

# Record of Service Podcast Episode 4: The Prisoner

---

Article by [The Memory Project/Le Projet Mémoire](#)

Published Online April 21, 2021

Last Edited December 2, 2020

---

[Record of Service](#), a podcast presented by [The Memory Project](#), a program of [Historica Canada](#). In this series, we bring you interviews with Canada's veterans—their stories of life, loss and service. (Click [here](#) to view the entire series.)

Edward Carter-Edwards served on a Halifax heavy bomber with the [Royal Canadian Air Force](#) during the [Second World War](#). He was one of 168 Allied airmen temporarily imprisoned in the Buchenwald Concentration camp after his aircraft was shot down over German-occupied France.

Music Credits: Kai Engel – Brooks, Marcel Pequel - Four

## Transcript

history and legacy of Residential Schools in Canada.

**Riley Burns:** “I didn’t want to be an Indian, I didn’t know who in the hell I wanted to be. I wasn’t accepted by the white man; I was accepted by my own people in my reserve.”

**AWS:** Subscribe to Historica Canada Podcasts for deep dives into our past. You can listen to “Residential Schools” on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts. Never stop learning.

**Edward Carter-Edwards:** “So we thought, once we’re here, we will never get out alive. Nobody will ever know we had been here; nobody even knows where we are! You could hear the moans and groans and agonies of people being tortured by the Gestapo. You could hear shots ringing out.”

**Maia Foster:** Welcome to “Record of Service”, a podcast presented by Historica Canada. I’m your host, Maia Foster. In this series, we bring you interviews with Canada’s veterans—their stories of life, loss, and their time in the service. This episode, we’ll focus on the story of Edward Carter-Edwards, a Canadian airman who was shot down over France.

Just a warning to those that may be listening with young ones around, today’s story contains graphic descriptions.

**Edward Carter Edwards:** “I don’t remember this. I don’t remember pulling

We took off and we were just minutes from dropping our bomb when the whole aircraft shook, just as if someone was hitting it with a sledgehammer.”

**MF:** The captain alerted his crew to prepare to abandon the aircraft. A German fighter had flown underneath their plane and fired.

**ECE:** “We had to bail out in a heck of a hurry. And it wasn’t until many, many years later that I met my navigator and he said, ‘Do you remember the night that we were shot down?’ And I said, ‘Well, kind of... I don’t remember leaving the aircraft.’ Well, he said, ‘No wonder, you were sitting in the escape hatch at the front of the aircraft and [you] froze.’ I didn’t know this, and I don’t remember, but I froze in that position, which meant I blocked Gordy’s exit, the navigator, who was behind me. He couldn’t get out. She he said, ‘All I did was put my foot on your back and shoved you out because I wanted to get out too.’”

**MF:** When their Halifax bomber crashed, the blaze lit up the countryside. He and his crew were on the ground, separated, in German-occupied France.

**ECE:** “I could see the Seine river. I could see a white church steeple sticking

two women there. And I said in my poor high school French, 'Avez vous le pain, s'il vous plait?' Which means, 'Have you any bread please?' And the one lady said to me, in good English, 'Who are you, what do you want? What are you doing here?' I said, 'I'm a Canadian airman. I was shot down a few nights ago. I need food. I need help. I want to be in touch with the underground. I'd like to get back to England.' So she ushered me into the house, took me into the kitchen, gave me a bowl of hot milk and bread and she said, 'Now, you can't stay here because if the Gestapo find you here, you may not be executed, but we will.'"

**MF:** Edward stayed with the women for a couple of days, until a young man and woman brought him a fake French passport. The couple promised Edward safe passage to Spain.

**MF:** Soon their fate took a turn for the worse.

**ECE:** "So they gathered everybody up and they took us by trucks and buses down to the railway yard in Paris where we were forced into this little French cattle car, like sardines in a can; you could hardly sit, you could hardly stand, you could hardly do anything. And so, you're almost like doubled up.

the brutality that took place in this... I call it the gates of hell because they

... 14761... with the dead... A... of... the... .







