

Soldier 2nd Class Henri Augustin Dioscoride

Service Number: 2978

3rd Battalion, Light Infantry, French Army

born: 16 July 1897–died: 28 November 1918

Henri Augustin Dioscoride was actually born Henri Augustin Prieux at 4.30 a.m. on 16 July 1897, the “natural and unrecognized”¹ son of Marcelline Victorine Prieux.² Less than a month later, his mother signed a register recognizing Henri as her son.³

His birth took place in the home of Marcelline’s father, Alphonse François Prieux, in Canville-les-Deux-Églises, Seine-Inférieure, where both Alphonse and his wife, Marcelline Victoire Morel, were labourers. Their daughter Marcelline, born on 18 March 1871⁴ in nearby Bénarville, was a servant living in Canville-les Deux Églises.⁵

A year and a half after Henri’s birth, Marcelline married Emile Eugène Parfait Dioscoride in Le Havre. Emile was a labourer, born in Saint-Étienne-la-Thillaye in Calvados on 14 October 1874,⁶ and Marcelline was a cook. In their marriage register, they declared that they had had a child, Henri Augustin, before their marriage and that they both recognized this child as their legitimate son.⁷

After their marriage, Marcelline and Emile had at least five more children, all born in Le Havre:

- Eugène Victor, born on 27 January 1900⁸
- Jeanne Celestine, born on 19 December 1902⁹
- Marie Lucie Juliette, born on 18 May 1906¹⁰
- Andrée Odette Alice, born on 6 September 1910¹¹
- Jean Émile Victor, born on 15 November 1915¹²

The last child was born nearly two months after the death of their father Eugène in the second year of the Great War. Eugène had first been conscripted (service number 1871) to military service on 16 November 1895, when he joined the 24th infantry regiment.¹³ Three years later, he was released to the reserves and served two periods of active service in 1901 and 1904. By 1908, at the age of 34, he had joined the territorial regiment—a regiment made up of men beyond the age to serve in the regular army (at different times, between 35 and 48) who had inherited the nickname “pépères” (loosely translated as “unworried old men”).¹⁴ They provided guard duties. As part of the general conscription in August 1914, he was called back to military service. He fought the Germans from 2 August 1914 to 24 September 1915—the day he died in Souain-Perthes-lès-Hurlus, Marne. This was the first day of the Battle of Champagne between the French and Germans.

Henri was 18 when his father died. The following year he was recruited for service in the Great War (service number 2978).¹⁵ At the time, he was a store manager, living at 11 rue Jean Jaures in Le Havre. His frontline service began on 10 August 1916 and his battalion took part in a number of key engagements in the war, including the battles of the Somme and of the Chemin des Dames. Henri was taken prisoner on 3 June 1918 at Pernant, Aisne, during the second Battle of the Marne. Leading up to 4 June, the 3rd Battalion was in precarious situation “. . . in a critical position and without any hope of relief, no provisions, nearly without ammunition and having spent seven whole nights without sleep.”¹⁶ It was not possible to determine where he was imprisoned but, after the end of the war, he was being repatriated when he was admitted to No. 1 CCCS.¹⁷

At the time, the CCCS was located in Gosselies, on the outskirts of Charlesroi, Belgium, where it had been a challenging month:

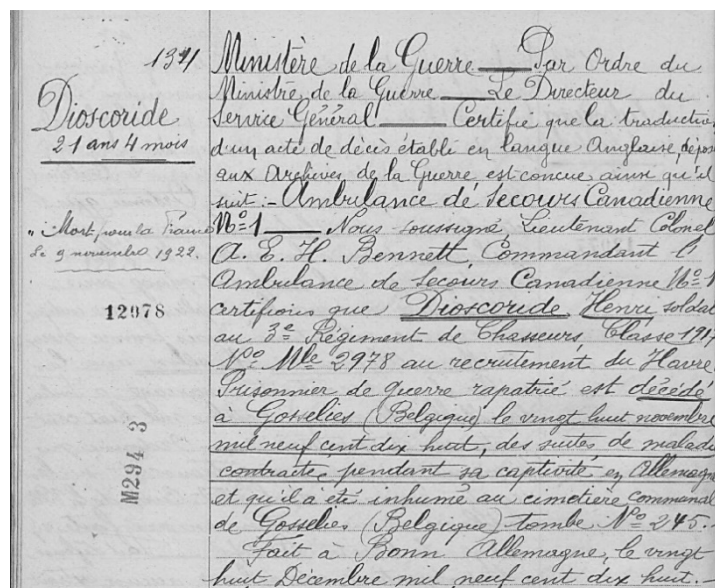
The month began with the CCS acting as an Advanced Operating centre [sic] behind the Canadian Corps in the First Army and with the bulk of our work heavy surgical. About the middle we lost our character as a surgical centre and became for a while a medical station with a considerable number of very bad influenza and bronco pneumonia cases. ... The month ended with us well into Belgium and the hospital practically all medical and with a large number of R.P.O.W. about half of whom were French. It was hard for the Officers Sisters and orderlies who for so long had thought only of Surgical work to turn their attention to the purely medical side but they did it gladly.¹⁸

Henri died there on 28 November¹⁹ of illnesses contracted when he was in captivity.²⁰ The CCCS war diary notes specifically for that day "... large numbers of R.P.O.W. arriving in shocking condition, starved, emaciated, very scantily clad, very lousy and dirty with wounds and sores showing gross lack of care or treatment."²¹

He was buried two days afterward in the Cimetière communale in Gosselies (Grave 245) with a French priest presiding. He was given the honour of "Mort pour la France" on 9 November 1922.²²

In accordance with French practices, Henri's death had to be entered into the death registers of the Seine-Inférieure. His death was recorded in the civil records based on a:

"... translation of a death record created in English and deposited with the War Archives as follows: No. 1 Canadian Emergency Ambulance [translation of French term for No. 1 CCCS], we the undersigned Lieutenant Colonel A E H Bennett, commander of the No. 1 Canadian Emergency Ambulance certifies that Dioscoride Henri, soldier of the 3rd Regiment ... a repatriated prisoner of war died in Gosselies, Belgium ... as a result of an illness contracted while he was in captivity in Germany. ...²³ [English translation]



Extract of French death record for Henri Dioscoride

Source: Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime

Henri's brother Eugène, an iron striker, was conscripted to do his military service (service number 3100) at the age of 16, but he was released because he was "weak." The decision was maintained in 1921 and in October 1922, he was moved to the reserves. In 1932, he was given a special assignment and began work as an iron striker at August Normand.²⁴ He was demobilized in August 1940 at the age of 40,²⁵ but sadly died on 14 June 1944 in Le Havre as a civilian victim of the Second World War.²⁶

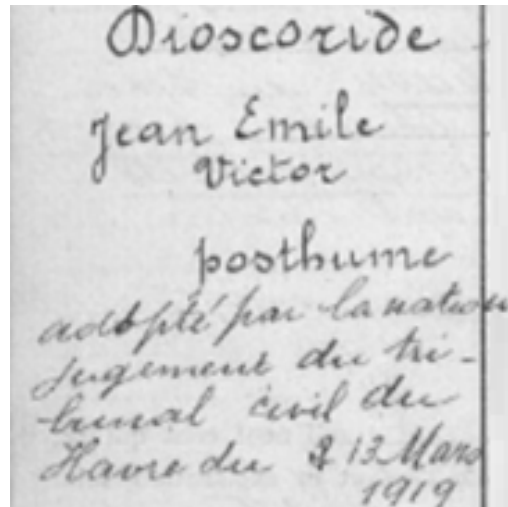
Two years after Henri's father died, leaving five children under the age of 21, the French government put in place provisions for the state to provide

"moral and material protection" for minor children of men or women who died or were seriously

wounded during the Great War.²⁷ In some cases, the recognition of this “adoption by the nation” was noted in a child’s birth record. This was the case for three of the children—Eugène, Andrée and Jean. Jean’s birth record notes that he was the posthumous son of Émile and was adopted by the nation.²⁸

Henri’s mother Marcelline did not die until January 1943²⁹ and lived long enough to see the marriage of all her remaining children:

- Eugène married Clementine Virginie Henriette Joly in 1927 and, in 1936, had two children.³⁰
- Jeanne Celestine married Robert Yves Alphonse Favey in Le Havre in 1924 and died there in 1982.³¹
- Marie Lucie Juliette married Marceau Georges Planterose on 15 May 1931 and died in 1982 in Elbeuf, near Rouen.³²
- Andrée Odette Alice married Jean Gaston Alexandre Vauchel in 1934, but their marriage was dissolved in 1947. She remarried in 1949, wedding Robert Henri Bourienne, and died in Annecy, Haute-Savoie, in 2002.³³
- Jean Emile Victor married Simone Jeanne Julienne Larenie in 1946³⁴ and died in Le Havre in 2002.³⁵



Notation on birth record for Jean Emile Victor Dioscoride

Source: Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime

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¹ “Natural” born is a term used in French civil records to designate an illegitimate child. “Unrecognized” means that there is no recognized parental relationship with the child. (“Héritage : enfants adoptés, naturels ou non reconnus,” *Droit-finances.net* (<https://droit-finances.commentcamarche.com/patrimoine/guide-patrimoine/689-heritage-enfants-adoptes-naturels-ou-non-reconnus/#enfants-naturels>; accessed 19 October 2022))

² “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>; accessed 17 October 2022), entry No. 19 for Henri Augustin Prioux, Canville-les-Deux-Églises - 01/01/1897-31/12/1897, 4 E 6528. Seine-Inférieure was renamed Seine-Maritime in 1955. (“Seine-Maritime,” *Wikipedia* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seine-Maritime>; accessed 29 October 2022))

³ An “acte de reconnaissance” is a legal document (like the registration of births, marriages or deaths) in which a parent(s) recognizes a parental relationship with a child. (“Acte de reconnaissance,” *Formalités Actes de naissance* (<https://www.formalite-acte-de-naissance.org/formalites/acte-de-reconnaissance>; accessed 19 May 2022.) This was necessary because Henri’s mother did not recognize him as her child in his birth certificate; “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 24 for Henri Augustin Prioux, Canville-les-Deux-Églises - 01/01/1897-31/12/1897, 4 E 6528

⁴ “Archives numérisées, État civil (mariages) [marriages],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 136 for Henri Augustin Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/01/1899-30/06/1899, 4 E 13059

⁵ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 19 for Henri Augustin Prioux, Canville-les-Deux-Églises - 01/01/1897-31/12/1897, 4 E 6528, 4

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- ⁶ “Base des Morts pour la France de la Première Guerre mondiale,” *Mémoire des hommes*, Ministère de la défense (<https://www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/>: accessed 17 October 2022), entry for Emile Eugène Dioscoride
- ⁷ “Archives numérisées, État civil (mariages) [marriages],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 136 for Henri Augustin Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/01/1899-30/06/1899, 4 E 13059
- ⁸ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 17 October 2022), entry No. 136 for Eugène Victor Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/01/1900-30/06/1900, 4 E 13063
- ⁹ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry No. 4302 for Jeanne Celestine Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/07/1902-31/12/1902, 4 E 19909
- ¹⁰ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry No. 1540 for Marie Lucie Juliette Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/01/1906-30/06/1906, 4 E 19932
- ¹¹ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry No. 1540 for André Odette Alice Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/07/1910-31/12/1910, 4 E 19961
- ¹² “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry No. 2616 for Jean Emile Victor Dioscoride, Havre (Le) - 01/07/1915-31/12/1915, 4 E 19999
- ¹³ “Archives numérisées, Matricules militaires, Recherche nominative (1887–1921)” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Dioscoride, Emile Eugène Parfait
- ¹⁴ “Régiment d'infanterie territoriale,” *Wikipedia* (<https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/>: accessed 20 October 2022)
- ¹⁵ “Archives numérisées, Matricules militaires, Recherche nominative (1887–1921)” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Dioscoride, Henri Augustin
- ¹⁶ “Historique abrégé du 3e Bataillon de Chasseurs à pied pendant la Guerre 1914–1918,” (<http://tableaudhonneur.free.fr/3eBCP.pdf>: accessed 9 November 2022)
- ¹⁷ “Search Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 5 September 2021), entry for Dioscoride, Henri
- ¹⁸ “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIN&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.htm&lr=1&f=G)
- ¹⁹ “Search Name Index,” *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa*, entry for Dioscoride, Henri
- ²⁰ “Archives numérisées, Matricules militaires, Recherche nominative (1887–1921)” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Dioscoride, Henri Augustin
- ²¹ “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada*
- ²² “Morts pour la France de la Première Guerre mondiale,” entry for Dioscoride, Henri Augustin
- ²³ “War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31,” *Library and Archives Canada*
- ²⁴ August Normand was a naval construction company, founded by Jacques-Augustin Normand, in Le Havre.
- ²⁵ “Archives numérisées, Matricules militaires, Recherche nominative (1887–1921)” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime* (<https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Dioscoride, Eugène Victor

²⁶ “Second Guerre mondiale, Les victimes civils, *Mémoire des hommes*, Ministère de la défense (<https://www.memoiredeshommes.sga.defense.gouv.fr/>: accessed 8 November 2022), entry for Emile Eugène Dioscoride

²⁷ “Adoptions par la Nation et décès de militaires,” *Archives Paris* (<https://archives.paris.fr/r/217/adoptions-par-la-nation-et-deces-de-militaires/#:~:text=Adoptions%20par%20la%20Nation%20%281918-1946%29%20L%27institution%20des%20pupilles,de%20guerre%20et%20enfants%20de%20mutil%C3%A9s%20ou%20d%27invalides>: accessed 19 October 2022)

²⁸ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” entry No. 2616 for Jean Emile Victor Dioscoride

²⁹ “MyHeritage Family Trees,” *My Heritage* (<https://www.myheritage.com/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Marcelline Victorine Dioscoride

³⁰ “Archives numérisées, Matricules militaires, Recherche nominative (1887–1921)” entry for Dioscoride, Eugène Victor

³¹ “Archives numérisées, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 4302 for Jeanne Celestine Dioscoride

³² “Archives numérisés, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 1540 for Marie Lucie Juliette Dioscoride

³³ “Archives numérisés, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 1540 for André Odette Alice Dioscoride

³⁴ “Archives numérisés, État civil (naissances) [births],” *Archives départementales 76 Seine-Maritime*, entry No. 2616 for Jean Emile Victor Dioscoride. The surname of Jean’s wife is difficult to read, so it may be incorrect.

³⁵ “France Death Index, 1970–2022,” *My Heritage* (<https://www.myheritage.com/>: accessed 29 October 2022), entry for Jean Emile Victor Dioscoride