

## **Private Robert Roy Edwards<sup>©</sup>**

**Regimental number: 512078**

**3rd Canadian Divisional Mechanical Transport Company,  
Canadian Army Service Corps**

**born: 29 November 1894 - died: 12 June 1918**

Private Robert Roy Edwards (probably known as Roy) was born on 29 November 1894 in Winnipeg, Manitoba,<sup>1</sup> the third child of William and Sarah Edwards.<sup>2</sup> His father, William James Edwards (born in England in about 1866),<sup>3</sup> emigrated to Canada in 1881. He married Sarah Hozack (born in Ontario on 25 July 1870)<sup>4</sup> on 17 July 1889 in Winnipeg.<sup>5</sup> They had six children: William Mathew (born on 16 April 1890 in Winnipeg),<sup>6</sup> Herman Percival (probably known as Percival) (born on 1 January 1893 in Calgary, Alberta),<sup>7</sup> Roy, John (known as Jack) Hozack (born on 2 November 1896) in Winnipeg,<sup>8</sup> Lillian Mary (born on 15 June 1904 in Winnipeg)<sup>9</sup> and Leonard Allan Edwards (born in 1913 in Winnipeg, but died there at the age of 14 in 1927)<sup>10</sup>

The family moved around quite a bit when Roy was a child. In 1891, before his birth, the family was living in Calgary, Alberta, where William was a bookkeeper.<sup>11</sup> Three years later, Roy was born in Winnipeg. Seven years later, the family was living in British Columbia and William was now a locomotive fireman.<sup>12</sup> By 1906, the family had moved to Winnipeg and was living at 460 Flora Avenue.<sup>13</sup> In 1911, the family was at the same address and Roy's father was working for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Roy was now a clerk.

Roy enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 11 November 1915 at Camp Hughes, in Manitoba.<sup>14</sup> Camp Hughes was a military training camp, with extensive trench systems, grenade and rifle ranges, and military structures, located near Carberry, Manitoba. During World War I, more than 38,000 troops of the Canadian Expeditionary Force trained at this camp.<sup>15</sup>

Roy was 5' 6½" tall and had a fair complexion, blue eyes and light brown hair. A few weeks after he enlisted, he left Canada and arrived in England on 15 December 1915. Like so many other Canadian soldiers, he went first to the Shorncliffe Army Camp in Kent, which served as a staging camp for troops heading to the Western Front.<sup>16</sup> He went to the Western Front five months later, arriving in Le Havre, France, on 13 May 1916 to join a mechanical transport unit.

In mid-March 1917, Roy was admitted to No. 39 General Hospital in Le Havre, with gonorrhoea. He did not rejoin his unit until the beginning of July. On 3 July, it was determined that he would forfeit his field allowance and would be "placed under stoppage of pay at rate of 50cts per diem" for the period, 16 March to 3 July, that he was hospital. He was readmitted to hospital in mid-July and, once again, forfeited his allowance and faced a pay stoppage from 14 July to 26 August. On 24 August, he was sentenced to forfeit one day's pay for, contrary to regulations, smoking in the marquee while on active service. He returned again to his unit at the beginning of October.

In April 1918, Roy was serving with the 3rd Canadian Divisional Mechanical Transport Company of the Canadian Army Service Corps and was attached to the 8th Canadian Field Ambulance—the unit with which he was serving when he was fatally injured.

At the end of May 1918, the 8th Canadian Field Ambulance was stationed in Fermont, in northern France.<sup>17</sup> That month 385 military casualties were admitted to the field ambulance. In addition to the military casualties, 158 civilians were treated—some admitted and other reporting to the

dressing station for medicine or dressing, or were seen in their homes. The vast majority of the soldiers were discharged to casualty clearing stations.

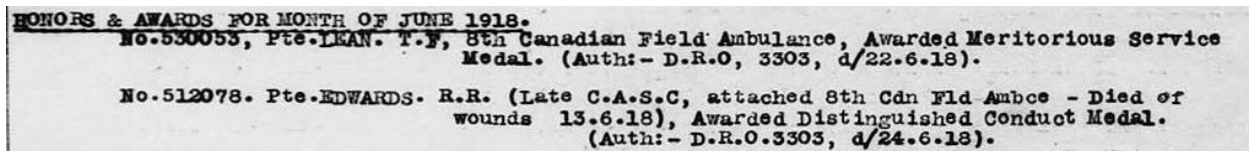
It is not clear how Roy was injured but, on 30 May 1918, he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station with shrapnel wounds to his chest, which penetrated his lung and liver, and to his back, hand and left face. He survived for nearly two weeks but finally succumbed to his wounds on 12 June. He was buried the next day in Pernes Military Cemetery (Plot 5, Row A, Grave No. 14) with the Canadian chaplain R. K. Lambert presiding.<sup>18</sup>

Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.<sup>19</sup> In June 1918, over 4,000 soldiers were admitted to No. 1 CCCS, where there were 82 deaths.<sup>20</sup>

His father William was his next of kin and was notified of his death by a letter from the chaplain.<sup>21</sup> William had the following inscription included on his gravestone:

GOD MOVES  
IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY  
HIS WONDERS TO PERFORM<sup>22</sup>

It was while serving with the 8th Canadian Field Ambulance that Roy was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.<sup>23</sup>



**Entry in 8th Canadian Field Ambulance War Diary, June 1918**

Source: *Ancestry*

The medal awarded to Roy on 3 October 1918 noted:

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. This man was driving his motor ambulance through the village, when he was severely wounded by a shell, a piece of which penetrated his lung, he also had a finger taken an off, and suffered other injuries. In spite of his condition he stopped his ambulance and went into a house, where he helped to dress the wounds of a civilian and carrying him to the ambulance. A little further on he stopped again and picked up a wounded soldier, and finally reached an area of safety where he collapsed at the wheel. His admirable example of self-sacrifice and resolute determination to perform his whole duty was one for which no praise can be too high.<sup>24</sup>

Roy was also awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).

Two of Roy's brothers also served in the Great War. Roy's younger brother Jack was the first to enlist. He enlisted five months before Roy, in June 1915 in Winnipeg, joining the 61st Battalion (Regimental number 460494).<sup>25</sup> He went to England in April 1916 and, in Shorncliffe, he joined the 11th Reserve Battalion. Three months later, he went to France and joined the 16th Battalion. On 12

October 1916, he was wounded and sent back to England. He was in the Masonic Hall Hospital in Bromley, Kent, until December 1916, recovering from gunshot wounds to his arm and neck and chronic disease of the middle ear on both sides. Although he recovered well from the wounds, he was still experiencing considerable hearing loss when he left the hospital in December 1916. He was in a convalescent hospital until he returned to the field and joined the 5th Battalion of the Canadian Railway Troops towards the end of February 1917.

He was still serving on the Front, but was on leave in England, when he was admitted to hospital again in February 1919. He was at the Canadian General Hospital in Shorncliffe suffering from gonorrhoea until May 1919. In June 1919 he left Liverpool to return to Canada. He was demobilized in July 1919 and went to live at 460 Flora Avenue in Winnipeg.

In March 1923, Jack went to the United States and lived in California. He married Luella Pearl Campbell (born on 21 January 1899 in Ontario) in December 1925 in Los Angeles, California. They had at least one child—a daughter, Virginia, born in Winnipeg in August 1927. In 1932, the family was living at 1307 San Pablo Street in Los Angeles.<sup>26</sup> Pearl died at the age of 39 in 1939<sup>27</sup> and Jack, age 69, on 6 March 1968 in Anaheim, California.<sup>28</sup>

Roy's oldest living brother, Herman, was the last brother to enlist. He was a machinist when he enlisted (Regimental number: 502467) in the CEF in January 1916—two months after his brother Jack.<sup>29</sup> He went to England in March 1916 and joined the Western Front in France in January 1917. The following month, his unit changed its designation to 2nd Battalion of the Canadian Railway Troops Depot of the Canadian Engineers. Seven months later he was hospitalized with nephritis—an inflammation of the kidneys—and admitted to the 54th General Hospital. In the spring of 1918, he returned to Canada and, in September of that year, in Winnipeg, he was discharged from the CEF because he was medically unfit for service. Herman and his wife Jean immigrated to the United States in 1923. Their daughter, Phyllis, was born in 1925 in California. In 1930, the family was living at 4762 Mendotta Street in Los Angeles.<sup>30</sup> Herman died on 25 October 1976 in Scarborough, Ontario.

Roy's sister Lillian went to the United States in 1929—perhaps she was joining her brothers.

After the Great War, Roy's parents were still living in Winnipeg. His father was a freighter<sup>31</sup> and his mother, at some point, worked at the North End branch of the Union Bank in Winnipeg.<sup>32</sup> His father may have died in 1944 and his mother, then a widow, died on 2 September 1948.<sup>33</sup>

© 2018 BIFHSGO

---

<sup>1</sup> *Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency* (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/Query.php>: accessed 20 November 2017), entry for Robert Roy Edwards

<sup>2</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 20 November 2017), entry for Edwards, Robert Ro., Service No: 512078

<sup>3</sup> "1891 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for William J Edwards, Province: Territories, District number: 197, District: Alberta, Sub-district: Calgary

<sup>4</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869–1913," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 December 2017), entry for Sarah Hozaek [*sic*]

<sup>5</sup> *Manitoba Vital Statistics Agency* (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/Query.php>: accessed 30 November 2017), entry for William James Edwards

- 
- <sup>6</sup> “Web: Manitoba, Canada, Birth Index, 1866–1912,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for Wilham [sic] Mathew [sic] Edwards
- <sup>7</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 4 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Herman Percival, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2840 - 36, Item number: 374689, Digitized service file - PDF format: B2840-S036. Unless otherwise indicated, all information about Herman’s military career comes from this source.
- <sup>8</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 3 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Jack H., Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2842 - 18, Item number: 374689, Digitized service file - PDF format: B2842-S018
- <sup>9</sup> “Web: Manitoba, Canada, Birth Index, 1866–1912,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for Lillian Edwards
- <sup>10</sup> “Web: Manitoba, Canada, Death Index, 1881–1943,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for Leonard Allan Edwards
- <sup>11</sup> “1891 Census of Canada,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for William J Edwards
- <sup>12</sup> “1901 Census of Canada,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 3 January 2018), entry for Robert Roy Edwards, Province: British Columbia, District: Yale & Cariboo, District number: 5, Sub-district: Kootenay (East/est), (South Riding/Division Nord), Sub-district number: E-4
- <sup>13</sup> “1906 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 3 January 2018), entry for Roy Edwards, Province: Manitoba, District: Winnipeg, Sub-district Description: Ward five, Sub-district: 05F
- <sup>14</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 3 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Robert Roy, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2845 - 10, Item number: 374689, Digitized service file - PDF format: B2845-S010. Unless otherwise indicated, all information about Roy’s military career comes from this source.
- <sup>15</sup> “Camp Hughes,” *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp\\_Hughes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_Hughes); accessed 1 November 2015)
- <sup>16</sup> “Shorncliffe Army Camp,” *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shorncliffe\\_Army\\_Camp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shorncliffe_Army_Camp); accessed 3 January 2018)
- <sup>17</sup> “War diaries - 8th Canadian Field Ambulance,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec\\_nbr=2005073&lang=eng&rec\\_nbr\\_list=2005073,929106](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=2005073&lang=eng&rec_nbr_list=2005073,929106): accessed 4 January 2018), RG9-III-D-3. Volume/box number: 5030. File number: 831. Copied container number: T-10918-10919.
- <sup>18</sup> “No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 20 November 2018), entry for Edwards R.R.
- <sup>19</sup> “Pernes British Military Cemetery,” *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11600/PERNES%20BRITISH%20CEMETERY>: accessed 13 January 2015)
- <sup>20</sup> “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G): accessed 15 December 2014)
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 20 November 2017), entry for Edward, Robert Roy
- <sup>23</sup> “War diaries - 8th Canadian Field Ambulance,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec\\_nbr=2005073&lang=eng&rec\\_nbr\\_list=](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=2005073&lang=eng&rec_nbr_list=)

---

[2005073,929106](#): accessed 4 January 2018). Although this entry in the war diary indicates that he died on 13 June 1918, the records of No 1 CCCS and Roy's military service file indicate that he died on 12 June.

<sup>24</sup> "Canada, Military Honours and Awards Citation Cards, 1900–1961," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 3 January 2018), entry for R R Edwards

<sup>25</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 3 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Jack H. Unless otherwise indicated, all information about Jack's military career comes from this source.

<sup>26</sup> "U.S., Naturalization Records, 1840–1957," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 20 November 2018), entry for Jack Hozack Edwards

<sup>27</sup> "California, Death Index, 1905–1939," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 8 January 2018), entry for Pearl L Edwards

<sup>28</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 3 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Jack H

<sup>29</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 4 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Herman Percival. Unless otherwise indicated, all information about Herman's military career comes from this source.

<sup>30</sup> "1930 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 January 2018), entry for Herman P. Edwards

<sup>31</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 12 January 2018), entry for William J Edwards,, Province or territory : Manitoba, District: Winnipeg North, District number: 39, Sub-District: Winnipeg (City), Sub-district number: 28, City, Municipality : Ward 3

<sup>32</sup> "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 3 January 2018) entry for Edwards, Robert Roy

<sup>33</sup> "Deaths," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 2 September 1948, entry for Edwards