

## SERGEANT JOHN ROBERT DELANEY

Regimental # M100721



John, born on August 24, 1911 at Blezard Valley, Nipissing District, Ontario was the 3rd youngest in John Sr. and Alberta "Bertha" (McKenzie) Delaney's family of seven children. He had four sisters; Annie (died 1917), Lila, Edna, Ada and two brothers; Archie and Alvin. They lived on the family farm in Algoma County until John Sr. died from cardiac failure on May 27, 1918. Bertha and the children subsequently moved into the town of Thessalon. Shortly thereafter, Bertha answered an advertisement to become a mail-order-bride. Bertha and the children arrived in Grande Prairie on June 17, 1919. She married Isaac Benjamin Boyer the next day and the family settled on Isaac's homestead in the Kleskun Hills area. The Boyer's had four children, Clarence, Ruth, Raymond and Harry.

John attended school at the one-room East Kleskun School until he left home to work for various farmers in the surrounding Districts. While working for Tom and Edith Smith from Sexsmith, he became acquainted with their youngest daughter, Rose, whom he married on February 14, 1939. The young couple made their first home in an old log cabin on John's brother, Alvin's property. A son, Robert was

born in the fall of 1939. As John had previously purchased 80 acres (1/2 of SW-2-73-4-W6) from Alvin, he decided to build a new cabin for his family on his property. He utilized the logs from Alvin's vacated cabin. The following summer, John went to work for his father-in-law. Their next move was to the Jess Harris farm for the summer.

On April 28, 1942, John enlisted with the Royal Canadian Army in Grande Prairie. As John was transferred to Camrose for basic training, Rose and their young son, Robert, stayed with the Smith family. In 1944 another son, Albert was born and Rose decided to take the children and join her husband in Camrose. They stayed until the war was over at which time John was sent to Dundurn, Saskatchewan to assist in the clean-up of the camps. Rose and the children once again moved back to stay with her parents. Sergeant John Robert Delaney was discharged on April 12, 1946 at Calgary, served in Canada and received the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp.

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John returned home and purchased the NE 15-73-5-W6 along with a Case tractor and binder by means of loan from the VLA. In March 1949, a daughter Rita was born followed by another son, Kenneth Dale in 1951. The Delaney's farmed and raised cattle continuously until John was diagnosed with cancer in the fall of 1954 and passed away at the Royal Alex Hospital in Edmonton on February 17, 1955. He was laid to rest at the Glen Leslie Cemetery.



Robert subsequently quit school so that he could take over the farming responsibilities. During the spring of 1955, the neighbors organized a work-bee to ensure that a crop was seeded for the young widow and her family. With hired help in the fall, Rose and her sons were able to continue on farming. In 1957, a decision was made to build a new house. With the assistance of friends, relatives and the staff of the VLA administration office who shingled the roof, the house was ready for occupancy. In December 1957, Rose married John Fitzsimmons and they moved into the unfinished house after New Year's. John Fitzsimmons purchased a ¼ of land that John Delaney and Rose had been renting which meant the Fitzsimmons now owned a ½ section of land. They continued to rent another quarter until they could afford to purchase it. Rose and John had a daughter, Joanne born in October 1958. When John passed away, Rose's youngest son, Dale, moved a mobile home out to the farm yard which enabled Rose to continue to live on the farm.

Rose passed away in 2006 and was buried at the St. Stephen's Anglican Church Cemetery in Sexsmith.

### Reference

Smoky to Grande Prairie History Book

Delaney – Boyer Family History Book

Interview with Robert Delaney, son

Discharge Certificate

### Note:

*Date of birth in Delaney-Boyer Family History Book states August 24, 1912.*

*Per Robert Delaney (son), John had lost the sight in one eye in an accident as a youngster.*

