

Charles William Dorscheid

Sergeant

Army – Royal Canadian Armoured Corps - Regimental # M/45559

Bezanson, Alberta

Died: August 19, 1944

Commemorated at: [Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery, France](#)

In 1921, Anton and Emma Dorscheid and family that consisted of four sons, Arthur (1904), John (Jack 1909), Charles (born October 7, 1912), and Earl (1919) moved from Windom, Minnesota, USA to an area west of Bezanson known as Glen Leslie to join their daughter Sylvira (1899) and her husband Herman Kimble. The Dorscheid's purchased land from Dr. John Peschong and lived in a log house with a sod roof for many years. The children went to the Crystal Creek School and were very active in sports. Charles was the ace catcher for the Glen Leslie Baseball Team. He was a cowboy at heart and rode horses in local rodeos. It appears Charles had an affinity for all animals as he had rescued an orphan moose calf at one time and brought it home where he raised it with the other livestock. Through hard work and perseverance, Anton and his sons built up a sizable farm and cattle operation. Anton and Emma passed away in 1939 following which their sons managed the farm. Charles married Luella Myrtle Parrish on December 2, 1939 and they had a baby girl, Sharon Joan that was born on May 10, 1941. The family settled on the farm at Glen Leslie.

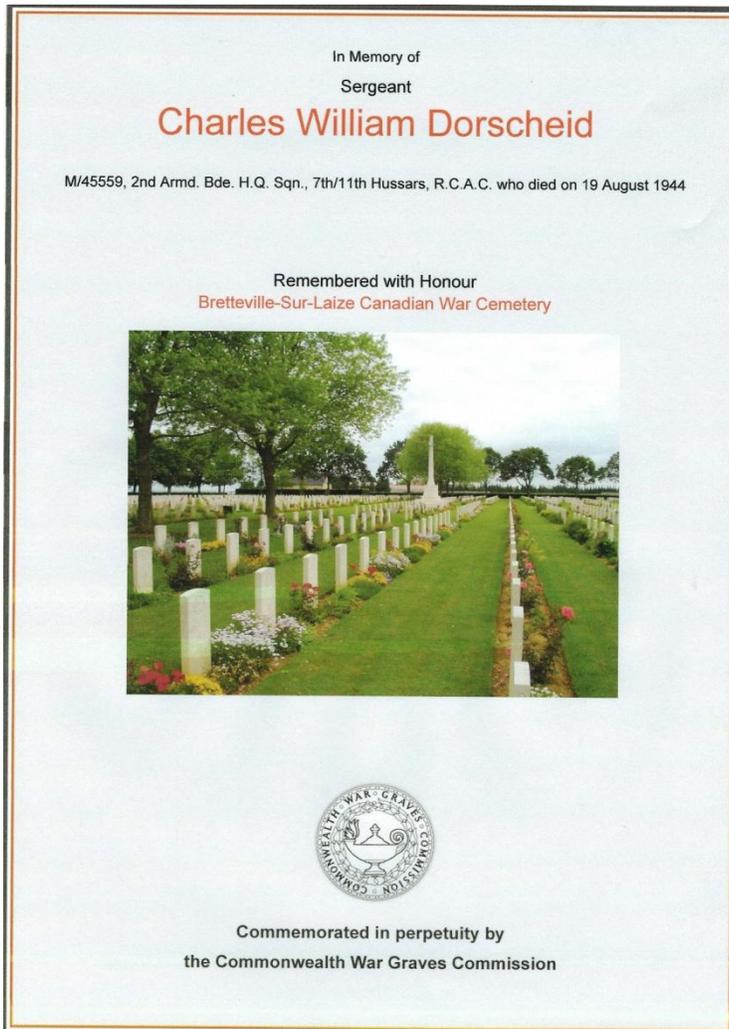


On June 24, 1940 in Grande Prairie, Charles enlisted with the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps which was the armored division within the Canadian Army. Charles served with the 2nd Armoured Brigade Headquarters Squadron, 7th/11th Hussars. His attestation paper stated he was a husky man with brown hair and brown eyes. Charles' service file noted that he was very ambitious and that was certainly evidenced by all the trades that he trained for at the various military training camps he was assigned to: Dundurn in Saskatchewan, Nanaimo in BC, Niagara in Ontario and Debert in Nova Scotia before being sent to England on September 27, 1942. As he successfully completed his training courses, he became a Qualified Driver Class III, Class II & III Motor Mechanic, Class III Motorcyclist and a Fitter.

The Allied offensive in north-western Europe began with the Normandy landings of June 6, 1944. Charles landed in France on June 12, 1944 and joined the forces embroiled in battles against German forces. Caen was finally secured by July 19th and the Canadians were then ordered to push forward towards Falaise. On August 15th, the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade continued the offensive under smoke-screen cover and overhead bomber action and secured Falaise by August 17th. Charles was on duty and working at the rear of a tank on August 19, 1944 when he was hit by a single round.

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Sadly, Charles died from the bullet wound within a few minutes. Although the Falaise pocket was sealed by August 21st, it was estimated that 20,000 – 50,000 German troops escaped through the gap.



Charles was buried at the Bretteville-Sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery; the majority of those buried there died during the latter stages of the battle of Normandy, the capture of Caen and the movement southwards. Almost every unit of Canadian 2nd Corps is represented in the cemetery. The cemetery contains 2,958 World War II burials, the majority being Canadian and 87 of them are unidentified.

Charles received the 1939-45 Star, France-Germany Star, War Medal, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal & Clasp. A memorial service was held for Charles at the Glen Leslie Church.

Charles' brother, Earl enlisted in the Army and his brother, John joined the Army Medical Corps. Once they returned home to the farm, they decided to supplement the farm income by implementing a sawmill business. They sub-contracted

timber from Moon's Mill north of Clarkson Valley and hired many local farmers. Their brother Art Dorscheid was the flunky and his wife Rosie was the cook. Eventually Earl and Jack retired and their sons took over management of the farm that included the original Dorscheid land. Art and his family lived on his father's land.

After Charles' death, Luella eventually married Howard Johnson and the family settled in Edmonton. Howard and Luella had four children. Charles' daughter, Sharon married Lawrence Barnes and had five children. Charles' legacy will certainly live on through his grandchildren.

The headstone of Charles' parents, Anton and Emma Dorscheid, located in the Glen Leslie Cemetery, was also inscribed with "Sergt. Charles 1912-1944". It is a very special tribute to a courageous young man.



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The Bezanson Community honours the memory of Charles Dorscheid – a young man who answered the call of duty to maintain the Country's freedom and died in the effort to do so.

Written by Wanda Zenner

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Reference

Smoky to Grande Prairie History Book

Louise Kimble (Dorscheid family friend)

Library and Archives Canada

Service File

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

South Peace Archives Land Records

Conversation with nephew Jerry Dorscheid 780-532-6719

Conversation with niece Janice Wales 780-532-6671