

CORPORAL ARNOLD JOHN DRYER

Regimental # M45568

Written by Wanda Zenner



Arnold, born on August 24, 1914 at Hanna, Alberta, was the oldest of John and Margaret Dryer's nine children. He had four brothers; Robert, William, David, Jack and four sisters; Mabel, Fay, Iris, Daisy. After several crop failures in Southern Alberta, the family moved to Grande Prairie in 1931. They eventually rented land in the Glen Leslie area and the children received their education at the Somme School. Arnold worked on the family farm and for local farmers; however in 1934, he started to follow the rodeo circuit - a sport he enjoyed for three summers.

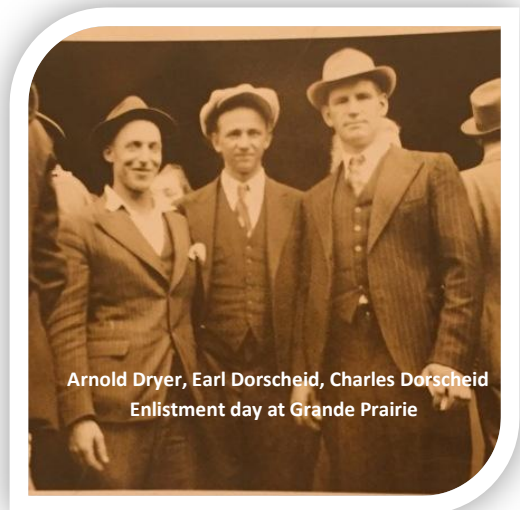
On June 24, 1940, Arnold enlisted in the Army, Southern Alberta Regiment (29th Canadian Armoured Regiment) at Grande Prairie. He served as a Corporal during WWII.

Arnold was transferred to various locations for

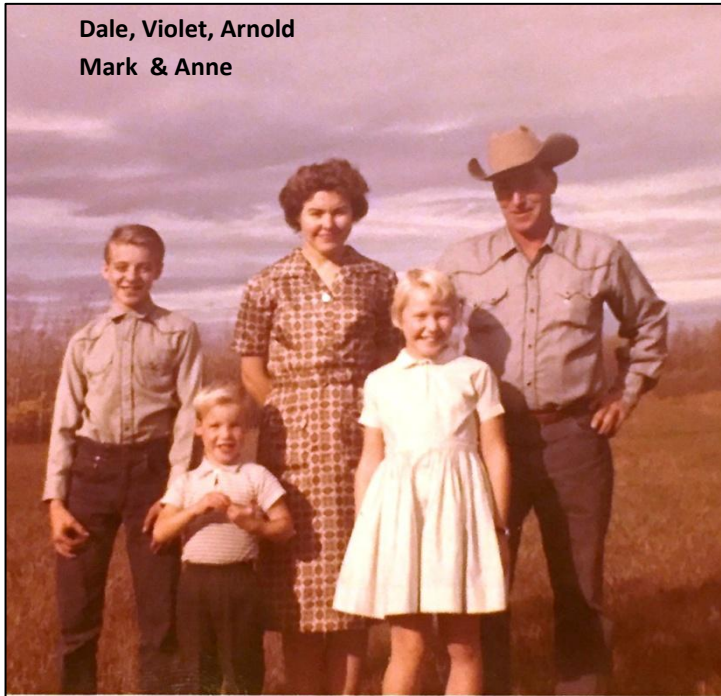
basic training; Dundurn, Saskatchewan; Nanaimo, BC; Niagara, Ontario and Debert, Nova Scotia where he successfully completed courses to become a Qualified Gunner Class I, a Qualified Driver Class III, and a Qualified Driver Operator Group C. He sailed from Halifax on August 21, 1942 and disembarked at Glasgow, Scotland on September 1, 1942. Once Arnold arrived in England, his squadron was billeted at Rowledge which was not far from the Canadian Army Base located at Aldershot.

While at a local dance, Arnold met Violet Remnant and the young couple continued their relationship by correspondence when Arnold was transferred to France on July 22, 1944. When the war ended, Violet and Arnold married on August 23, 1945 at Rowledge, England. Corporal Arnold Dryer served in Canada, United Kingdom and Continental Europe. He received the 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, Defence Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp.

Arnold sailed for Canada and arrived in Grande Prairie on January 3, 1946 following which he received his official discharge on February 7, 1946 in Calgary. However, Violet had to wait to receive



Arnold Dryer, Earl Dorscheid, Charles Dorscheid
Enlistment day at Grande Prairie



permission from the Canadian Wives Bureau to join her husband. In the interim, Arnold once again found employment as a labourer for local farmers.

Violet finally received permission to travel and sailed on the Aquitania, arrived in Canada and arrived by train at Grande Prairie on July 4, 1946. By means of a loan through the VLA, the Dryer's purchased a ½ section of land in the Hermit Lake area that contained a house and several out-buildings. Violet and Arnold operated a mixed farming operation and had three children, Dale, Anne and Mark. As well, Arnold often assisted the local veterinarian, Dr. Somerville, with the care of animals in

the area. Arnold and Violet eventually sold the ½ section of land and moved to Grande Prairie. Shortly after the sale, Arnold suffered a heart attack and started to lose his eye sight in 1973. Arnold still got around even though he was blind, by memorizing the route. He would meet a group of friends known as the "Senators" at the Co-op coffee shop. Arnold would visit and reminisce and then walk home.

Arnold passed away on November 27, 1977 and was buried at the Grande Prairie Cemetery. Violet is currently residing in McKenzie Place, Grande Prairie.

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Reference

- Smoky to Grande Prairie History Book
- 1926 Census records
- South Peace Regional Archives – War Brides Collections
- Interview with Dale Dryer – son
- Interview with Anne Schmard – daughter
- Photos courtesy of Anne Schmard
- Sharon Kimble – Dryer land information at Glen Leslie