

Sgt Murns Sydney Clouston (Service # G22325)



Murns Sydney Clouston was born on April 17, 1918, on a farm near East Bathurst, Gloucester County, New Brunswick. the son of James Judson Clouston and Frances Lillian (Jagoe). The family was of Scottish and Irish descent and attended the Methodist Church. Murns was one of eight children. His brother Elmo served with the Carleton & York Regiment in WW2. At age thirteen, Murns left school after completing grade seven. Records show that he went to work as a pipe fitter for Bathurst Power and Paper Co. Ltd. During this time, he also served part-time with the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM).

War broke out in September 1939. The following year on June 6, 1940, Murns and his friends Sprague Wiseman, Walter Fournier, and Aurele Vienneau went down the old Bathurst Arena and enlisted with the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment. Murns assigned most of his pay to his mother and took out a life insurance policy with his mother as the beneficiary. The following year was spent training at Woodstock and Sussex. On July 21, 1941, the regiment sailed for Liverpool, England, on the *Duchess of York*, and the following November Murns was promoted to the rank of Corporal. In the United

Kingdom, the regiment spent almost three years in intensive physical training and rehearsing beach landings in England and Scotland. On November 2, 1943, Murns was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

On D-Day (June 6, 1944), Sgt Clouston landed in Normandy near the village of Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer with D Company under the command of Major Ernie Anderson. Major Anderson was from Burnt Church, NB, and would become the longest-serving commander of the regiment during combat. A and B Companies were the first units to come ashore. At about 8 a.m. their landing craft doors opened and the men poured out under heavy fire from artillery, mortars, and machine guns. They scrambled over barriers, mines, and boobytraps, and ran for the security of the seawall.

For B Company, there were few casualties during the dash across the beach. Most made it to the wall, but they now stalled and soon D Company was coming in behind them. Using explosives and wire cutters, B Company cut a path into the village. They now pushed into the streets with orders to eliminate a large defensive strongpoint that included 75 mm guns, 50 mm guns, as well as mortars and machine guns. All were firing on the beach and the landing craft. The German snipers were also deadly and using a network of tunnels, they kept moving to different positions. B Company's progress was temporarily halted by the defenses but eventually, with a combination of anti-tank guns and a Petard, the strongpoint was silent.

D Company orders were to follow and pass through B Company and then clear the eastern section of the town and capture the railway station. Major Anderson stated, "We located a well-worn path that must have been used by German beach patrols." ... buildings had been demolished to provide lines of fire." ... Sgt Clouston and I started for the first street, and within seconds he was killed on a mine." Sgt Murns Sydney Clouston was twenty-six years of age.

Despite snipers, mines, and machine guns, D Company made their way southeast of the town and captured the railway station. Afterward, they established a defense line along the railway tracks to prevent German counterattacks. They also continued the task of clearing houses and streets with grenades and flamethrowers. The War Diary records that by 11:15 a.m. Hitler's Atlantic Wall had

been broken, all Company objectives had been achieved, and the NS(NB)R was in control of Saint Aubin.

For his service to Canada, Sgt Murns Sydney Clouston was awarded the following medals; the 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, Defense Medal, War Medal 1939-45, and Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp.

Sgt Murns Sydney Clouston is buried in Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery in Calvados, France, Plot V. B. 7. His name is also engraved on one of the monuments to the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment that stands along the seawall in Saint Aubin-sur-Mer. In 2019 his biography, as well as the biographies of other NS(NB)R soldiers killed on D-Day were mounted on large plaques and placed on the walls of Miramichi schools.

Right: The grave of Sgt Murns Clouston in Beny-sur-Mer, Canadian War Cemetery

Below: The village of Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer, captured by the North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment on the morning of June 6, 1944, and where Sgt Murns Clouston was killed.

