

**Caldwell, Alexander Wallace**  
**Corporal**  
**14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment**  
**D 81878**



Alexander Wallace was born in Mann Settlement, Quebec, on August 2, 1914. He was the sixth of seven children born to father William Walker Caldwell and mother Jessie Mann. Both parents were of British descent and they were members of the Presbyterian Church. Father was born in 1881 and he died in 1944, mother was from 1877. They got married in Mann Settlement on September 18, 1902. The family later moved to Matapédia and they had seven children: Henry, Hilda, William Isaac, Robert Murray, James Howard, Alexander and Francis. They had two more sons who died at a young age, both named Donald Bruce.

Alexander spoke only English, he attended the Public School for seven years and was fourteen when he started working. He worked as a Fisherman's Guide (River Guide) at Sportsman Guide in Matapedia Valley for nine years.

Matapédia is a river, as well as a village in eastern Canada and Quebec, at the southern tip of the Gaspé Peninsula. It is only small, but largely lives off the salmon fishing in the two rivers that converge there.

Alexander had a fair complexion, brown eyes and brown hair. He was a well-developed young man of 25 when he volunteered for service in Montreal on December 9, 1939. He was then 5 ft.11 tall and weighed 174 lb.

Initially, Alexander was with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of the Canadian Active Service Force. Older brother James Howard was also in the military, serving overseas as Lance Corporal with The Black Watch.

The Black Watch included a bagpipe band founded in 1862 as part of the Canadian Brigade Group. It was a reserve regiment of the infantry of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Army in Montreal. In 1939 it did not have its own barracks or training facility. There was a Black Watch Museum in Montreal.

In June 1940, Alexander was on fourteen days leave before embarking on the "Antonia" in Valcartier, Quebec on June 17. With The Black Watch, he disembarked in Botwood, New Foundland, for training on June 22. After almost two months, on August 10, 1940, they departed with the SS "Duchess of Richmond" from Botwood to Halifax. Here they went to the Infantry Training Center in Aldershot. Not long afterwards, Alexander departed by ship for Scotland, where they arrived on September 4, 1940. He was then a Lance Corporal and part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Anti Tankshot Company. He was entitled to landing leave and was Trooper again at his own request when Alexander joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Squadron on 14 November. In May 1941 he had nine days leave and then joined the 14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars. In October of that year he took the Water Duty course and on March 28, 1942 he received the Good Conduct Badge.



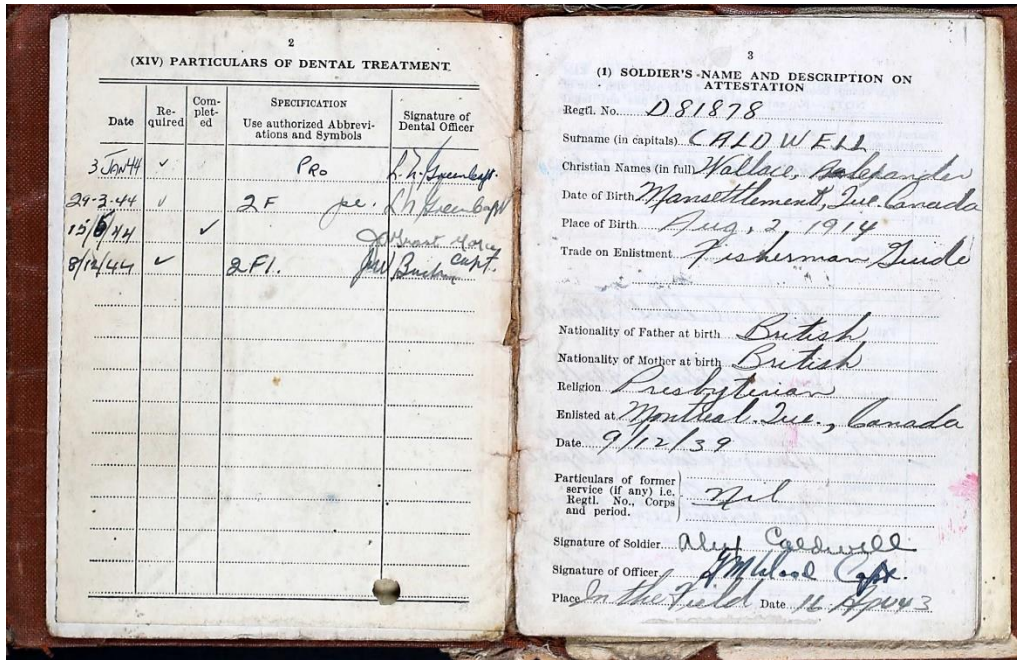
This was a recognition badge after two years of service and good conduct. This badge was worn on the left sleeve.

Alexander was Acting Lance Corporal from April 27, but in July he was banished to the barracks for four days due to unauthorized absence. He then joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery.

Alexander was given leave to marry Agnes Andrew Paterson of Motherwell in Lanarkshire, Scotland. She was born on October 19, 1919 and they had known each other for 10 months when they tied the knot in Motherwell on April 19, 1943. After the war, Agnes moved to Montreal after the war.

From November 25 to November 29, 1943, Alexander was in the 10<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance Hospital. The Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp was awarded to him on January 15, 1944. After almost four years in Great Britain, he was shipped to France on July 4, 1944, to the war in northwestern Europe.

Alexander was wounded again on October 12, he had a wound to his scalp from shrapnel. From October that year Alexander was again assigned as A-Corporal to the 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment, 14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars. From November 10, 1944 he was Corporal.



The 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment (14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars).



This regiment was the reconnaissance unit of the Canadian army during the advance from Italy to the Netherlands. The 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment (14<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars) received its training and coastal defense duties in the south of England in the first three years of the war. It was not until July 6, 1944 (1 month after D-Day) that the troops landed at Gold Beach in Normandy, France, and then began their task as infantrymen for the first time. The first three deaths were mourned on 13 July.

They pushed back the German troops from Northern France towards Belgium and the Netherlands and they were then used for their actual task: as a reconnaissance unit during the advance of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Army. They were often far ahead of their troops and were involved in the liberation of important ports such as Dieppe, on 1 September 1944, and Antwerp, the Battle of the Scheldt, the liberation of towns and villages in the Netherlands and the invasion of Germany. In the meantime, fierce fighting had taken place and many people had been killed and injured on both sides.

Extract from the diary of the 8<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Regiment:

- 1 Feb. 1944 in Angmering on Sea, southern England, on the English Channel, there was a lot of training and sport, including boxing matches
- 1 March 1944 American troops arrive as neighbours in Rustington

- 11 March 1944 third anniversary of regiment with festivities*
- 2 April 1944 large exercise "STEP"*
- 14 April 1944 accident during an exercise, four dead and one wounded, one soldier breaks his leg while trying to report this to HQ by bicycle*
- 21 April 1944 Camp Angmering cleared and abandoned with some regret*
- 22 April 1944 in Camp Goodnestone in barracks and tents, entertainment through outings, movies and many sports*
- 27 May 1944 General Montgomery says on a visit that the war will be over on January 31, many men had been training for four years and want action*
- 29 May 29 1944 General Eisenhower inspects the troops and talks to many of the men and was interested in how they were doing*
- 1 July 1944 they start in Goodnestone (UK) with the clearing and cleaning of the barracks, waved goodbye by canteen staff*
- 2 July 1944 departure of the crew in their vehicles to the shunting yard of the ship's cargo and the vehicles were made watertight for the crossing*
- 4 July 1944 from London Docks to Landing Ship Tanks*
- 5 July 1944 in the evening leaving the harbour with a tugboat*
- 6 July 1944 via the Thames with calm waters across The Channel*
- 7 July 1944 just before midnight the ship arrives in Caen in France*
- 8 July 1944 with LST (Landing Ship Tank) around 6 pm ashore in Tracey Sur Mer, where the vehicles were again well prepared and driven to the port*
- 11 July 1944 the first two soldiers wounded by a shell, three miles from the fighting in Caen*
- 13 July 1944 attacked by enemy tanks, the first reported dead*
- 1 September 1944 Dieppe liberated and the population was overjoyed*
- 9 September 1944 via Bulscamp in Belgium towards Ostend, at the end of October in Antwerp and to Noord-Beveland in the Netherlands*
- 9 November 1944 in Appeltern, later in Horssen, with a lot of high water*
- 17 December 1944 relieved by the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Recon. Regiment*
- 19 February 1945 in Germany, Headquarters in Reichswald at the end of March*

Unfortunately Alexander was killed in combat with the enemy, he died on February 27, 1945 and was initially buried in Kalkar, Germany. He was given a temporary place in the Canadian Cemetery, row 3, grave number 4.

On February 20, 1946, Alexander Wallace Caldwell was reburied at the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XX. H. 12.**

The text on his tombstone reads:

STILL, MY DARLING  
YOU WILL BE  
ALWAYS YOUNG  
AND DEAR TO ME



*Photo: Liesbeth Huisman*

Alexander received the following awards:

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



Life story: Liesbeth Huisman-Arts, Research Team Faces To Graves.



\* Do you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission  
 Library and Archives Canada  
 Wikipedia  
<https://catalog.archives.gov/search?q=>

(II) NEXT OF KIN		
Any change becoming known is to be duly noted with date of NOTE.—No entry in these pages has any legal		
Nearest degree of relationship	Names	Date
1st	Wife <i>AGNES ANDREW CALDWELL</i>	<i>30-1-43</i>
	Children	
2nd	Father <i>William Caldwell</i>	<i>18 Apr. 40</i>
	Mother <i>Jessie Caldwell</i>	<i>9/12/39</i>
3rd	* Older <i>Howard Caldwell</i>	<i>18 Apr. 40</i>
	* Older <i>Harry Caldwell</i>	<i>18 Apr. 40</i>
	* Brothers and Sisters <i>Francis Caldwell</i>	<i>18 Apr. 40</i>
	<i>(MRS. ALEXANDER DELANEY)</i>	
4th	Other Relations (stating relationship)	<i>30-1-43</i>

\*State whether brothers are older or younger.

NOW LIVING	
such change and reported by O.C. Unit to the Officer i/c Records. effect as a Will (see pages 20 to 23)	
Latest known Address in full	
<i>192</i>	<i>LADYWELL RD, MOTHERWELL, LANARKSHIRE, SCOTLAND.</i>
	<i>Matapedia, Que. Canada</i>
	<i>Matapedia, Que. Canada</i>
<i>1461-</i>	<i>14 BIRCHBACH WALK, RHR, CAOS.</i>
	<i>Matapedia, Que. Canada</i>
	<i>Matapedia, Que. Canada</i>
	<i>Matapedia, Que. Canada</i>

Instructions regarding preparation of War Diaries (which will be kept from first day of mobilization, creation or embodiment), are contained in F.S. Regn. Vol. 1.

# WAR DIARY

MM 11  
40/P 2 5/127

OR

Original, duplicate and triplicates to be forwarded to O. i/c 2nd Echelon for disposal.

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

Title pages will be prepared.

PAGE 8

8th Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (14CH)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
GERMANY, MR 94845375	24 Feb	Cont'd	O.P.'s. were located. The whole operation was carried-out without any casualties although a few vehicles were slightly damaged by small-arms fire and shrapnel. In the evening, the Artillery fired a large number of shells into the German line and a few Jerry were heard to come this way in answer.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	25 Feb		Weather:- Partly cloudy and cold. The day was quiet, except for heavy shelling of the ensnared positions by our own Arty. 4 L.O's. went to Div. to act as Phantom L.O's. for operation Blockbuster.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	26 Feb		Weather:- Cloudy. Operation Blockbuster started at 0430 Hrs. and met with good success during the morning. 8th Recce. was given the task of left flank protection for the Div., with Galcar as an objective. Enemy small-arms fire, mortars and sniper activity was considerable and we were unable to reach our objective. One light car blew-up on a mine and Cpl. <del>Stevens</del> Stevens and Tpr. Barker, were killed. A Sqn. came under command of 4 Bde.	
GERMANY, MR 94845375	27 Feb		Weather:- Cloudy. An early morning visit to 2 Div. Main, showed that 5 Bde. had reached the South-West corner of the Hochwald Forest. At 1030 Hrs. RHQ left its area North of Hessel and moved to a new location North of Louisendorf. Several hours of hard work were put in before the shelled-out farm that was taken over for RHQ, was clean enough to be used. A Sqn. working with 4 Bde. met some fairly heavy enemy resistance during the day and lost 3 cars and 1 carrier from Bazookas. A Sqn. suffered 3 other rank casualties killed, 3 other ranks wounded, 1 Officer and 5 other ranks missing. The 3 killed were Cpl. Strank, Cpl. Coldwell, Sgt. Clarke. The wounded were Sgt. Baldwin, Tpr. Durdell and Tpr. McNickel. Missing were Lt. Kaye, Tpr. Elie, Tpr. Fallowe, Sgt. Cavanagh and Tpr. Maloney. 43rd Div. took Galcar without any opposition.	
GERMANY, MR 964463	28 Feb		Weather:- Mostly cloudy. The day was quiet and uneventful for the Regiment, with B Sqn. on a holding job with 4 Bde. Lt. D.M. Elsdon and Lt. Montgomery arrived with 1 OR as re-inforcement. Just before noon, 7 German tanks counter-attacked through the South-east corner of the Hochwald Forest, against position held by the A & SH. Repelled by the 29th Arm'd. Recce. Regt. with the enemy losing 2 tanks.	

Form CMHQ 1000-110  
40/P & S/127

### APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO MARRY

(one copy only to be completed)

In the year 1943  
(Date)

I, D 81578 Snooper Caldwell A.W.  
(Number) (Rank) (Name) (Initials)  
8. Chm. Recce. Regt. (14 CH) hereby apply for permission to  
(Unit)  
marry Miss Agnes Ardnew Paterson of  
(Proposed wife's name in full)  
200 Gledywell Road, Mathawells, Lanarkshire, Scotland  
(Proposed wife's address in full)

2. I certify that the following particulars concerning myself and my proposed wife are true:

(a) PARTICULARS OF SOLDIER

- (i) Date of birth Aug 2nd 1914  
(ii) Date of enlistment Dec 9th 1939  
(iii) Domicile (place of permanent residence) immediately prior to enlistment  
Malapiedrai Riv. of Quebec  
(iv) Marital status—(Strike out words inapplicable)

Bachelor

Widower

Name of deceased wife n/a  
Date of death of deceased wife n/a

Divorced

Name of former wife n/a  
Date of divorce decree n/a  
Place where divorce granted n/a

(v) Educational standing Grade eight  
(Highest standing secured at school)

(vi) Training nil  
(State qualifications for profession, business, trade, etc.)

(vii) Employment at time of enlistment Trading guide for American frontiers

(viii) Average weekly earnings at enlistment \$17.50

(ix) If unemployed on enlistment give particulars of prior employment and earnings

(x) If history does not disclose probable ability to maintain family after discharge from Army state how it is proposed to do this Returning to former

occupation



