



Anderson Rodger—known as Andy—is born in Port Arthur, Ontario, on June 18, 1913. He is the son of William Rodger and Agnes Rodger (née Dann). His parents divorced in the 1920s; when Andy enlists in July 1942, he states that he had not seen his father for about twenty years.

The 1931 census indicates that his mother has remarried Robert Pateman and is living in Fort William, Ontario, with Andy and her new husband.

Upon his enlistment in Port Arthur, Ontario, it is recorded that he belongs to the United Church of Canada and English is his spoken and written language.

Andy pursues further education after primary school, an opportunity made possible by a bequest from his maternal grandmother.

He completes four years of study at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and three years at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto.

At university, he majores in history, political science, and economics; at Osgoode Hall Law School, his study is, naturally, law.

Andy is officially called to the bar in 1939.

Andy works a legal professional for another six months, though he receives no financial compensation for this work.

He therefore moves to the aircraft division of Canada Car and Foundry Ltd.

By the time he voluntarily enlists in the Canadian Army in 1942, he has been working there for two and a half years—the final year he is an inspector.

During the 1940s, Canadian Car & Foundry (CC&F) transitioned from manufacturing railway equipment to aircraft production. It became Canada's largest manufacturer during the Second World War.

The company produces thousands of military aircrafts while simultaneously providing significant employment opportunities for women in non-traditional industrial roles.

Key milestones and aircraft from the 1940s include the Hawker Hurricane: CC&F built

1,451 of these crucial fighter aircraft for the Royal Air Force, which played a vital role in the Battle of Britain.



After registering, Andy undergoes a medical examination. The standard details are recorded: 5'9" tall; weighs 145 lbs; green eyes and brown hair.

A specific note is made of a scar from hernia surgery and two vaccination marks on his left arm.

It is also noted that he has worn glasses for eight years.

His right eye does not function properly; furthermore, he cannot close one eye without closing the other as well. This causes him difficulties at the shooting range.

Andy's athletic pursuits are also limited by his 'problem eye.' He did play basketball for five years after entering high school, and he remains active in golf. He maintains good social connections; he is a member of a Tuxis Club of the church, writes reports for the university newsletter, and enjoys photography. As a legal professional, he is also a member of the Law Society of Northern Canada.

Andy's military career starts at the district depot in Port Arthur; a week later, he is transferred to Winnipeg, Manitoba, for basic training.

In August 1942, he requests and receives permission from the military authorities to marry. On September 19, Mariette Marie Berthe Gorman—a library assistant—becomes his wife.

In late September 1942, Andy is transferred to Camp Shilo in Manitoba for advanced training. Andy is assigned to the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada (QOCH of C) but remains at Camp Shilo.

In late November 1942, he is to be a Lance-Corporal.

An initial assessment is drawn up in January 1943. Andy has a high learning ability, excellent observational skills, and is good in logical thinking.

He possesses sufficient self-confidence and generally takes an optimistic view of things.

He is considered a suitable candidate for officer training. So, Andy is enrolled in the officer training program at Camp Shilo.

After a few weeks of leave in July 1942, -as a cadet-officer- to Long Branch, Ontario, in early October for a course on chemical warfare.

The Canadian Small Arms School (CSAS) is also located in Long Branch; the next station where Andy's knowledge is further expanded.

The CSAS was the Canadian Army's primary facility for tactical and weapons training during the Second World War. Its main mission was to train officers and non-commissioned officers as instructors for key platoon and section weapons.

Andy successfully completes this phase quickly.

In late November 1943, he is promoted to Second Lieutenant. Shortly after the turn of the year (1943/1944), he is awarded the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal (CVSM).



Meanwhile, negotiations have been underway at the government level since late 1943 to allow Canadian officers to serve in the British Army.

Andy has volunteered to go to the United Kingdom as an officer and be assigned to a British unit.

He is selected and his CANLOAN number is: CDN/429.

CANLOAN Officers

In the autumn of 1943, the British Army faced a severe shortage of infantry lieutenants and captains—ranks associated with roles such as platoon or company commander. These infantry officers were required for operations on the front lines.

The British Army had already been fighting on multiple fronts for several years, and casualties in these roles had been heavy. With the planned invasion on the horizon, this shortage threatened to become a major problem.

Canada had a surplus of such young officers who were motivated and willing to join the fight. Following extensive consultation between Britain and Canada, the green light was given in February 1944 for the following scheme:

- A maximum of 1,450 infantry officers and 50 logistics officers could be seconded.
- Participation was strictly voluntary.
- Pay was provided by Canada in accordance with Canadian standards.
- Age limits: 33 years for lieutenants, 37 years for captains.
- British promotion regulations would apply.
- Officers could be recalled by Canada if necessary.
- The initiative was given the codename CANLOAN.

High numbers of applications were expected in Canada, as many officers believed that participating in combat would lead to faster promotion. Others were so determined to see active service that they accepted a reduction in rank to qualify.

Nevertheless, the number of applications fell short of initial estimates.

Ultimately, 623 infantry officers and 50 logistics officers were selected.

They were assigned a service number beginning with "CDN," followed by a sequential number based on the order of their application. The dedication and performance of the CANLOAN officers were beyond question.

The list of decorations and promotions is long.

Their commitment and courage also had a dark side.

The toll: 128 killed, 310 wounded, 27 taken prisoner, and one missing.

Eleven of the fallen are buried in Holten.

Their headstones can be identified by the maple leaf, the service number beginning with CDN, the inscription 'Royal Canadian Infantry Corps', and the British regiment to which they were attached.

In early April 1944, a recommendation is drawn up for Andy.

At that time, he is a platoon commander at an infantry training centre.

His qualifications are rated as 'good' concerning leadership, character, and motivation.

The description further notes: a good education, a pleasant personality, and a lot of flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances.

After his embarkation leave, Andy—along with several other CANLOAN officers—boards the **Empress of Scotland** in Halifax.

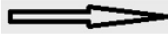
This contingent arrives in Liverpool on May 11, 1944.

Andy is assigned to the 1/6th Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment.

The planned invasion of the French coast is imminent at that time. Andy has only a few weeks to get accustomed to British training drills. Neither Andy nor the regiment are part of the initial landing forces.

According to the war diary, they landed on Juno Beach on June 29, 1944.

	sail.
28	M.T. Party Still at sea. All personal cleaned their Rifles.
	MARCHING TROOPS Set sail at 2030hrs.
29	M.T. Party Landed at JUNO Sector at 0900hrs without Casualties
	and moved up to Conc Area VILLIERS - LE - SCE 8980 where trenches were dug and vehicles were camouflaged.
	MARCHING TROOPS Arrived at JUNO Sector at 1000hrs and joined the Bn at 1600hrs in Conc Area.
30	Bn moved fwd to LA MARE 000786 and dug themselves in.
	Order No. 3



On July 7, 1944, Andy's regiment sees action for the first time during Operation Charnwood, a large-scale assault on the city of Caen. Some information from headquarters records:

On July 8, 1944, men from the 1/6 South Staffordshire Regiment broke through German lines from their positions near Cambes. They advanced under murderous enemy fire and through minefields toward the villages of La Bijude, Galmanche, and Saint-Contest. Many soldiers lost their lives in the surrounding orchards during this advance. While other units pushed on toward Caen, a detachment of the 1/6 South Staffords remained behind at Cambes to eliminate German snipers who were harassing Allied supply lines.

Andy is wounded on July 10, 1944. He is struck in the left calf by shrapnel from a mortar shell and is evacuated to the 4th Canadian General Hospital in Basingstoke, England.

Andy is discharged from the hospital on August 21, 1944; after that he is administratively shuffled between various reserve units. In mid-November 1944, he attends a one-week course at the Army's Hygiene School.

On January 16, 1945, Andy's daughter is born, she is named: Mary Linda.

On February 3, 1945, Andy returns to the European mainland. It is a standard procedure for returning soldiers, Andy is initially assigned to a Reinforcement Holding Unit (R.H.U.).

An R.H.U. was a temporary British Army unit established to receive, organize, and forward military reinforcements to the front line. Soldiers stayed there after completing basic training, recovering from hospital treatment for injuries, or if their previous unit had been disbanded.

After spending a week at a Casualty Retraining Center to refresh his skills, Andy is assigned to the Gordon Highlanders on February 27, 1945. His file contains only one subsequent entry: 'Killed in Action'.

The regiment's war diary provides a bit more information.



The 1st Gordon Highlanders regiment was tasked with clearing the town of Rees. The troops were ferried across the Rhine in 'Buffaloes' (amphibious tanks).

Companies B and C advanced across some three hundred meters of open grassland toward the dike, taking advantage of a smoke screen. After fierce fighting in isolated positions within houses, they too achieved success.



Gordons on the dike near Rees

Lieutenant Anderson Rodger was killed in the open area between the dike and the outskirt of the town.

The regiment was pinned down there by the defending forces for nearly two days. A post-war interview with a CANLOAN officer from another Gordon Highlanders platoon sheds light on what happened.

'Andy, along with part of his platoon, made use of trenches that had been dug by the Germans. These positions were under fire from machine guns and heavy 88 mm artillery. Andy and his platoon sergeant were struck by a shell from this artillery and were killed instantly'.

Both are given a temporary grave near the riverbank.

On August 14, 1946, Andy is laid to rest at the CWGC Canadian War Cemetery in Holten: Plot 4, Row H, Grave 3.

He is awarded:

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

His headstone reads:
**And I give to them
Eternal life;
And they shall never perish**

St. John X.28



Sources:

www.cwgc.org; www.ancestry.com; www.canada.ca/library-archives; wikipedia, wartimesproject.com; codeword CANLOAN ISBN 1-55002-167-2