

Jordan was born on April 6, 1919 in Minden, Ontario to Albert Edward Gayner (deceased in 1933) and Ethel Elizabeth Gayner. She later called herself McCarrell. Probably my marriage. They got married on June 16, 1913 in Minden, Ontario. Jordan had three brothers; Lawrence Edward, Kenneth Osborne and Stanley Leonard. And one sister; Mrs. Welda Irene Margarite Smith.

The Gayners were farmers and member of the Church of England.

Jordan enlisted voluntarily on February 12, 1940 in Picton, Ontario. He was soon sent to the UK where he arrived July 17, 1940. After years of military training his regiment, the 48th Highlanders of Canada were to take part in the invasion of Sicily.

#### *Canadian army in Italy, 1943-45*

*The role of the Canadians in the Italian Campaign during World War II was crucial, but less known compared to the Normandy landings. Between 1943 and 1945, more than 92,000 Canadians fought in Italy, building a reputation as elite troopers.*

*Canadian participation began on July 10, 1943 with the invasion of Sicily. They slowly fought their way north. The most legendary and bloody confrontation of the Canadians in Italy is the Battle of Ortona, a port city on the Adriatic coast, which was stubbornly defended by the Germans. Because the streets were full of rubble and mines, Canadians devised a tactic of blowing holes in the walls of houses to move from building to building without having to go outside and expose themselves on the streets.*

*In 1944, the Canadians played a key role in breaking the two German Defence lines in Central Italy:*

- Gustav-line: They helped in the attack on Monte Cassino and broke through the neighbouring Hitler line.*
- Gothic Line: In the fall of 1944, the 1st Canadian Corps led the attack on the heavy German Defence in the Apennines and along the coast near Rimini.*

#### *Operation Goldflake*

*From February 22, 1945, Canadian troops in Italy were moved to France in the greatest secrecy and under strict camouflage in a very short time. In order to deceive German intelligence services, measures were taken to suggest that Canadian troops were still in Italy.*

*The trip from Italy to Marseille, France lasted two days. From there it was a five-day drive to the Belgian border, a distance of 1085 km. By the end*

*of April, more than 60,000 troops and support personnel had been transferred from Italy to the front in Northwest Europe.*

Jordan eventually arrived in France on March 12, 1945 and his regiment gets some well deserved rest in the Netherlands. From April 9, 1945 the 48th Highlanders of Canada were involved in Operation Cannonshot, the crossing of the River IJssel between Zutphen and Deventer.

On April 12, the regiment crosses the IJssel over the pontoon bridge just built by the Canadian Engineers. The goal is to conquer the railway and the Deventer-Apeldoorn road. From Wilp they advance north along the west bank of the IJssel to drive the Germans out of Steenenkamer and the Deventer neighbourhood of De Hoven. With the help of tanks, the German resistance (including machine guns and artillery) is broken that afternoon. The Canadians were in an exuberant mood: "the fighting in Italy had been much more difficult and had never been such a success."

Soon the focus is on another goal: Twello. At the beginning of the evening of April 12, a quick surprise attack is being launched along the railway line from Deventer to Apeldoorn, which is successful but costs the lives of six Canadians, including Jordan Wesley Gayner. Those casualties were caused by German fire from houses and dug-in positions.

Jordan died of wounds received in action on Thursday April 12, 1945, only six days after his 26th birthday.

He was temporarily buried in Wilp before being reinterred on the Canadian War Cemetery in Holten on December 21, 1945.

On his headstone it reads: IN THAT BRIGHT ETERNAL CITY WHERE NO TEARS DIM THE EYE WE WILL MEET HIM BY AND BY. MOTHER

He was awarded the 1939-45 Star; Italy Star; France Germany Star; Defence Medal; War Medal; CVSM & Clasp.

