

Caouette, Paul Emile
Private
The Calgary Highlanders
Royal Canadian Infantry Corps
M – 53898



Paul Emile Caouette was born on 3 March, 1925 in Legal, Alberta. His parents, both Canadian, married on 27 June, 1922. Paul had a brother, Roland and a sister, Cecile. His father, whose name is not known, died on 1 August, 1935 when he was only eleven years old. His mother, Yvonne remarried in Carbondale, Alberta with Mr. Vervynck and they had a daughter, Celina. The family was Roman Catholic.

Paul Emile went to school in Carbondale. He reached grade VIII in 1940 when he was 15 and went to work on his parents' farm. Three months before he joined the army, he was a truck driver and worked for G.L. Menie in Edmonton, Alberta. He did not know what he wanted to do after the war - he did not want to be a farmer or go back to work with G.L. Manie. Paul could speak both English and French.

On 6 March, 1944, three days after his 19th birthday, Paul enlisted for active service in Edmonton, Alberta.

He was found to be a healthy young man at his medical examination. With brown eyes and chestnut coloured hair; he was 5.4 ft tall and weighed 119 lbs.

16a CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE ATTESTING OR ENROLLING OFFICER

The 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 above named 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,

at Calgary, Alberta, this 6 day of March 1944

R.H. Summersgill, Capt.
#17 District Depot, C.A.

Signature of Magistrate, Justice Attesting or Enrolling Officer.
 Office or Rank and Unit or appointment.

ITEMS 17, 18 AND 19 WILL NOT BE COMPLETED UNLESS A MAN ENLISTS FOR GENERAL SERVICE ANYWHERE.

17. DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION

I, Paul Emile Caouette, hereby engage to serve in any Active Formation or Unit of the Canadian Army 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 9 May, 1944

P. Caouette
 (Signature of Recruit)

For the first two months, Paul's basic training took place at #61 training centre in Glasgow, Nova Scotia; on 13 May, he was transferred to Camp Petawawa, Ontario where there was shooting practice with different types of weapons. He also learned to handle grenades and followed a gas course.

RANGE COURSES				
	Classification	Date	Remarks	Initials
Rifle .22	GOOD 52/60	May 10'44	Pract. 1-3	ERS
Rifle	I	June 9'44	Pract. 1-7 Good shot	ERS
Bren	II	June 13'44	Average shot Pr 1-4	ERS
Sten	II	June 22'44	Average shot Pr 1-4	ERS
#36 Grenade		June 13'44	Threw 2 live grenades	ERS
PIAT		June 24'44	Fired 1 practice shot	ERS

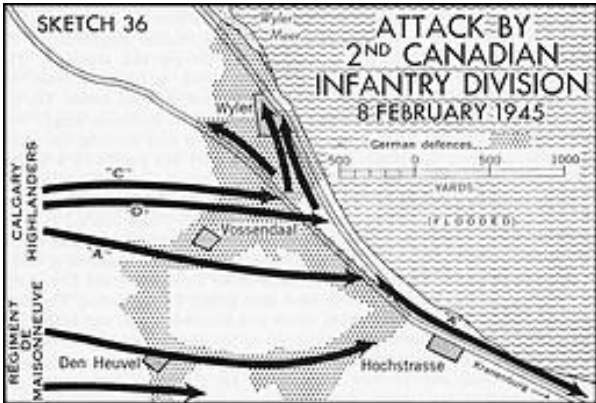
In his report he was described as a strong, thorough, energetic soldier who worked well with others; he was observant, practical, creative and could read maps. He liked to take the initiative and he worked hard.

His training continued in Camp Debert, Nova Scotia at the end of August and then, on 6 October, Paul Emile boarded a ship for England, arriving six days later.

He was there for a relatively short period for, on 29 December, he left for the European mainland; nothing is known about his movements until 18 January, 1945 when he was posted to the Calgary Highlanders; the Regiment was then in the Netherlands, in the Nijmegen area.

Their duties included the guarding of bridges between Malden and Grave and patrolling the Dutch-German border closeby, for two weeks at a time, with one week off in between. They were also trained to use the new WASP flamethrower weapon. There were also opportunities for some entertainment and rest days.

At the beginning of February, preparations for Operation Veritable were well underway. Paul Emile with his comrades left Berg en Dal in the direction of the border and stayed in the woods, about five kilometers from Wyler in Germany, waiting for what was to come.



On 8 February, at 5 in the morning, Wyler was attacked; the defense was unexpectedly strong and the battle lasted for eight hours. Thirteen Calgary Highlanders died.



Wyler, February 1945

One of those killed was Paul Emile Caouette; he was only 19 years old and had arrived at the front just three weeks earlier. His mother received a letter on 22 February, 1945, telling her that her youngest son was not coming home anymore.

For the 276 days that Paul Emile served in the Canadian army, he received the following awards:

- 1939 – 1945 Star
- France & Germany Star
- War Medal 1939 – 1945
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp

Paul Emile was buried temporarily on 12 February in the Nijmegen Military Cemetery. He was reburied in the Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek on 27 July, 1945. **Plot V. A. 4.**



Life story by Sigrid Norde – Research Team Faces To Graves.



Groesbeek – February 19 – 2020

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Library and Archives Canada

David. J. Bercuson, Battalion of Heroes–The Calgary Highlanders in World War II, The Calgary Highlanders Regimental Foundation, 1994

<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/UN/Canada/CA/Victory/Victory-18.html>

<https://nl.pinterest.com/>