



THOMAS HENRY DONALD

D/76550

Sergeant

Family affairs.

Thomas Henry Donald is born on the 27th of November 1907 in St. Coatbridge, Scotland. Donald is raised in a presbyterian family consisting of father James, mother Mary Gillon, brothers James Alexander and Alexander and sister Jane D., Elizabeth Jane (later: Beaven), Isabella M. (later: Duranceau) en Mary G. (later: Carter). At the age of 14, Donald leaves school after completing grade 9 and will work as a general construction worker. He loves playing football and hopes to become a driver engineer when he returns. Thomas describes his childhood as 'happy'.

Military affairs.

Donald moves to Canada, presumably due to work reasons, when he's about 20 years old. In this period of his life, he moves regularly within Québec and Ontario and works as a highway construction worker. On the 30th of September 1940, Donald enlists in the 32th Reconnaissance Armoured Corps. At this time, he is 31 years old and living in Lachine, Québec. He receives several training courses during his education till the 10th of December as he embarks to England. He arrives on the 18th of December and is promoted to sergeant in his 4,5 years in England. Donald meets in these years Emma Elizabeth, with whom he marries on the 22nd of January 1942. Almost 4 months after, on the 8th of May, daughter Renada Dorothy is born in Sussex, England. His son Thomas Arnold is born about 2 years after.

On the 22nd of July 1944 Donald leaves to France to fight with the troops in Northwest Europe. Via France and Belgium he arrives in North-Brabant at the end of 1944. On the 21st of October 1944 he enlists in the South Alberta Regiment. In the area between Dongen and Capelle he is however hit by an accident. On the 16th of December 1944 Donald, together with Tpr Rowe and Sgts Prenevost and Fortin, is riding in a jeep exploring the area along the south of the river the Maas. During their service, they hit a teller mine after which the vehicle explodes. Sgt Donald and Tpr Rowe are killed outright. Even though the site of the accident is under German observation from across the river, volunteers of the Recce Peleton manage to evacuate the men. Sgt Fortin is evacuated to a nearby hospital, but dies two days after as a result of his wounds. Sgt Prenevost is the only survivor.

Donald is buried temporarily along with Tpr Rowe in Nieuwvaart, Capelle. On the 7th of November 1945, they are buried in the Bergen op Zoom Canadian War Cemetery. Thomas Donald is buried on grave 2, row G, plot 8, where he still remains buried nowadays.

Source:

- War Diary 29 CARRC (South Alberta Regiment). LAC, RG24, T-12767.
- Graves, Donald (1998). South Alberta's: A Canadian Regiment at War.
- <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2641649>