

Sergeant Clarence Verne Boyd MM[©]
Regimental number: 500607
4th Signal Company, Canadian Engineers

born: 13 October 1893–died: 30 September 1918

Sergeant Clarence Verne Boyd, the second son of James Boyd and the former Susannah Lougheed, was born on 13 October 1893 in Grey County, Ontario.¹ His older brother, John Reginald, had been born five years earlier.²

Both Clarence's parents were born in Ontario. James Boyd, born on 18 November 1855, was the son of Scottish immigrants, John and Margaret Boyd.³ His wife Susannah, born on 11 April 1858, was the daughter of Irish immigrants, Robert Lougheed and Eliza Seabrook.⁴ The couple married in Euphrasia, Grey County, on 2 February 1886.⁵ James was a millwright.

Clarence's older brother was born on 27 August 1887⁶ and, in 1891, the young family was living in Euphrasia, where James was farming.⁷ Ten years later the family, now with the addition of Clarence, was still farming in Euphrasia.⁸ By 1911, Clarence's father had become a factory man and the family was living in Meaford, Grey County—probably on Denmark Street. Ruby Lougheed, the daughter of Susannah's brother George, was living with the family.⁹ She would stay with the family until at least 1921.¹⁰

When Clarence enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 21 October 1915, he was a student but had previously served in the militia.¹¹ He was 5' 8" tall and had a dark complexion, hazel eyes and brown hair. He arrived in England on 10 January 1916 and went to the Canadian camp at Shorncliffe. He joined the 4th Canadian Divisional Signal Corps of the Canadian Engineers in June and left for France on 11 August 1916.

On 19 May 1917, Clarence was promoted to lance corporal and in mid-July was given ten days leave in Marseilles. About six weeks after he rejoined his unit, he was admitted to No. 11 Canadian Field Ambulance with tonsillitis but was discharged a few days later.

On 20 July 1917, Clarence was appointed second corporal. In early August he distinguished himself with his conspicuous gallantry in the field and was awarded a Military Medal. He showed leadership and bravery in continuing to lay telephone lines under enemy fire.¹²

HONOURS AND AWARDS TO COMPANY PERSONNEL DURING MONTH.

Recommended by O.C. Unit.

500607 A/Sgt. Boyd, C.V.

"MILITARY MEDAL".

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty from the 7th to 11th August 1918, especially near MEHARICOURT - BOSIERES (Sheet F.16.a.)

From the 7th to the 11th of August 1918, this N.C.O. displayed conspicuous courage and initiative in laying and maintaining telephone lines.

Throughout the period mentioned, his conduct was a fine example to the men, under very trying conditions.

On the 11th, after working with practically no sleep for 3 days, he took charge of a Cable detachment, the N.C.O. in charge having been killed, and laid a line to Brigade Headquarters through MEHARICOURT under shell fire and bombing and machine gun fire from aeroplanes, and established communications.

Sergeant Clarence V. Boyd's citation for Military Medal

Source: 4th Canadian Divisional Signal Company war diary, Library and Archives Canada

Perhaps as a result of his gallantry, he was appointed acting sergeant on 12 August 1918 and was then given two weeks leave in the United Kingdom, rejoining his unit at the end of August.

When he joined on 31 August, his battalion was in the field at Hermaville, 15 kilometres northwest of Arras, France. At the end of September, the 3rd Signal Company was probably supporting the British offensive near Cambrai. The men were involved in preparing communication systems for the offensive attack. It was while doing this work that Clarence was fatally injured. He received gunshot wounds to his abdomen and was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 30 September. He died there the same day and was buried the following day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Plot 8, Row A, Grave 9) with the Canadian chaplain W. Fisher presiding. He died just days before his 25th birthday.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.¹³ No. 1 CCCS arrived at the beginning of September 1918 and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918. Clarence was one of 1681 Canadians admitted to the station in September and 31 to die there that month.¹⁴

In addition to the Military Medal, Clarence was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) and the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre).

In 1921, Clarence's parents were living at 5 Monarch Park in Toronto, where James was a carpenter.¹⁵ They were living at 15 Monarch Park when Susannah died on 29 December 1937 of lobar pneumonia¹⁶ and when James died of arteriosclerosis and senility on 12 January 1940.¹⁷ Both were buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Clarence's brother John became a doctor, which may be why there is no evidence that he served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He married Pauline Ruby Shupe on 14 June 1916 in Welland, Ontario,¹⁸ and in 1921 they were living with two children at 169 East Main in Welland.¹⁹ They had at least three children, two of whom died prematurely. Their first child, Ross Verne, died on 12 February 1923 of whooping cough at the age of 6.²⁰ Their second child, Betty Theresa, died on 15 December 1940 of meningococcal meningitis at the age of 20.²¹ Their third child, Margaret Jean, born in 1927, married Raymond Clifford Cork and died in 2006.²² Pauline died on 13 August 1956²³ and John on 28 June 1969.²⁴ They all joined John's parents in Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

© 2020 BIFHSGO

¹ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for Clarence [sic] Verne Boyd

² "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for John Reginald Boyd

³ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for James Boyd; "1881 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for James Boyd, Province: Ontario, District number: 14, District: Grey East, Sub-district number: C, Sub-district: Euphrasia, Division: 1

⁴ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1947," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for Susanah [sic] Boyd

⁵ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for James Boyd

⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1858–1913," *Ancestry*, entry for John Reginald Boyd

-
- ⁷ "1891 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for James Boyd, Enumeration district: 67
- ⁸ "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for Clarence V. Boyd, Province: Ontario, District: Grey (East/est), District number: 64, Sub-district: Euphrasia, Sub-district number: 3
- ⁹ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 25 January 2020), entry for Vernon [*sic*] Boyd, Province: Ontario, District: Grey North, District number: 73, Sub-district: 38 - Meaford, Sub-district number: 38
- ¹⁰ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 25 January 2020), entry for James H. Boyd, Province or territory: Ontario, District: York East, District number: 143, Sub-district: Toronto (City, part), Sub-district number: 57, City, town or village: Toronto
- ¹¹ "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>; accessed 24 January 2020), entry for Boyd, Clarence Verne, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 972-22, Item number: 58440, Digitized service file - PDF format: B0972-S022. Unless otherwise specified, all information about Clarence's military service comes from this source.
- ¹² "War diaries 4th Canadian Divisional Signal Company," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://collectionsCanada.gc.ca>; accessed 14 February 2020), Date: 1916/08/01-1919/04/30, Reference: RG9-III-D-3. Volume/box number: 5005. File number: 693. Container: T-10853. Unless otherwise specified, all information about Clarence's company's movements comes from this source.
- ¹³ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ¹⁴ "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/>; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ¹⁵ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry*, entry for James H. Boyd
- ¹⁶ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1947," *Ancestry*, entry for Susanah [*sic*] Boyd
- ¹⁷ "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869-1947," *Ancestry*, entry for James Boyd
- ¹⁸ "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826-1937," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for John Reginald Boyd
- ¹⁹ "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 25 January 2020), entry for James H. Boyd, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Welland, District number: 138, Sub-district: Welland (City), Sub-district number: 40, City, town or village: Welland City
- ²⁰ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for Ross Verne Boyd
- ²¹ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for Betty Theresa [*sic*] Boyd
- ²² "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for Margaret Jean Cork
- ²³ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for Pauline Ruby Boyd
- ²⁴ "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 28 January 2020), entry for John Reginald Boyd