

**THE BATTLE HONOUR  
WALCHEREN CAUSEWAY  
31 OCT-2 NOV 1944 WWII**

**Walcheren Causeway** - After South Beveland was secured, the only land route to Walcheren Island - last holdouts on the Scheldt Estuary - was a long causeway just 40 metres wide and over 1000 metres long. The Slooe (Sloe) Channel through which the Causeway ran was too shallow for assault boats, and the salt marshes and mud made the way impassable to land vehicles or marching infantry. On Halloween Night, the Calgary Highlanders followed up a disastrous attack by the Black Watch on the Causeway, and managed to force a shallow bridgehead on the far end. Fierce fighting ensued, and the Highlanders were relieved by Le Regiment de Maisonneuve on 1 November. **Sixty-four Highlanders were killed or wounded in the action**; the ferocity of the fighting was testified to by the actions of Sergeant Emil Laloge, who was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for, among other things, picking up German grenades and throwing them back at the enemy before they could explode among his men. This battle is commemorated each year by the Regiment with a drumhead ceremony and visit from the Dutch community.



**Major Ross Ellis (Acting Battalion Commander)  
Calgary Highlanders**

Said "The actual battle itself did not develop a great deal. The main accomplishment we got out there was that we got as many we could out alive".



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**THE KILT TEST**



**THE ARGYLL GOVERNMENT TARTAN**

The Calgary Highlanders tartan is the same as the Argyll and Sutherland Highlander tartan. This tartan is very similar to that of The Black Watch (The Royal Highland Regiment) but of a lighter hue and smaller sett. As well, our kilts are box pleated while those of The Black Watch are knife pleated.

**THE BATTLE OF WALCHEREN CAUSEWAY  
31 OCTOBER-2 NOVEMBER 1944.**

**WW II**

**THE KILT TEST**

**AIRAGHARDT ( ONWARD )**



**Tel: 403-263-1796**



## The Walcheren Action

31 October 1944

Cpl S. Kormendy covers Sgt H.A. Marshall, a scout of the Calgary Highlanders, as he moves over open ground near Kapellen, Belgium, October 6th, 1944.

### Points To Remember

- This action happened during **World War Two** on a causeway that was between the mainland of **Holland and the Island of Walcheren**.
- The reason this action was important to the allies was that they had captured the **Port of Antwerp** in Holland but could not use the port to bring in desperately needed supply's because the Germans had defensive batteries still posted on the island of Walcheren.
- On **Halloween night** 31 October 1944 at 2400 hrs (**midnight**) The Calgary Highlanders as part of the **The Battle of the Scheldt Estuary** as members of the second Canadian Division were ordered to fight over the causeway and form a semi circular bridge head.
- **B Coy 12 Platoon** was to lead the advance to the Causeway that night. And after an attempt withdrew and **D Coy took over the advance**.
- The Walcheren Causeway joined the **Islands of Walcheren Holland and South Beveland Holland** together. The Causeway was **1 km long and 40 meters wide** with land that rose 20 meters above the marshy salt flat known as the Slooe (Sloe.) On the causeway were a set of railway tracks and a two lane road and two tree lined bike paths.

At approximately 1545 hrs to 1630 hrs 1 November 1944 B Coy of the Calgary Highlanders came under counter attack from German infantry **D Coy was attacked by the Enemy using flamethrowers**. This forced a withdrawal of B coy and the rest of the Highlanders so they could call in Artillery support.

Facing incredible odds the Calgary Highlanders crossed the Walcheren Causeway but was unable to hold it. On 1 Nov 1944 the Calgary Highlanders handed over a small bridgehead to the Maisies (Regiment de Maisonneuve) and withdrew from the Island.

#### Bravery Typical of the Calgary Highlanders

**Sgt Emile Jean Laloge** 18 PL. D Coy threw back German grenades when they landed close to his men. When his Bren Gunner was hit he repaired the gun and took over firing at the Germans. He did the same thing with the PIAT. For his action he was recommended for the VC but was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal instead.

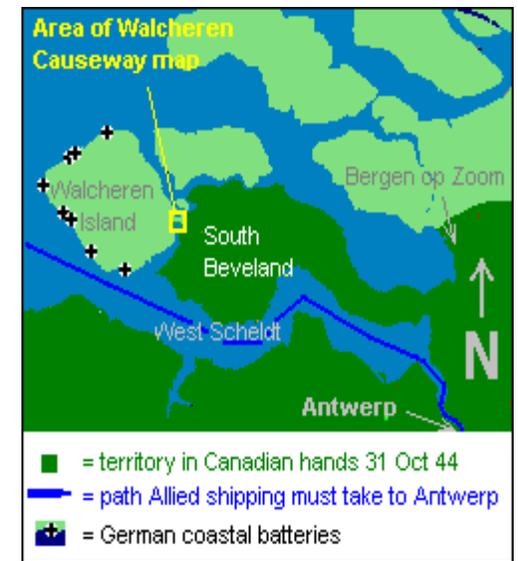
**LCpl Richard G Wolf** was a two inch mortar man He stayed behind when B Coy withdrew to provide covering fire. His well aimed bombs held off the German advance. He was captured by the enemy and released two days later.

**THE CALGARY HIGHLANDERS LOST 19 DEAD 45 WOUNDED EQUAL TO 8% OF THE REGIMENTS STRENGTH DURING THIS OPERATION.**

*Note: Study the map on the next page and know the German artillery positions (Coastal Battery's) and the shipping route to the Port of Antwerp Holland. Know the location of the Causeway.*



**Sgt Emile Laloge (in the uniform of the Seaforth Highlanders) was awarded the DCM.**



**1930 hrs 31 Oct 1944.** LCol Ellis was told that the mud flats were too thick for an assault boat landing. He would have to take the causeway to the Walcheren Island ( the objective).

**2340 hrs 31 Oct.** The British 52nd Lowland Division started to blast the German positions. This lasted twenty minutes.

As the allied barrage began the Germans began to shell the causeway.

**2400 hrs 31 Oct 1944 ( Halloween).** B Coy Calgary Highlanders led by **12 PL** moved forward .

**0300 hrs 1 Nov. B Coy** was forced to withdraw off the Causeway. Brigade HQ Made up a new artillery fire plan.

**0650 hrs 1 Nov. D Coy** inched their way up the Causeway. They were under German artillery fire and machine gun fire.

**0710 hrs– 0715 hrs. D Coy** Stormed the first German road block.

**0950 hrs. D Coy** Reported they had reached the far end of the causeway.

D Coy signaled to bring the other Companies forward.

A Coy made good progress until pined down by sniper fire.

B Coy Reached Walcheren Island.

A Coy was taking casualties and was left without any senior leadership. **1545 hrs 1 Nov.** Allied fighter bombers started bombing the German positions.

The Calgary Highlanders were sustaining constant casualties.

The Germans launched a counter attack against D Coy position. The Germans used **flame throwers against D Coy**.

This threatened to drive a gap between B Coy and D Coy. This was going to leave B Coy surrounded.

The OC of B Coy ordered the withdrawal and called down artillery to cover this move.

**As D Coy withdrew** Sgt Laloge D Coy and LCpl Wolfe of B Coy helped in slowing the enemy.

**1 Nov 1944.** facing incredible odds the Calgary Highlanders hand over a small bridgehead to the Maisies (Regiment de Maisonneuve).

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