

Campbell, Joseph Daniel

Private

Algonquin Regiment

Royal Canadian Infantry Corps

F75909



Joseph "Joe" Daniel Campbell was born on August 3, 1914, in Dominion, Nova Scotia. His parents were Agnes MacDonald and Michael S. Campbell who were both born in Nova Scotia and married in 1897 in East Bay, Cape Breton.

Joe Campbell was the youngest of seven children. The four daughters were Mary (Campbell), Christina (MacDonald), Jessie (Hall), and Margaret (MacDonald). The sons were John, Ron, and Joseph. They grew up in Dominion, a small coal-mining community on Cape Breton Island. It was a Roman Catholic household. When Joe was not yet two years old, his father, Michael Campbell died on October 2, 1916.

Joseph attended school and completed up to Grade 9 before becoming an electrician. He worked as an electrical station man for the Dominion Steel & Coal Corporation at its Sydney mill for one and a half years.

On October 23, 1942, Joe Campbell enlisted in the regular army at Halifax, Nova Scotia, at the No. 6 District Depot General List. He was 26 years old with no previous military experience.

He stood five feet eight inches and weighed 136 pounds. He had black hair and brown eyes.

He went to Canadian Army Basic Training Camp No. 60 in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on October 31, 1942, for his basic training. He was transferred to Petawawa, Ontario, for engineering training and was recommended for trades training.



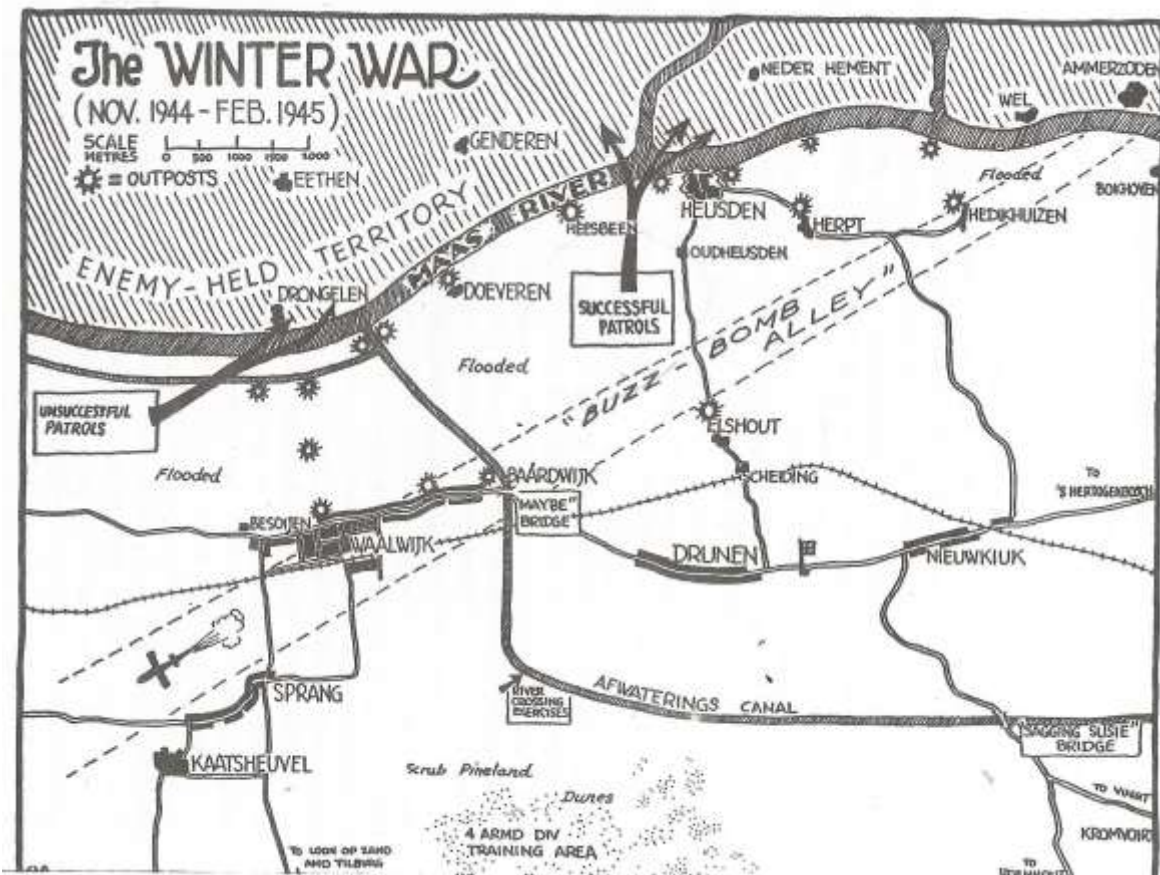
Private Campbell went back to Halifax on April 5, 1943, to continue engineering training at the Nova Scotia Technical College. He completed his engineering training on June 24, 1943. On his Trade Training Form, he was described as a "good practical man." He went back to Petawawa on June 29, 1943, and completed his electrician trades training.

Private Campbell left for the United Kingdom from Halifax, Nova Scotia, on February 16, 1944, and arrived on February 24, 1944. Upon his arrival, he tested and achieved the Electrician "C" status on March 14, 1944. On August 23, 1944, he was transferred out of his reinforcement unit into the Royal Canadian Engineers regiment as a sapper.

Joe Campbell left for Northwest Europe on September 17, 1944, and arrived the next day. Within a few days in France, he was transferred again as a private in The Algonquin Regiment on September 23, 1944. With The Algonquin Regiment, he qualified as a carpenter "C" on December 18, 1944.

For the next months, the Algonquins were deployed to various battlefields in Belgium and The Netherlands.

In February 1945, while stationed in Waalwijk, Netherlands, near Drunen, Private Campbell along with Private Braden Bolger went to investigate some enemy mines. The two Algonquin soldiers, belonging to "C" Company, had been inspecting enemy mines as trained assault pioneers (infantrymen that conduct engineering tasks within the Battalion).



Map from *Warpath: The story of the Algonquin Regiment 1939-1945*.

According to the Algonquin war diary for February 10, the two soldiers "had gone forward on request of Captain T. P. Richardson, acting Officer Commanding "A" Company. Captain Richardson felt he needed a clearing party to check over a route that one of his platoons was to take to a new position." Private Bolger was seen to bend over a mine, to inspect it. All of a sudden, for an unknown reason, the German Teller-Mine exploded and killed both Private Bolger and Private Campbell instantly.

and evening. visibility poor.

3. Two of our pnsr, Pte Bolger B and Pte Campbell J D, were killed this morning while looking over some enemy mines on "A" Coy front. They had gone fwd on request of Capt T P Richardson, A/OC "A" Coy, who felt he needed a clearing party to check over a route that one of his pls was to take to a new posn. This done, the two pnsr were walking back along with Capt Richardson and Lt Heywood, when Mr Heywood mentioned some teller mines that were in his pl area and, although Capt Richardson said he thought these mines would be OK for the time being, Ptes Bolger and Campbell undertook to investigate. On reaching the mined area the two pnsr went over to the first mine. Pte Bolger was seen to bend over the mine as though to make a closer scrutiny when for some undetermined reason the mine exploded and both men were killed instantly. Capt Richardson and Lt Heywood, some 35 yds away were showered with mud from the explosion.

5. B, C, and D Coys spent the morning getting ready to move. The change

Excerpt from February 10, 1945 entry in Algonquin War Diary

Both soldiers were temporarily buried in a temporary military cemetery north of the Groenendaal Cemetery at 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands on February 11, 1945. Private Campbell was 30 years old.



Groenendaal cemetery, now called Orthen Cemetery – photo courtesy Bob van Boekel

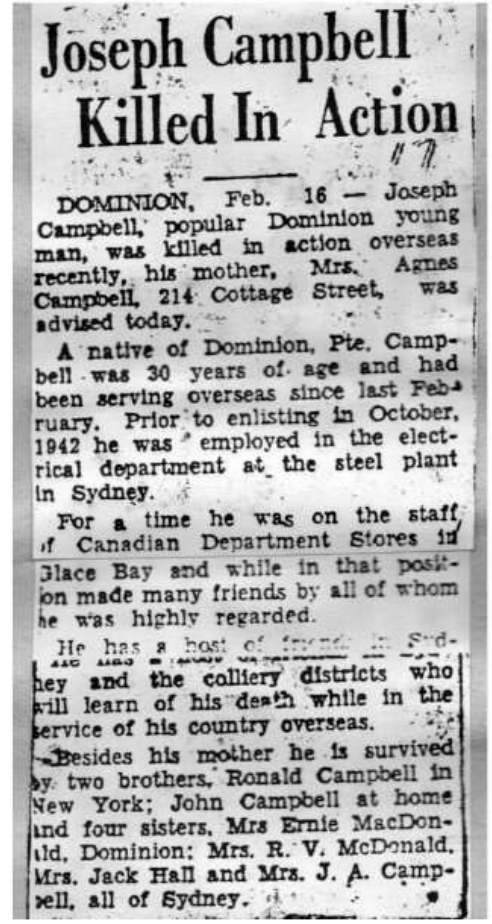
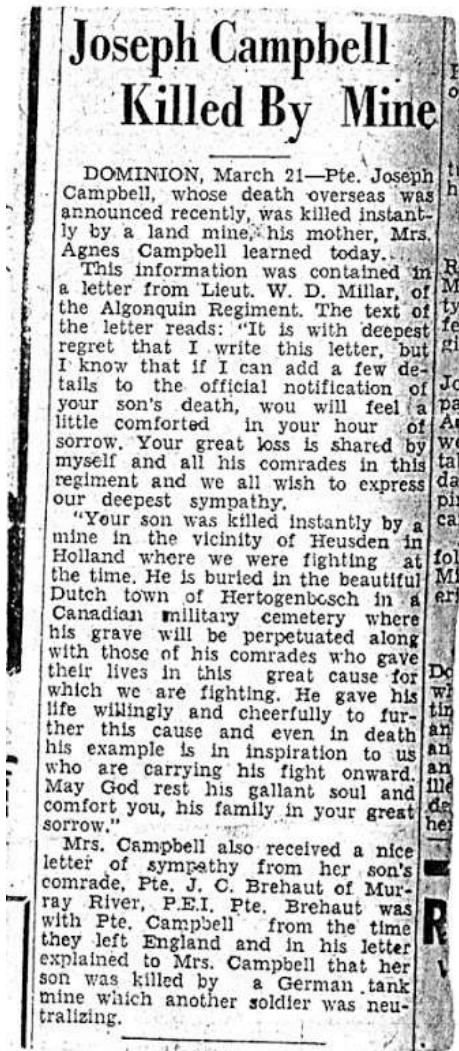


Photo Courtesy of Second World War Veteran, Douglas E. MacLean of Sydney, Nova Scotia.
 Photo gracieusement fournie par un ancien combattant de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, Douglas E. MacLean de Sydney (N.-É.)

Private Joseph Daniel Campbell was later buried in Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery. The grave references are **XV. H. 13.**

The inscription on his gravestone reads:
 MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE



After Joseph's death, his mother, Agnes Campbell, received a letter from an anonymous person who had served in the Canadian army with him. The letter details what the writer thought of "Joe" and what memories were associated with him.

"I remember our standing in line for mail from home. the expression on his face when a letter arrived, his love for things beautiful; the sound of his army boots on the stone flooring as he explained the vast ancient beauty of York Cathedral; his fondness for chocolate, yet he always gave his candy rations to the poor grimy kids of some foreign land; remarking 'I love candy but they need it.' That was Joe."

Wm. H. H. H. H. H.
April 4th 1945

Dear Mrs Campbell,

When a mutual friend of yours, Don Joe and myself wrote me from Holland giving me the sad news of your great loss; I wanted to write you and express my profound sympathy, a feeling shared by all who knew him. Never the less I hesitated to do so, lest in my clumsy way I freshen in your mind the sorrow you have felt.

Knowing Joe so well, he was my best friend in England and Continental Europe, I feel that I must say a few words about him and some memories associated with him.

I remember our standing in line for mail from home, the expression on his face when a letter arrived, his love for things beautiful; the sound of his army boots on the stone flooring as he explained the vast, ancient beauty of York Cathedral; his fondness for chocolate, yet he always gave his candy rations to the poor grimy kids of some foreign land; remarking "I love candy but they need it." That was Joe. These kids could not say thanks just nod dumbly, stuffing the unbelievable pleasure of candy in their mouths with dirty little fingers, even soap was a luxury.

The childrens shining eyes - matched only by the pleasure in Joe's. The others, unknown to you, who shared his bully beef, his cigarettes, his kindness, they all send their sympathy.

If some unthinking, unknowing person should ever speak of his being in a foreign country, please remember that there his memory will be perpetuated, for these people over there above all others know he willingly paid the bitter price of their future; their right to live as God intended life should be lived is secure because men like Joe lived — and died. Now, and long years after this war is over, his resting place with its stiff white cross shall be sacred to Hertenbach and shall have its cover of flowers; this I know.

In our minds, we who knew him, shall be kept ever green his memory. In the muck and grime of war one cannot forget a life that was clean and splendid; an inspiration in good living.

When I remember Joe with his knees bent and head bowed in frequent prayer; I know he is in Good Company and may this thought comfort you in your sorrow.

Just a guy who knew Joe.

The writer simply addressed himself as "Just a guy who knew Joe." While the letter's author has never been identified by the family, it holds a special place and continues to be appreciated. It has been read on CBC Radio, been the subject of a Remembrance Day play put on by students of Lockview High School in Waverly, outside of Halifax, and was read at the Remembrance Day 2000 dinner of Joe's old regiment, The Algonquin Regiment of North Bay, Ontario.

Private Joseph Daniel Cambell was awarded the:

- 1939-45 Star
- France-Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp

Private Campbell's name was also memorialized on The Algonquin Regiment Monument, located on the Rotary Algonquin Regiment Fitness Trail in Parry Sound, Ontario.



The Algonquin Regiment's Memorial in Parry Sound, Ontario.



FACES TO GRAVES

Stichting Faces to Canadian
War Graves Groesbeek

Life story by Yanni Val Guentasse and Clayton Seibert, students from All Saints H.S., Kanata, Canada for Faces to Graves courtesy of Vanessa Kirtz, teacher at All Saints H.S.

Additional research and editing provided by Kurt Johnson.

Sources:

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission Library
- Canadian Virtual War Memorial
- Project '44
- Library and Archives Canada
- <http://lestweforget1945.org>
- Veterans Affairs
- <https://www.geschiedenisgroesbeek.nl/campbell.htm>
- Photos and information provided by relative John Campbell whose father was Private Joseph's cousin.

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