

Brady, Sidney Edward
Private
The Black Watch (Royal
Highland Regiment) of Canada
D 72205



Sidney Brady was born in Montreal, Quebec on November 5, 1921. Montreal is the Province of Quebec's largest city and it was named after Mont Royal, situated in the south-west of Canada.

During the first five years of his life, Sidney was raised by his grandmother Milton. He never saw his own father, Michael, and apparently, his mother Edna was not capable of looking after him. So he never saw her either. After his grandmother's death, Sidney was adopted by his uncle Milton and his aunt even though official papers are missing.



These were not in his grandmother's possession either. Uncle Milton is his legal representative and later on also his heir. Milton was forty-five when Sidney died. They lived in Montreal all their life and were members of the United Church.

Sydney went to Public School for seven or eight years and had then reached the age of fourteen or fifteen. From 1935 until 1941 he had several jobs. He worked, among others, for M. Johnson in Montreal and a year and a half as a labourer with Canada Dry Ltd. in Montreal. The latter company has existed for

more than one hundred and thirty years and started by bottling Ginger Ale, a product that was known all over the world. Later on, other soft drinks were also bottled there. Sidney spoke and wrote English and also spoke French. He was still single when he decided to sign up for the army.

On March 3, 1941, when Sidney was nineteen years old, he was medically examined. He was 5 ft 4" tall and weighed 127 lbs. Sidney had a medium-light skin tone, blue eyes and dark hair. On March 5, he started his active service as a Rifleman in Montreal with No 4 District Depot. He was assigned to the Victoria Rifles of Canada (VRC). After his basic training he left for St. John's, located in the municipality of Botwood, Newfoundland, where Sidney took the Guard Duty training. From April 23 until May 4, 1941 Sidney was laid up in St. John's General Hospital to have his tonsils removed and to recover for a few days.

With the VRC, Sidney was transferred again, this time by aircraft, to Valcartier Camp, Newfoundland. On October 2, 1941 they arrived here and departed for Nanaimo, British Columbia on November 11. Sidney caused damage to the barracks and had to pay \$ 10,00 for this on December 20, 1941. From February 12 until the end of February 1942 Sidney continued his training at A 13 Canadian Advanced Infantry Training Centre. In Macaulay Camp, Esquimalt, British Columbia, he was admitted to Victoria Military Hospital with nasal problems for twelve days. He stayed in hospital from May 17 to May 28, 1942.

The follow-up training with the VRC took place in Sussex, New Brunswick. One of the trainings he did was the Emergency Trials training. Subsequently, Sidney was transferred to The Black Watch and they started preparing to go overseas, to the war in Europe.

Finally, on September 30, 1942 the day came for Sidney, with The Black Watch, to leave his home country to go to the United Kingdom, where he arrived on October 7. An evaluation took place on November 25. Sidney was then twenty-one years old and had gained quite some weight during his time in the army. He weighed 158 lbs. Sidney said that he had never seen his father and that he lived with his uncle and aunt. He loved playing the guitar and practising sports, such as wrestling, swimming, rugby, baseball and softball. He indicated that he wanted to become a Bren Gunner. By his superior Sidney was described as a well-groomed and neat young man, short but sturdy and cheerful. He had not seen his mother for fifteen years. Sidney was averagely intelligent, a bit slow in learning, but stable and with a good memory. He wanted to join the army because he wanted to see some of the world.

On January 13, 1943 Sidney was with the #2 Special Coy with The Essex Scottish. Later on, he joined the Black Watch again and on March 5, 1943 he received the One Good Conduct Badge for two years of service. This was a badge that could be worn on the sleeve of the uniform. The next reward for his voluntary service was the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp, which he was awarded on January 15, 1944. In February 1944 he was penalized for being absent without permission.

In the UK Sidney took the Sniping Course from March 6 to March 17, 1944. After the huge losses on D-Day, June 6, 1944, the troops had to be reinforced and Sidney Brady too left the UK in order to go to France as part of the 13th Battalion of The Black Watch. They arrived on Juno Beach on July 6.

On July 25 they received orders to advance across May-sur-Orne and to secure Verrières Ridge. The hastily advancing Black Watch, under Major Mitchell's command, was all but wiped out that day and a total of three hundred and seven soldiers lost their lives. Among them were five officers and one hundred and eighteen others who were killed or died of their wounds. On September 3, The Black Watch took part in a victory parade through Dieppe, the location of their first action in 1942. The battalion was part of the Canadian advance across France and Belgium to the Netherlands, where they were engaged in the evacuation of the Scheldt estuary, which was essential to liberate the vital port of Antwerp.

On October 13, The Black Watch started their attack just after sunrise. They were supported by artillery and heavy mortar fire. The attack on Woensdrecht was the second devastating battle in the Regiment's European war. The attack, however, was not successful. All Company Commanders lost their lives and at dawn it became clear that there were a huge number of casualties. It had



been a badly prepared attack across muddy dikes near Woensdrecht. For the Black Watch October 13 was 'Black Friday', the second disaster on one

day in the history of the Royal Highland Regiment of Canada. One hundred and forty-five soldiers lost their lives.

On November 2, 1944 the unit moved across Antwerp and set up their camp in Lierre, four miles south-east of the big port.

During the month of November the battalion was given few military tasks and it was allowed to build itself up again, to train and conduct patrols. On November 10, the RHC moved to new territory, near Cuijk, in the Netherlands. Here too, most of the time was spent on training and conducting patrols. On December 1, the battalion was moved to Groesbeek, which was situated on higher grounds, sandwiched between the swollen Rhine in the north and the Maas behind it.

On January 8 there was good news: Lieutenant Nichols, captured during the first night of the New Year, had successfully escaped from Kleve, while in the hands of the Gestapo, and managed to return to the RHC lines. It was a thrilling escape. Chased by dogs, which he managed to evade, he travelled by night, guided by the stars. He reached the Canadian lines with a detailed intelligence report on the German defence. On January 30, the CO announced that the Military Cross had been assigned to Nichols. He was allowed to go on leave. Tragically enough, three days later the battalion received news that Lieutenant Nichols had died in a plane crash, while on his way to Great Britain.

Apart from raids, there were no big actions in the month of January.

On January 29, 1945 the RHC moved to Dekkerswald (near Nijmegen). Most soldiers were housed in dug-outs, while some succeeded in finding houses to stay in. Oil heaters were handed out to the men in the dug-outs.

Operation Veritable started on February 8, 1945. At 07.50 hours the barrage started and at 10.30 hours each unit in the area that possessed heavy arms fired them.

The first few Companies had withdrawn and did not return to their front positions until 12.00 hours. The noise was horrendous and it was not until late in the afternoon that the noise was reduced. During the first stage there was mortar fire. C-Company suffered three losses and three others got wounded. The battle was fierce and two attacks were repulsed, but at 16.00 hours the village of Wyler was successfully captured.

Photo – 45759-N Holland – Feb 15, 1945



45759-N

A BIT OF GOOD ADVICE IN HOLLAND

Since men of the Black Watch Regiment of Canada heard of the speed of the Russian advance, two of them nailed this sign, "Don't be Trigger Happy...The Russians are Headed This Way", to a tree as a warning to over anxious comrades. They are: Pte. Syd Brady, 3336 Rochon Street, Montreal (left), and Pte. Hugh Carleton, 638 Liverpool Street, Montreal. (CANADIAN ARMY OVERSEAS PHOTO 15-Feb-45)

Another attack was launched on February 28. However, the Companies were immediately pinned down by heavy artillery and mortar fire and nobody was able to move. Robert Davey, who was in charge of B-Company as Acting Major, successfully led his men to a major target at the edge of the wood. They followed him along fire-strewn access roads and killed the parachutists in fierce man-to-man battles. Subsequently, Davey reorganised his platoons in order to hold their positions and to deliver devastating covering fire, so that other Companies of the battalion were able to reach their targets.

The Black Watch and the Calgary Highlanders, together with the other regiments of the 2nd Division, completed the clearing of the Hochwald.

At 03.00 hours on March 1, 1945 A, C and D Companies withdrew from their positions. A, C, and D Companies were all under cover in the area near Uedem. It was not possible to relieve B-Company before 20.30 hours. The men were on the brink of exhaustion. A resting place was found for them, where they too could find cover and take a well-deserved break, as they had been under continuous fire all day long.

Private Sidney Brady too was fatally injured on March 1. He was only twenty-three years old. Sidney was temporarily buried at a Canadian military cemetery in Bedburg, Germany, row 26, grave 11.

On September 4, 1945 Private Brady was reburied at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, near Nijmegen, grave reference **VII. G. 9.**

Private Sidney Edward Brady undoubtedly must have received medals, but which one(s) is unknown.



Photo: Peter ten Dijke



Life story: Liesbeth Huisman-Arts, Research Team Faces To Graves.

*If you have a photograph of this soldier or any additional information, please contact info@facestograves.nl.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

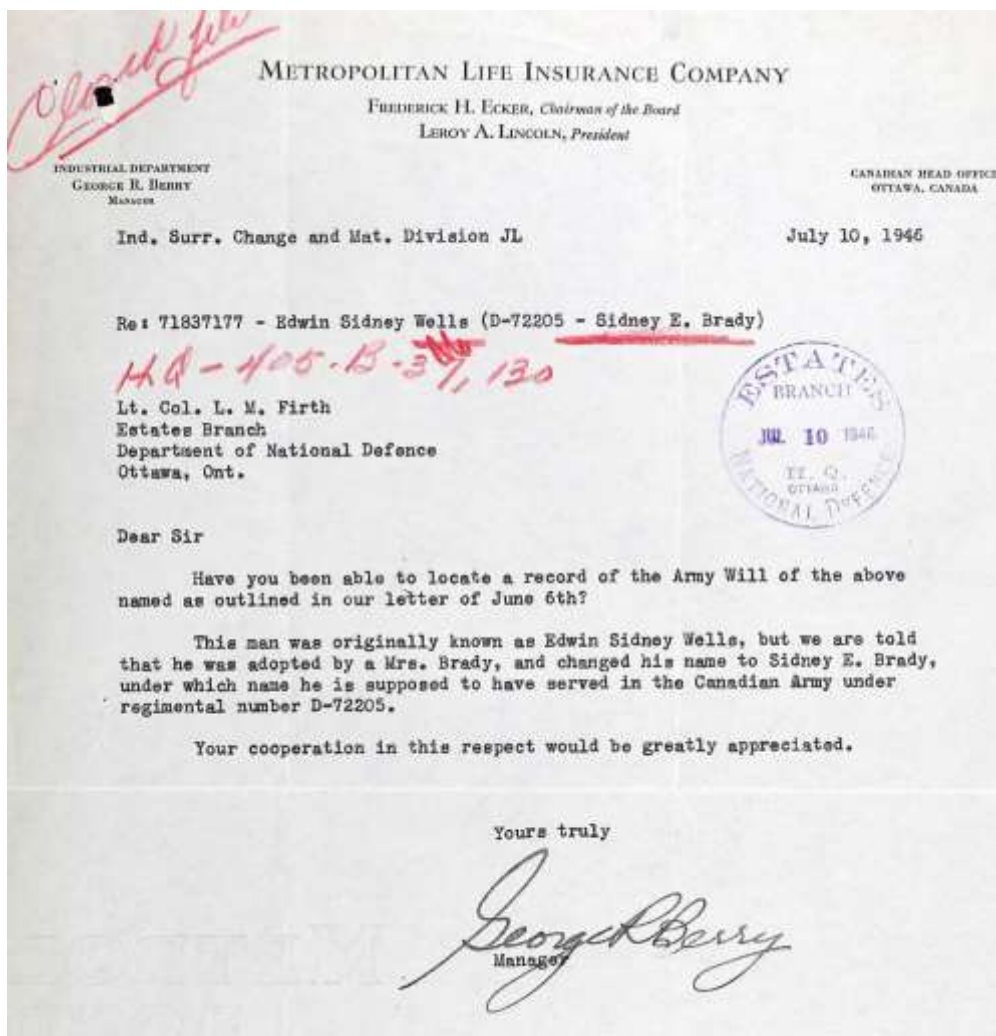
Library and Archives Canada

War Diaries The Black Watch

Veterans.gc.ca



Cenotaph for all fallen soldiers at Place du Canada in Montreal. Photo: Jean Gagnon



Information on a document from Sidney's papers, which show that he had a completely different name.

MAY 26 1941

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ORIGINAL
DUPLICATE
TELETYPE

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY FORM

(To be completed in triplicate. Copy designation to be shown by striking out words not applicable.)

Unit VICTORIA RIFLES OF CAN. A.F. Regimental Number D-72205

PTE

CANADIAN ACTIVE SERVICE FORCE
ATTESTATION PAPER

1. Surname..... BRADY
2. Christian Names..... SIDNEY EDWARD
3. Present address..... 204 Villeray St., Montreal, P.Q. (Apt. 3) Canada
4. Date of birth..... 5 Nov. 1921
5. Place of birth..... Canada..... Quebec..... Montreal,
(Country) (County or Province) (Town or Township)
6. Religion (state denomination)..... United Church of Canada
7. Trade or Calling..... Laborer
8. Married, Widower or Single..... Single
9. Name of next of kin..... Mr. Milton BRADY
10. Relationship..... Uncle
11. Address of next of kin..... 204 Villeray Street, Apt. 3, Montreal, P.Q. CAN:
12. Do you belong to, or have you served in the Active Militia of Canada? NO
13. Have you served in (a) The Canadian Active Service Force?..... NO
(If Yes, Give Unit and Dates of Service)
(Yes or No)
- (b) Any other Naval, Military, or Air Force?..... NO
(If Yes, Give Regimental No. and Unit) (Yes or No) (If Yes, specify Unit and Period of Service)
14. Did you serve during the Great War 1914-1918?..... NO
(If Yes, specify Regimental No., Unit and Dates of Service)

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION

I, Sidney Edward Brady.....do solemnly declare that the above particulars are true, and I hereby engage to serve in the Canadian Active Service Force so long as an emergency, i.e., war, invasion, riot or insurrection, real or apprehended, exists, and for the period of demobilization after said emergency ceases to exist, and in any event for a period of not less than one year, provided His Majesty should so require my services.

Date 5 March 1941.....W. Weber.....Sidney E. Brady
(Signature of recruit)

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION
I, Sidney Edward Brady.....do sincerely promise and swear (or solemnly declare) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty.

Sidney E. Brady.....(Signature of Recruit)

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OR ATTESTING OFFICER

The Recruit above-named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answers to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided by law. The above questions and answers were then read to the recruit in my presence. I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me,

at Montreal South, P.Q. this 5th day of March 1941

Ab. Humphreys.....(Signature of Magistrate, Justice or Attesting Officer)

NO. 4 DISTRICT DEPOT, C. A. S. F......(Office or Rank and Unit or Appointment)

N.B. ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE FACT THAT ANY PERSON MAKING A FALSE ANSWER TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS IS LIABLE TO A PENALTY OF SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT

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