



Naam: Dominas, Edward Ralph

Reg.nr: L102320

Edward was born in Regina, Saskatchewan, on April 5, 1922. His parents are Stanley (45) and Rosemary Issard (Rose) (44). They married on January 5, 1921 in Regina. Edward has a sister, Beatrice (21). When Edward enlists in the Canadian Army, Edward's parents are divorced. Beatrice then no longer lives at home.

When Edward is 11, he moves with his mother to Nipawin, Saskatchewan, where his grandfather owns a dry cleaner.

Between brackets are the ages as on March 12, 1945.

Edward is a school leaver at age 14. He gets grade 6.

Edward works as a dry cleaner with his grandfather for 4 years. He gains experience with (truck) cars and has gained a bit of experience with farm work.

On September 9, 1942, Edward enlisted in the Canadian Army in Regina.

Edward is 1,70m. tall and weighs 69 kg. He has blue eyes and dark brown hair. He has a scar above his right eye. His teeth are bad, several teeth have to be pulled.

He has read quite a bit of general literature. He has done a lot of sports. His great hobby is music, he plays the violin and can also play some themes on other instruments. He also likes dancing, film and social contacts.

He is described as someone with below average abilities, but probably smarter than it appears.

What he has to offer the military is his driver experience. His preference is for artillery as a driver. He has friends there and hopes they will be together.

Verdict: suitable, could be of use as a driver.

On September 9, 1942, Edward first enters #12 District Depot in Regina. On September 19, 1942, his basic training begins at 120 TC in Regina.

On November 18, 1942, he was posted to A3 CATC, a training camp, in Shilo, Manitoba. He passes here for Driver I/C, Class III (wheeled). He remains in Canada at this camp.

On August 10, 1943, he was suspended for unauthorized absence. On November 9, 1943, he was sentenced to 6 months in detention for desertion. The sentence is shortened and on March 22, 1944 Edward is released. Because he has been imprisoned for desertion, he is sent to a refresher course on 10 May 1944. He could then be sent overseas as a driver 5 weeks later. On June 3, 1944, he is deemed suitable for overseas.

On July 27, 1944, Edward arrives in England. On 29 July 1944 he reported to 1 CARU, a reserve unit of the artillery. On August 12, 1944, he was assigned to the Rocky Mountain Rangers, infantry, and he arrived in France on September 8, 1944.

On September 14, he moves from the Rocky Mountain Rangers to the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

October 13, 1944 is known as "Black Friday". Lieutenant Colonel Withaker calls it in his book (see source) "the day of the betrayal of the "civilian in uniform", the young volunteer of the Black Watch who had volunteered for the Canadian army with great enthusiasm".

The Black Watch had already suffered heavy losses. The 1st Battalion suffered more casualties than any other Canadian infantry battalion in northwestern Europe. Disasters seemed to follow the Regiment almost with every battle.

During the Battle of Verrières Ridge on July 25, 1944, there were 97% casualties. Of the 325 men who left the starting line, only 15 came back into their own lines. The others were killed or wounded, and a company of 90 men had only four survivors.

Another 40% were killed 10 days later in Operation Totalize.

A month before Operation Angus, they lost 60 men in 36 hours from September 12-14. In October, the Regiment expected to be fully staffed and resupplied, but that was not to be. The regiment that had lost many trained men in recent months was replenished with inexperienced infantrymen and was still below original strength. The order for the attack was given by Major General Foulkes, commander of the 2nd Canadian Army Corps, who was aware of the Black Watch's situation. Lieutenant Colonel Ritchie, commander of the Black Watch of Canada, and Brigade Commander Megill, commander of the 5th Canadian Infantry Brigade, had their doubts about Angus' success, but the order was given.

The attack turned into a major drama. The intelligence was not good, the Germans in the area were well organised, were offensively minded, well entrenched and belonged to elite troops. The Black Watch was ill-prepared. The attack was during the day, in an area where the beet foliage provided the only cover. Support from tanks etc. was not possible because of the swampy ground.

In the morning hours, the B and C companies attacked the Germans. The starting point was the Grindweg in Woensdrecht, the goal was the railway embankment on the Kreekrakdam. The attack started at 6.15 am. Within a short time the attack was halted by heavy casualties. The men fell like pins on a bowling alley. A smoke screen could not improve the situation. A number of C Company men managed to reach the railway embankment, they were captured.

25 men from C company returned, from B company 41. Normally a company consists of 130 men.

The companies lost many executives.

At 5 pm the attack was resumed by A Company, supported from the flank by D Company and the remainder of B Company. In one hour the A company lost almost 70 men, 9 men returned unharmed. D Company also lost a few dozen soldiers. The Black Watch had no more company commanders.

The losses of the Black Watch are the highest losses in 1 day of the battle of the Canadians in the Netherlands. The Black Watch of Canada counted 145 casualties, 56 killed, 62 wounded and 27 POWs.

Edward belonged to A Company that day. He was killed in action on October 13, 1944. Edward is initially reported as missing, later as killed in action, aged 21.

Edward is temporarily buried in Ossendrecht at the temporary cemetery on the current Burgemeester Voetenweg, near the war memorial of

Ossendrecht. A reburial follows on May 16, 1945. Edward is buried at the Canadian War Cemetery in Bergen op Zoom, plot 2, row E, grave 12.

In December 1944, the relatives receive a thank you from the Municipal Executive, on behalf of the population of Ossendrecht.

Edward was awarded the 1939-1945 Star, the French-German Star, the Defense Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.





Bronvermelding:

<https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/2641646/EDWARD%20RALPH%20DOMINAS/>

<https://nl.findagrave.com/memorial/12724209/edward-ralph-dominas>

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<https://blackwatchwardiary.blog/casualty-database/>

<https://blackwatchwardiary.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/oct-1944-diary.pdf>

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