHOF with the exception of Rear BHQ, about 1000 yds W of HOCHWALD. At 0500 hrs an 'O' Group was to have been called for all coys, but 'A' & 'D' Coys were not able to attend. The plan then was to have 'D' & 'C' Coys move through 'B' & 'D' Coys supported by one troop of tanks (Sherbrooke Fusiliers and artillery. 'H' Hour was set at 0715 hrs but due to road conditions zero hr was set back to zero plus 30 in order to get tanks crews into position.<br><i>Bill Angman</i> |

Na diverse acties tijdens Operatie Plunder ging de eenheid van Charles begin april 1945 in noordelijke richting, de grens met Nederland weer over en daarna bijna non-stop door tot de omgeving van Doetinchem.

Charles werd op 12 maart 1945 weer toegevoegd aan het Essex Scottish Regiment, toen gelegerd achter het front in het Reichswald.

Het Essex Scottish Regiment ging versneld verder richting Zutphen. Daar raakte het verkennerpeloton in problemen.

Het is onduidelijk of Charles Prouse een carrier bemande bij deze verkenners.

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|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Near ZUTPHEN<br>Ref<br>ZUTPHEN SHEET<br>3803<br>1:25000 | 3<br>Apr<br>45 |  | The weather was murky and overcast. During the morning a recce party under the command of Lieut. FRASER went to feel out the enemy near ZUTPHEN and ran into trouble. We suffered one killed and three wounded and Lieut. FRASER himself, was missing until the evening when he returned under cover of darkness, wounded in the shoulder, and gave us valuable information of enemy positions. At 1630 hrs. the CO and IO went to Bde and received the movement order which was to take us over the canal by ferry to a new concentration area in the RRC lines. Around 1730 hrs. the CO passed his orders on to the Coy Commanders. In the meantime, our 'B' Coy took over from 'B' Coy RHLI to release it for the crossing of the canal and strengthen the bridgehead. The crossing was delayed due to enemy activity and we finally got across with our Company intact about 0245 hrs. |
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Eenmaal Zutphen voorbij ging het richting Twentekanaal. In de war Diary worden geen acties genoemd bij het kanaal, noch bij Laren Gld. Klaarblijkelijk hebben andere eenheden hier het voortouw genomen.

Ook de oversteek van de Schipbeek en de opmars richting Holten werd niet speciaal vermeld in het dagboek.

De eerste vermelding van actie was van 10 april 1945; de oversteek van het Overijssels kanaal en aanvalsacties op doel "Park 1813". Dit was de Lemelerberg. De heuvel werd zonder problemen en zonder slachtoffers bezet.

Eén aantekening is bijzonder: het hoofdkwartier van de Essex Scottish was er al voordat de compagnieën er aankwamen.

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| At: Park 1813<br>NIJVERDAL SHEET<br>1:25000     | 10<br>Apr<br>45 | During the night the QOCH commenced moving in to our positions. Bn started moving off to new objectives on high ground dominated by a so called "Park 1813". During this move we crossed the OVERIJSSELSCH CANAL in assault boats. TAC vehicles then crossed the bridge. Without any opposition whatsoever, we took over Park 1813 which had formerly been a German strong point and HQ. This operation was unique in two ways. First no casualties and secondly TAC HQ beat all Coys to the objective.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PARK 1813 Ref<br>LEMELERVELD<br>3504<br>1:25000 | 11<br>Apr<br>45 | The day began with a beautiful dawn and the arrangements were made by all to have sunbaths. However the war was not over and at 1330 hrs. a balls was called at Bde. At 1430 a platoon of carriers and one A/TK gun left to clear South West of OMME (Omme Sheet 1:25000) No enemy found in the woods. Reluctantly we left Park 1813 at 1913 hrs. to a Bn concentration area in HOOGEVAN, a town of canals and bridges which were all blown by retreating enemy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| OUTSIDE ASSEN<br>Ref HOOGEVAN<br>SHEET 1:25000  | 12              | O group was called at which Div. gave objective as GRONINGEN with and intermediate Bde objective, ASSEN. Move commenced at 1120 hrs. in TCV's and we arrived at ZWIGGELVE at 1315 hrs. There an O Group was called immediately. We were now situated approximately 3000 yds from GRANJE KANAAL. Our leading Coy, 'B' Coy, came under small arms fire and it was soon noted the road was heavily mined. Pioneers were called on. Two Jeeps carrying pioneers followed a tank up the highway. The tank was hit by a bazooka setting fire also to the pioneer jeeps and the ammunition and explosives in the Jeeps wounded Mr. SHEPPARD and eight pioneers. In the ensuing advances several skirmishes were fought by our Coys and from POW's taken many conflicting reports came to us about the strength of the enemy in the town. Late that night the Engineers, covered by our Rifle Coy's fire removed debris and fixed a necessary bridge and checked for mines. Our Rifle Coys dug in at the outskirts and just inside of the town. |

De bevrijding van Ommen, Hoogeveen en het gebied richting Assen ging niet zonder slag of stoot, zoals opgetekend is.

Op 13 april 1945 ging de opmars verder met de Essex Scottish in de spits. Het was de dag die voor Charles Prouse fataal zou zijn. Ondanks dat de troepen al snel doordrongen tot het centrum van Assen en de verliezen als "verrassend licht" werden omschreven.

| Place                                       | Date            | Hour | Summary of Events and Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| ASSEN<br>Ref ASSEN SHEET<br>3005<br>1:25000 | 13<br>Apr<br>45 |      | The woods on either side of the road were cleared and at 0500 hrs. our 'B' Coy was ready to spearhead the attack. Small battles took place as houses were cleared. Many POW's were taken. Fairly early in the morning the centre of the town was reached and our Coy consolidated. Our casualties were very light. Our Bn. was accustomed to warm welcomes by liberated Dutch towns but the tumultuous reception given by the people of ASSEN outdid everything previously experienced. Even with small arms fire flying dangerously near, the happy citizens could not be restrained from rushing about tossing flowers at our vehicles and serving refreshments to our men. TAC was set up in the sumptuous town hall which was situated close to the town jail. The latter was the scene of many heart-rendering and dramatic episodes. First the moving scene as the gates burst open releasing 300 Dutch prisoners to the waiting arms of their friends. Later the same jail was host to the previous jailers as hundreds of German prisoners were temporarily billeted there for questioning. The full cycle of justice was reached when Dutch collaborators and informers were paraded through the crowds to ponder over their treason in the relative security of the very jail to which they had sent many patriotic Dutchmen. No honest Dutchman shed a tear of sympathy that day. No Canadian, participating now as a spectator, could feel anything but pride for the part his country and Regiment had played in once more enthroning decency and justice in the fair city of ASSEN. But the war was not yet over. Ahead of us lay the largest city in North HOLLAND, GRONINGEN But to give the enemy no reprieve or rest, the order of the day was, "On to GRONINGEN!" At 1700 hrs. the Bn. moved off and 2 hours later TAC was already established at the TWEE PROVINCIEEN HOTEL" at PATERSWOLD, 7km south of GRONINGEN The plan was that during the night the RHLL would feel out the enemy in the Southwest sector of GRONINGEN. We were to move through the RRC, established just South of GRONINGEN, and take the first streets of the city and reach the Canal. |

In de databank van de Commonwealth War Graves Commission vinden we voor 13 april 1945 de namen van acht gesneuvelden van het Essex Scottish Regiment.

Charles kreeg een tijdelijk graf in Assen.

Op 21 maart 1946 kreeg hij een definitieve rustplaats in Holten, in graf 10-E-12.

|                                           |                                             |      |               |                   |                 |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| NO.                                       | B.55696                                     | Rank | Private       | Name              | PROUSE, Charles |
| Unit                                      | Essex Scottish Regt.                        |      | Date of death | 13th April, 1945. |                 |
| Died at                                   | Holland                                     |      |               |                   |                 |
| Cause                                     | Killed in action.                           |      |               |                   |                 |
| Death occurred on strength of Forces H.Q. | 405-P-15644                                 |      |               |                   |                 |
| N/K                                       | Mrs. Rose Prouse,                           |      | Relationship  | Mother            |                 |
| 25 TORRINGTON ST.                         |                                             |      |               |                   |                 |
| Address                                   | Bideford, Devon, England.                   |      |               |                   |                 |
| Remains buried in                         | Holland Assen sh Trouingar 1/10000 Cemetery |      |               |                   |                 |
| M1 MR 210/894                             |                                             |      |               |                   |                 |
| Grave location                            | CHX ✓                                       |      |               |                   |                 |
| OVER ✓                                    |                                             |      |               |                   |                 |

Charles Prouse kreeg de volgende onderscheidingen toegeedeeld:

1939-1945 Star; France-Germany Star; Defence Medal; War Medal 1939-1945 en de Canadian Volunteer Service Medal met gesp.

Zijn laatste eenheid was de Essex Scottish Regiment.

Dit regiment had in totaal 562 gesneuvelden te betreuren over alle jaren van de Tweede Wereldoorlog gerekend.



Herman Sligman  
ICB Holten  
Februari 2025