

Coslett-Thomas, Oscar Donald
Private
Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
Of Canada
H/22281



Oscar Donald was born 28 July, 1925 in Bangor, the son of Oscar Gerald Coslett-Thomas and Bertie Hazel. His father, who came from Argentina, was a laborer and the family lived in Saskatchewan in the west of Canada. This is a prairie province, very flat, with many woods and small lakes. Oscar Donald was the oldest child and he grew up with his sisters, Eleanor, Margaret and June and their younger brother Lloyd. The family belonged to the United Church.

He went to school until he was 16 and reached grade 8 in 1941. Then he went to work as a truck driver and carpenter among other things. At the time he went into the army, he had worked for seven months making butter in a dairy factory, the Co-operative Creamery in Esterhazy.

On entering the army, Oscar was 1.68m tall and weighed 62.5kg, a young man with blue eyes and blond hair.; he had a scar on his cheek. He liked to join games of ice hockey and softball and he played the guitar and accordion. He enlisted 1 March, 1944 and did his infantry and small arms training in Canada. On 20 November he boarded a ship which sailed for Liverpool in the United Kingdom. He received further training and on 12 January, 1945 he arrived on the European mainland.

Oscar Donald was attached to the Cameron Highlander's Regiment, then stationed in the Nijmegen area of the Netherlands near the German border; it was soon to take part in Operation Veritable beginning a month later on 8 February. This Rhineland offensive was fought on a broad front with American, British and Canadian troops. During the fierce battles which ensued, many Canadians were killed and fate struck for Oscar Donald on 3 March. He was killed in the battle of the Hochwald Gap; a comrade and friend of his, told Oscar's mother after the war that he had been killed by an exploding grenade.

Oscar was buried temporarily near Uedemerbruch and in July, 1945, he was reburied to the Canadian War Cemetery in Groesbeek, grave reference **XXI. F. 16.**

The awards of Oscar Donald Coslett-Thomas:

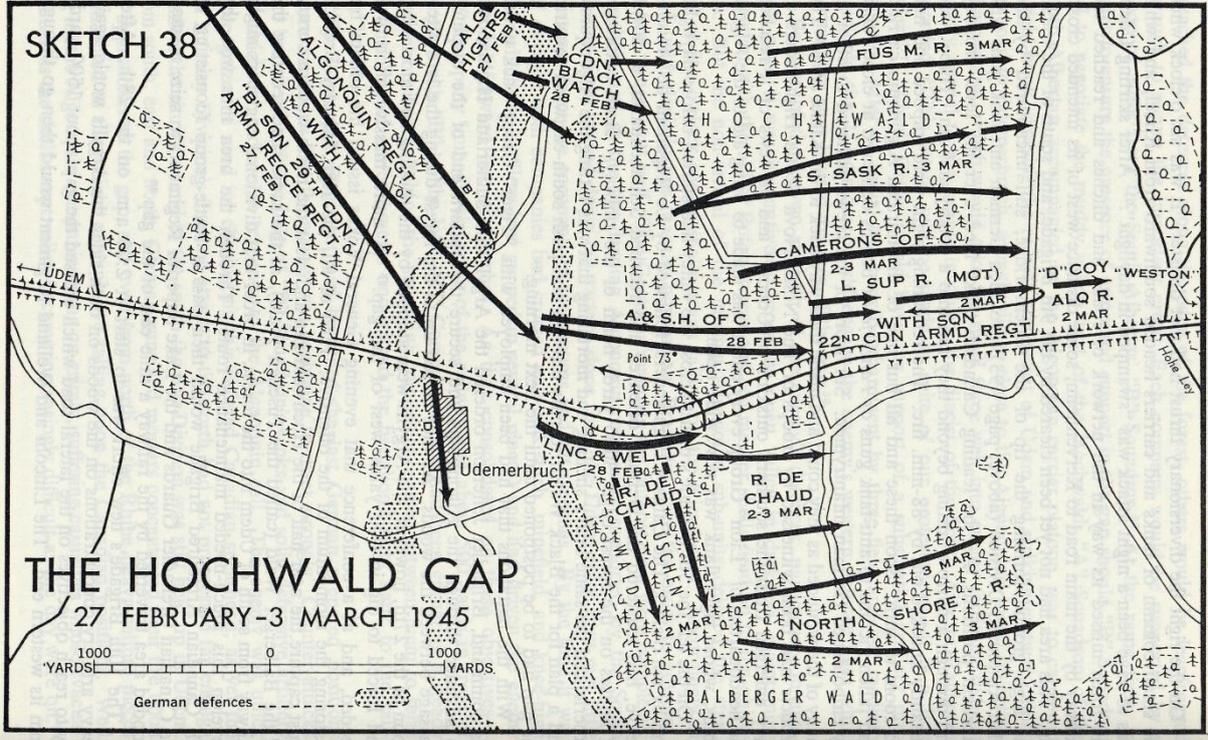
1939-1945 Star
France-Germany Star
War Medal
Canadian Volunteer Service Medal

His possessions, including a wallet, a letter and three photos were sent to his father in Canada, who also received the payment of 126.94 dollars owing to Oscar. In the meantime his parents had divorced; the medals were sent to his father and his mother received the Memorial Cross.



Life story: Linda Verhelst, Research Team, Faces to Graves

Sources:



Overview from the book: The Victory Campaign by Col. C.P. Stacey.



In a viaduct in Uedemerbruch is a plaque in memory of what happened here in the Second World War.