

Loughnan, David Stephen Herbert

Captain

Royal Canadian Corps of Signals



David Stephen Herbert was born on 2 December, 1919 in Winterton, Lincolnshire, England the son of David Loughnan and Daisy Emily Rose-Loughnan. David Jr. and Daisy Rose are married on 7 October, 1914 in Peterborough, England and their two oldest children were born in England. Later on they moved to Canada where their youngest child was born.

The Loughnan family were members of the Church of England. David Jr. was the second of three children; his older sister was Patricia and his younger brother Brian. They grew up in Capilano British Columbia. David was known within the family by the nickname "Spud".

From May 1934 to April 1935 David Jr. and brother Brian went to a boarding school in England. The brothers attended Brigg Grammar School where David was Senior Swimming Champion in 1934 and a member of the 2nd XI Football team.

In the period of 1937-1939 David (Spud) worked as a newspaper and advertising photographer for Spencer's LTD in Vancouver. Photography was one of David's hobbies and he was setting up a photography business for himself to which he wanted to return after completing his military service.

Brian joined the Army but he was not involved in the actual fighting as he had lost a leg in a training accident.





This family photo was probably taken early 1940's shortly before David left for England. On the left Daisy, David's mother, then David, sister Patricia, brother Brian. Photo courtesy of David Rose.

Patricia, the oldest of the children, served in the Royal Canadian Navy. She was stationed in London where she married Captain John Lawrence RN. The couple returned to Canada after the war and had three children.

David's had a dark complexion, he had brown almost black hair and hazel eyes. He was a healthy young man of around 1.80m tall and weighing 68kg. He was single.

David enlisted into No.11 Fortress Signal Coy, Canadian Active Service Force in September 1939. Starting as a Signalman, his service records show that his career developed fast. David became an Acting Lance Corporal on the 24th of September 1940 and on 17 December, 1940 he qualified as a dispatch rider in Troop C. He was promoted to Sergeant on the 11th of June 1941, and in November that year he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant.

Surname LOUGHNAN		
Christian Names David Stephen Herbert		
Rank Lieut.	No.	
Age 1919	Ht. 5-10 Wt. 150	
Hair Black	Eyes Hazel	
Marks, Scars, etc. Nil		
Signature of Holder <i>D. S. Loughnan</i>		
Signature of Issuer <i>W. Goodfellow</i>		
Place Barriefield	Date 7-8-42.	
Report Lost Return If Found	CANADIAN ARMY	Identification Bureau Ottawa, Can.

Source: Service records, Library and Archives Canada

On 22 June, 1942 David was posted to the 7th Division Signals and attached to CSTC (Cadet Summer Training Centers) Kingston, Ontario where he became a Lieutenant on the 24th of June 1942.

He was posted to England in November, 1943 and reported to the 1st Canadian Signals Reinforcement Unit. He remained in England until July 1944, after that he embarked for France. At this point David was with the 2nd Canadian Corps HQ Signals. He was taken on strength of the 3rd Division Signals and promoted to Acting Captain in December 1944. He commanded "J" Section which was assigned to support the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade.

The two Canadian Infantry Divisions were sent to the Moyland area and the road between Goch and Calcar in Germany. In the 48 hours required to clear these areas, the Infantry suffered severe losses at the hands of the Panzer Lehr Division.

On the 18th of February 1945 units of the 7th Brigade were deployed for an attack on a small wood covering the approaches to Calcar. Their tactical disposition was such that a line had to be laid along a road parallel to the woods and in full view of the enemy entrenched within it.

The battle plan was intricate, and its timing required that line communications be maintained to all units throughout. During two days and nights the road was under heavy artillery and mortar fire, but a Signals corporal * , without food or rest, and with several of his crew members killed or wounded, strove valiantly to build a line. Just a few minutes before zero hour he completed an outside line so well constructed that it withstood all shelling throughout the operation.

* It has been established that this was Corporal E.A. Stanley who was awarded the Military Medal for his actions.

The following day the same brigade was at Beek in the Netherlands, and still in the thick of the fighting. The Regina Rifles and Canadian Scottish were critically engaged out front. Two Signalmen of "J" Section were working on a line to the regiments when the captain commanding the section called to learn their progress. The men expressed concern at being unable to repair the line to the Canadian Scottish whose companies were in difficult straits. Mortar fire was particularly heavy in the area when David came out to the scene, picked up his linemen, and set off to find the trouble. In an open field close to the road they detected the break and had just stopped their "Weasel" to repair it when David and a number of infantrymen were killed outright by mortar fire.

Word was sent back to brigade headquarters, whence a corporal came forward and succeeded in repairing the line.

David was killed in action the 19th of February 1945 at th age of 25 years old. He was originally buried in a temporary burial ground in Bedburg-Hau in Germany, row 1 grave 1.

He was later exhumed and reburied in Groesbeek, in plot **X1. G. 15**.

His headstone bears the inscription:

FOR EVER YOUNG



*The Province –
Vancouver BC*

KILLED—Capt. David (Spud) Loughnan, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Loughnan, Capilano, has been reported killed in action on the western front. Born in England, he was educated at Brigg Grammar School in Lincolnshire, and at North Shore College, North Vancouver. Joining the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals as a private at the outbreak of war, he went overseas in December, 1943. A sister, Mrs. Stuart Lawrence, is wife of a lieutenant-commander in the Royal Navy, and herself is a leading firewoman in the National Fire Services, England. His younger brother, Brian, was formerly with the 2nd Canadian Scottish Regiment. Injured during his service, he is now at Shaughnessy Hospital.



Photo: Frans van Cappellen

For his service David was awarded:

- France & Germany star war medal
- Defense medal
- War medal
- Canadian volunteer service medal and clasp



FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story: Kim Huvenaars, Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Library and Archives Canada
David Rose
Joe Costello of the RCSigs Militaria Web Site
Estelle Mumby of Winterton Remembers
The Remember November 11 Association

* If you have a photo of this soldier or additional information please contact info@facestograves.nl

David's name is recorded on the former Brigg Grammar School WW2 memorial at Sir John Nelthorpe School, Brigg, in England for the 50 former students who lost their lives in the Second World War.

In Winterton, David's name was approved by councilors in December 2017, and on Memorial Day in 2018 a wooden cross with his name on it was placed for the first time. His name will be added to the Winterton war memorial, which is located within All Saints' Churchyard.



On the WW1 Armistice Centenary, Sunday 11th November 2018, David Loughnan's name was read out for the first time and a small wooden cross was planted in his memory by local schoolchildren at the base of Winterton War Memorial. Courtesy of Estelle Mumby of Winterton Remembers.