

SHAW, Alexander 'Alec' Edwin

Service Number K/70857

Rank Private

Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, 3rd Division Troops Coy.

Born April 10, 1919, Parksville, BC

Died July 24, 1944, France

Occupation Truck Driver / Mechanic

Marital Status Married to Winnifred Evelyn

Shaw Hill in Qualicum Beach is named after Alexander Edwin's family, who were early settlers. Located near the Old Comox Road, the original family home served as a rest stop for travellers. Alec's father was a rancher and according to his family, his mother was the local post mistress and drove the school bus. Alec attended local schools and became a mechanic and truck driver.

Alec's niece shared stories about him, told by her father. The two brothers would work on vehicles at the family farm, and Alec enjoyed the occasional prank. If a friend was leaning beside a car for a look at the engine, Alec would touch the magneto and then the friend, acting as a conductor, to send a shock to the friend... "and the brothers would erupt in laughter."

He could also 'hypnotize' chickens into a trance-like state. Alec taught the skill to his brother. "One day, they set about hypnotizing the flock of chickens in the driveway to the main house. This was all 'fun and games' until my grandmother came home and nearly ran over the birds."

When he enlisted in 1941, Alec stated an interest in serving as an air force mechanic. Instead, the military put his aptitudes to use in the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. During his training, he qualified for Class III driver as well as a motorcycle driver. The RCASC was responsible for delivering all supplies including food, ammunition, fuel etc. to fighting troops. In 1943, the RCASC was reorganized for flexibility, and was also responsible for maintaining transport vehicles and providing boats, rafts and Bailey bridges where necessary.

After arriving in England in 1942, Alexander became seriously ill and spent two months in hospital. He was discharged in October 1942 and continued to serve in England. Sent to France in June 1944, he was wounded in action on July 24.

Alexander Edwin Shaw died as a result of multiple wounds to face, hands and body from a mine explosion. He is buried in Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, Calvados, France.

Sources: Photo: Cilka LaTrace
Service Files of the Second World War / Library and Archives Canada / Ancestry
British Columbia Directories / Vancouver Public Library
Books of Remembrance, Veterans Affairs Canada
PQB News
Juno Beach.org

