

Daigle, Victor Willie

Age: 30

Nationality: Canadian

Rank: Lance Corporal

Unit: Royal Canadian
Ordnance Corps.

Occupation: Mechanic

Service No: E/20527

Birth: 22 August 1912
St. Malo, PQ, Canada

Home Town: Quebec City, PQ, Canada

Death: 25 May 1943
Struck by truck,
Saanich Road, B.C., Canada

Burial: St. Charles Cemetery, Quebec City, PQ, Canada



Biography

Victor Daigle was a heavy-set French Canadian. He left school at 19 only having attained grade 8, but with good mechanical aptitude.

After seven years at various unskilled jobs, Victor found work as a motor mechanic, a job he was interested in and could do well.

With seven years in the Non-Permanent Active Militia, Victor joined the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps in June 1941, in Quebec City, to train as a fitter and driver. Due to his excess weight he was rated at fitness class B1 and performed only 'fair' in physical training. His mechanical knowledge was limited and his education level poor, but he was accepted for training.

Victor was pleasant, stable and reliable and qualified as a Fitter group B and a Driver class III in August 1942. He had performed well in all his practical courses but rather less well at courses which required reading, where he was weak. In summary, he was rated as good in military efficiency and leadership and excellent in conduct and overall, a good and hard worker.

Victor remained in Quebec until April 1942, when he was attached to the Royal Rifles of Canada in Vernon, B.C. His movements for the next year are not known but he was posted to Patricia Bay before May 1943.

On 25 May 1943, Victor suffered a fatal accident. He was mechanic on a Bren carrier, and was leaning over the side to make a check when an RCAF truck passed and struck his head. He died instantaneously.

Victor was born in St. Malo, PQ., on 22 August 1912, to Pierre Daigle, a shoe repairer, and Florida Martel. He had six brothers and one sister. On 30 August 1941, two months after he enlisted, Victor was given permission to marry Marie Jeanette Yvonne Scott, née Boisvert. His wife had two children, Roger Scott, b.1935, and Huguette Scott, b. 1937, whom Victor claimed as dependants.

Details of Accident

On 25 May 1943, at about 10:50 am, L/Cpl Victor Daigle was riding in a Bren Carrier driven by Sgt. William Dodds, which was being tested. L/Cpl Daigle was examining the left track, which meant he had to stand and lean out of the side of the carrier. The carrier had to be kept on the paved surface of the road as the test could not be done if it wobbled on an uneven surface. They were travelling at about 15-20 mph on East Saanich Road between Oakland Rd. and Airport Rd.

Sgt. Dodds noticed an RCAF truck approaching from the opposite direction at about 25-30 mph, heading for the garbage dump. As far as he could see, it had ample clearance and he did not notice any unusual noise as it passed. L/Cpl Daigle remained standing in the same position and Sgt. Dodds was unaware of what had happened.

L/Cpl E. Davis was driving a Bren Carrier following Sgt. Dodds. He saw the truck pass by and noticed L/Cpl Daigle's hat fly off after which he saw Daigle hanging limply from the vehicle with blood pouring from his head. Davis tried hooting at Dodds to get his attention but could not be heard over the noise of the carriers. He overtook Dodds' vehicle and signalled to him to pull over and stop. This was the first Dodds knew of the accident. Davis went to fetch an ambulance and doctor from the station while Dodds remained with L/Cpl Daigle and informed passing B.C. police of what had happened. When the Military Police from the station arrived he gave them a description of the RCAF truck and driver.

The Military Police found the truck still at the garbage dump and brought the driver back to the scene. The driver claimed he had seen the carrier approaching and that he had thought it was weaving on the road, and had pulled over to give it adequate clearance. He was not aware that he had hit the mechanic and continued on his route.

When the truck was examined, human hair and blood were found on the left side, confirming it to be the truck involved in the accident.

The inquest concluded that the death was the result of an accident and there is no record of anyone being apportioned blame.



Canadian Bren (Universal) Carrier

