
Guardzman Douglas Stanley Wall

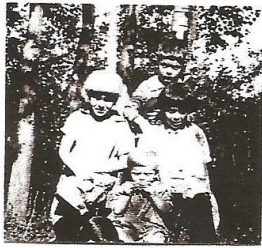
M105407

Story written by Marilyn Doige - 2014

Niece of Douglas Stanley Wall

Douglas Stanley Wall

Douglas was born to Anna Madge (Doze) Wall and Walter Cecil Wall on August 3, 1923 in Smoky Lake. He was their first born son and a brother for Nora and Esther. He was named after his grandfather, Isaac Stanley Doze.



Doug's first home was at the farm in Ardrossan where he and his older sisters became great playmates. When he reached school age, he went along to Garden School with his older sisters. The family was soon joined by two brothers, Leslie in 1927 and Walter in 1929. In 1932 the family welcomed twin girls, Eunice and Beatrice.

Doug at back, Nora on left, Esther on right, Les the baby in front

In 1930, Cecil decided to move west in pursuit of his dream to ranch along the Pembina River at Easyford. Cecil and Madge made the decision to buy a quarter of land at Rocky Rapids where the family would live as there was a school across the road. They would also develop the land along the Pembina River.

Madge along with Doug, Leslie, and baby Walter boarded the CN train in Edmonton for the move west. At Entwistle Madge arranged for transportation to their new home in Rocky Rapids. Cecil, Nora, Esther and his crew had driven the herd of cattle from Ardrossan to Rocky Rapids. They camped along the way in a chuck wagon and tent.

Doug went to Rocky Rapids School along with his sister and eventually his brothers. When he completed grade eight in June and turned fifteen that summer, he was expected to stay home and help on the family farm. In the winter he went to work at sawmills. One winter he worked for Fraser Mills near Breton. Another year he worked for the Albrecht mill owned by Bill and Nora Albrecht (Doug's sister).



Doug at Albrecht's mill

Doug on the left

(Over the years Madge kept various documents, letters, cards, telegrams in several different boxes. The boxes were eventually stored in an old suitcase. The suitcase was on a shelf in Nora's basement for several years and Nora eventually gave the suitcase to Roger. The contents of the suitcase have been most valuable in the writing of this story as they provided and confirmed information not otherwise available. I have included some of the items in this story.)

One fall he headed to southeast Alberta to work on the harvest crews. He left home on foot with only a backpack. In March 9, 1940 Doug gave a horse to his two younger brothers, Les and Walter. They wrote an agreement concerning the gift of the horse.

PLEASE KEEP THIS BILL FOR REFERENCE

Date March 9 1940

M Leslie & Walter Wall

Address Rocky Rapids

Bo't of Douglas S. Wall

1	one old useless
2	cripled old plug
3	mare
4	
5	I give to my little
6	brothers for keeps
7	Leslie Wall
8	Walter Wall
9	
10	Douglas Wall
11	
12	
13	
14	

Translation:

March 9, 1940

Leslie & Walter Wall

Rocky Rapids

Bo't of Douglas S. Wall

One old useless

cripled old plug

mare

I give to my little

brothers for keeps.

Leslie Wall

Walter Wall

Douglas Wall

Doug always liked good horses and, in particular, good saddle horses. He found work on a ranching operation near Czar, Alberta. He worked at the ranch for some time as he loved the ranch work and had made some good friends. When he returned home he came driving a 1928 Pontiac four-door sedan. This may have been the first car in the Wall family.

But times were precarious as WW 11 had begun and Canada had joined the allied forces in Europe. A call went out for volunteers and in 1941, Doug signed up. Before leaving home he sold his Pontiac to his father, Cecil, and his two younger brothers and an agreement was signed.

November 16,
1942.

Mr. W C Wall
and Sons. Leslie & Walter.

This is to certify that
these above have clear
title to this Pontiac
Sedan 1928 model.
and has paid for in
full this 16 day of November
to D S Wall.
Witness.

Translation:

November 16,
1942

Mr. W C Wall
and Sons. Leslie & Walter.

This is to certify that
these above have clear
title to this Pontiac
Sedan 1928 model.
and has paid for in
full this 16 day of November

To D.S. Wall.

Witness (no signature)

Doug signed up at No. 13A. District Depot, Prince of Wales Armoury in Edmonton. Cecil had written a letter stating that Doug was 18 years old and had permission to enlist. Cecil received a letter on Sept. 12th, 1941 from A.H. Elliott, Lt. Col. Major, requesting Cecil complete a form. The form is still attached to the letter so it is not known if there were two copies of the form or if Cecil never sent in the form.



This picture was taken just before Doug enlisted. The original is in rather rough shape as if someone had carried it in their wallet for a long time.

From the time Doug enlisted in the summer of 1941 until October of 1943 he was involved in training within Canada. At some point he was sent to Camp Bordon, Ontario. He was assigned to the Governor General's Foot Guard and, as the title suggests, responsible for guarding the Governor General of Canada. Doug's official title was "Guardsman Douglas Stanley Wall M105407". When in formal uniform, he wore a tall bearskin hat and red tunic.

There are a few letters in the suitcase from Doug written during this time. At one point he was hospitalized for an ear infection and had written his mother about his recovery. He also expressed some frustration about not being sent to Europe. He came home on leave. These pictures were taken on what was to become his last leave home,

Pictures taken at Nora's
with Ken in 1943



Doug became part of a mechanized group and a part of a tank crew. They were officially known as "Armoured Regiment (21st C.A.R. CCFG)". Doug, along with his regiment, was shipped to England arriving there on October 7, 1943. On November 1, 1943 Madge and Cecil received the following telegram.

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Full-Rate Message	
Day Letter	D L
Night Message	N M
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a full-rate message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAM

D. E. GALLOWAY, ASSISTANT VICE-PRESIDENT, TORONTO, ONT.

Form 6123

Exclusive Connection
with
WESTERN UNION
TELEGRAPH CO.
Cable Service
to all the World
Money Transferred
by Telegraph

STANDARD TIME

D G CABLE 71 16 31

GT BRITIAN NOV 1/43

EPM MRS W C WALL
ROCKY RAPIDS ALTA

VIA WABAMUN ALTA

ALL WELL AND SAFE WRITING ALL MY LOVE.

DOUGLAS WALL

740P/6th

During the regiments' stay in England, they were moved several times for training and encampment. During this time Doug wrote home several times. Madge saved many of these letters and stored them in the old suitcase.

The first letter from England was sent January 14, 1944. In the letter Doug thanked his mother for the parcel she had sent. He wrote, "I got your parcel yesterday and thanks a lot. The donuts were hard as hell but they were sure good." Further on, he wrote, "This army's doing me good over here. I can get my feet up to my head now and that's something I never could do." In another letter dated September 20, 1944, Doug wrote about going to Glasgow on leave. He wrote, "Had a good time. There're certainly a lot of difference in people."

In July, 1944, his regiment was scheduled to cross the English Channel to France but were delayed a few days until the channel was safe for crossing. Then on July 24, 1944, Doug's regiment crossed the channel landing at Juno Beach.

Doug's regiment travelled through France arriving in Paris. In a letter he wrote on December 12, 1944, he wrote, "I got to Paris on a 48 (*meaning a 48 hour leave*). I sure was surprised. It sure some place. I expected to see a dirty looking place like all the old places you see but it's all they say. And the night clubs. They have real floor shows too. Nothing on but a little flower or something of that sort. I sure had my share of champagne while I was there. It costs like hell though - about 15\$ a bottle. So now I'm just happy. I saw Paris and I'm broke flat."

Doug's regiment crossed France, Belgium, and Holland before entering Germany in the northwest corner of the country. History states that the regiment fought well with 'courage, cunning and bravery'.

The final letter from Doug was dated April 17, 1945 and was addressed to Walter, his youngest brother. There may have been letters sent to other members of the family after this time but this is the last one stored in the old suitcase. Doug wrote to Walter (who was fourteen years old), "Up to your neck in cow-s since the warm weather. What are you doing for excitement these days? Do you do any dancing?" At the end of the letter he writes, "Well old Buck, I'll say so long for now. So write again, will you. As always, you brother, Doug."

On April 27, 1945 at a place called Vichdamn, Germany, Doug's tank and crew were hit. Doug was pulled from the tank badly wounded and he died the next day, April 28, 1945. As was the practise of the military, a telegram was went to Cecil and Madge Wall on May 3, 1945 to notify the family that Douglas had been wounded. The next day, May 4, 1945, a second telegram was sent to inform the family that Douglas had died. Family oral history is that both these telegrams arrived on the same day, which could very well be accurate, because of the remote location of Rocky Rapids.

Over the next weeks Cecil and Madge received several letters from the Department of National Defense. Of course, they all expressed their sympathy and regrets. A couple of the letters were dated prior to the Douglas's death. The poor officers had written so many letters to so many families that they simply neglected to correct the date on their form letter. Of course, no letter or words of sympathy made any difference to families who had to face their worst fears.

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Full-Rate Message	
Day Letter	D L
Night Message	N M
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a full-rate message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAM

W. M. ARMSTRONG, GENERAL MANAGER, TORONTO, ONT.

Exclusive Connection with
WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO.
Cable Service to all the World
Money Transferred by Telegraph

STANDARD TIME
D G 92 / 88 D L G B 2 Extra Report Delivery
Via Edmonton
Ottawa Ont 438 pm May 3/45

Mrs Madge Wall
Rocky Rapids Alta.

79633 Sincerely regret inform you M105407 Trooper Douglas Stanley Wall has been officially reported severely wounded in action Twenty seventh April 1945 becoming dangerously ill twentyeighth April nature of wounds reported as bullet wound penetrating right chest stop when further information becomes available it will be forwarded as soon as received stop when addressing mail add words IN HOSPITAL in bold letters over name of addressee for quick delivery stop to prevent possible aid to our enemies do not divulge date of casualty or name of unit.

Director of Records

445pm

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Full-Rate Message	
Day Letter	D L
Night Message	N M
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a full-rate message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAM

W. M. ARMSTRONG, GENERAL MANAGER, TORONTO, ONT.

Form 6123
Exclusive Connection with
WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO.
Cable Service to all the World
Money Transferred by Telegraph

STANDARD TIME
D G 44/40 D L G B 2 Extra Via Edmonton
Ottawa Ont. 1128 am May 4/45

Mrs Madge Wall
Report Delivery
Rocky Rapids Alta

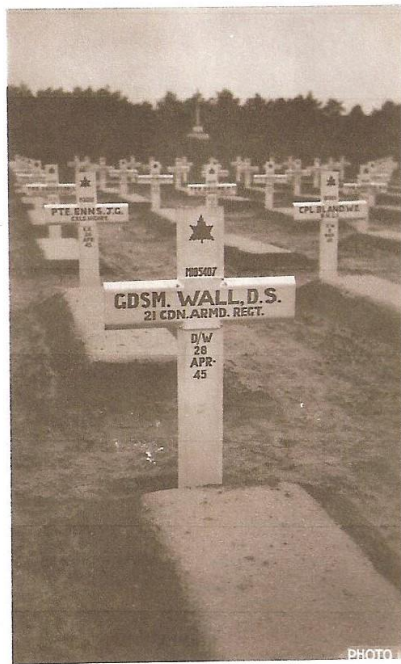
Via Wabamun & Edmonton

79868 Regret deeply M 105407 Trooper Douglas Stanley Wall has now been officially reported to have died of wounds twenty eighth April 1945 stop You should receive further details by mail direct from the unit in the theatre of war

Director of Records.

7752am

Guardsmen Douglas Stanley Wall M 105407 rests in a Canadian Military Cemetery in Holten, Holland. The cemetery is beautifully maintained by the school children of Holland.



The original headstone



The present headstone

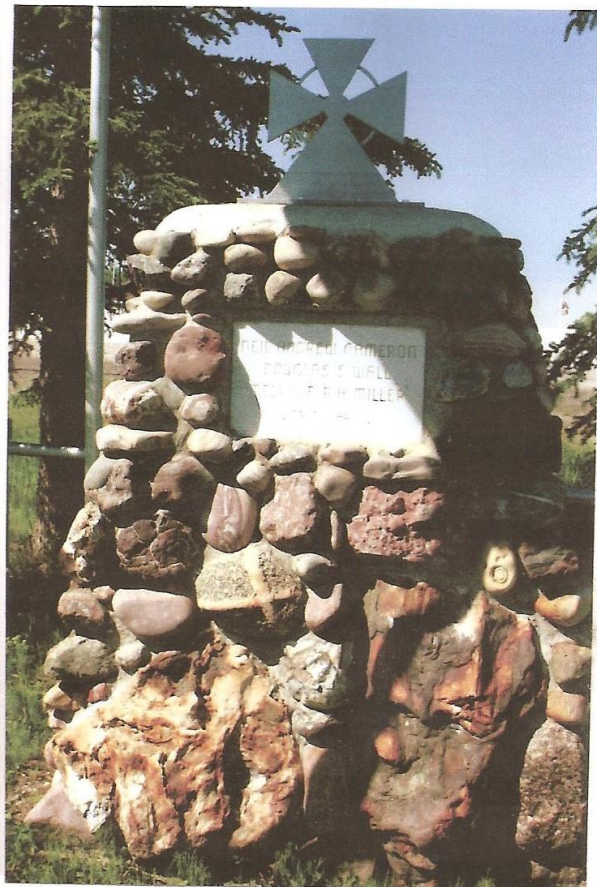
Photo taken by Ken Albrecht

Some years after the end of the war, the Cameron family of Rocky Rapids constructed a cairn in honor of the three young men from Rocky Rapids who had lost their lives. Originally the cairn was set on the Cameron family farm but has since been moved to the yard of the Rocky Rapids Community Hall. It honors Neil Andrew Cameron, Douglas Stanley Wall and Melville P.H. Miller.



CAMERON MEMORIAL CAIRN
DRAYTON VALLEY, ALBERTA

Copyright
P. Jacobs Studio



Medals awarded to Guardsman Douglas Stanley Wall M105407

Top row left: Canadian Volunteer Service Medal

Awarded for active service and honourably completing eighteen months of volunteer service between 1939 and 1947. A silver bar on the ribbon for sixty days or more outside Canada.

Medal: Seven marching figures representing men and women of army, air force, navy and nursing services. Reverse side: Coat of arms of Canada

Top row center: Defense Medal

Awarded to Canadians for six months or more of service in Britain between 1939 and 1945.

Medal: Bareheaded effigy of King George VI. Reverse side: Royal crown rests on an oak tree flanked by a lion and lioness.

Top row right: War Medal 1939-1945

Awarded to full time personnel serving twenty-eight days or longer between 1939-1945.

Medal: King George VI. Reverse side: A lion standing on the body of a double-headed dragon. Dragon's heads are those of an eagle and a dragon to signify the occidental and oriental enemies.

Bottom row left: 1939-1945 Star

Awarded for six months or more service for active Army or Navy personnel.

Bottom row right: France and Germany Star

Awarded for service in France, Belgium, Holland, or Germany - June 1944 and May 1945.



The Wall family is very proud of the contribution made by Douglas Stanley Wall. He is honoured in our hearts.

May peace be with you, Doug.

