

Private George Loan

Regimental number: 718493

1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, 3rd Canadian Division

born: 29 April 1890 - died: 15 September 1918

Private George Loan was born 29 April 1890 in Glenluce in Wigtownshire, Scotland,¹ the son of William and Janet Loan.² His father was born in about 1852 in Wigtown and his mother, the former Janet Morrison,³ about four years later in Kirkmaiden, Wigtonshire.⁴ They probably had eight children: Thomas (born in 1881),⁵ James (born in about 1882),⁶ Annie (born in about 1884),⁷ Alexander (born in 1885),⁸ Jessie (born in about 1887),⁹ George, Agnes (born in 1891)¹⁰ and Myrtle May (born in about 1893).¹¹

In 1891, George's father was a traction engine proprietor¹² and then, in 1901, a "steam theasing mill proprietor."¹³ In 1906, the family immigrated to Canada.¹⁴ They sailed from Glasgow on the Mongolian and landed in Halifax on 4 April 1906. William was a farmer and the family headed to Brandon, Manitoba. The British Bonus, a commission paid by the Canadian government to steamship booking agents for each suitable immigrant who purchased a ticket to sail to Canada,¹⁵ was paid for all family members. Their eldest son immigrated with them, but the next two children (James and Annie) did not. Perhaps they chose to remain in Scotland or perhaps they had died.

In 1911, the family was living in Oak Lake, near Brandon, Manitoba.¹⁶ George, his two brothers (Tom and Alex) and his father were all labourers, doing odd jobs. In 1916, the family was still living in Oak Lake and George's father and his brother, Tom, were still labourers.¹⁷ However, by then, George had joined the army and was posted to Camp Hughes, a Canadian military training camp, located near Carberry, Manitoba. It was used for Army training from 1909 to 1934 and had a World War I battlefield terrain, created for training purposes by the Canadian Department of National Defense between 1915 and 1916.¹⁸

George enlisted in the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles on 10 February 1916 in Winnipeg, Manitoba.¹⁹ At the time he was listed as being an engineer. He was 6' 1" tall, had a fair complexion, dark blue eyes and black hair and was a Presbyterian.

The 1st Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles was an infantry unit of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, formed in Brandon in 1914, landed in France on 22 September 1915.²⁰ Although originally a mounted infantry unit, after it landed in France, it was apparent that the conditions of the Western Front made its mounts more of a hindrance than a benefit. As a result, at the beginning of January 1916, both CMR brigades were dismounted, converted to infantry and reorganized as the 8th Infantry Brigade.

In September 1918, the 1st CMR was in Divisional Reserve.²¹ On 11 September, the unit relieved the 42nd Canadian Infantry Battalion and was on the Front Line. The next day there was active artillery fire from both sides. During the night of 12/13 September, George was wounded:

While on patrol duty on the night of 12/13 September, 1918, he was wounded in the left leg and sustained a fracture of it by enemy shell fire. He received First Aid and was then carried to the Regimental Aid Post, and from there to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station where he died two days later.²²

He was admitted to the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 13 September with gunshot wounds.²³ Both his legs were amputated, but he succumbed to his wounds on 15 September. He was buried the same day in Duisans British Military Cemetery (Grave No. 69, Plot 5, Row H) with the chaplain Andrew D. Reid presiding. George's father was notified of his death.

Duisans British Military Cemetery is located in Etrun, near Arras, in France. The first burials took place in the cemetery in March 1917.²⁴ The 1st CCCS arrived at the beginning of September and was stationed near Duisans for two months in the autumn of 1918.²⁵ A total of 75 patients died at the 1st CCCS in September 1918.

The Loan family lost four members over a seven-year period. George's mother, Janet, died just a year before he was killed, dying on 22 April 1917 in Oak Lake.²⁶ His brother, Thomas, who did not serve in the Great War, died in Manitoba just two years after George.²⁷ Then his sister, Myrtle, appears to have died in 1922.²⁸ His father, William, died on 19 November 1925.²⁹

His older sister, Jessie, married John H. Webster on 30 April 1912.³⁰ His younger sister, Agnes, did not marry and died in British Columbia in 1970.³¹

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¹ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for George Loan

² "1901 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for George Loan, ED: 8, Household schedule number: 133, LINE: 22, Roll: CSSCT1901_442

³ "British Columbia Death Registrations, 1872-1986; 1992-1993", database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FLB9-T6K> : accessed 13 November 2015), entry for Agnes Loan, 1970.

⁴ "1891 Scotland Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for William Loan, Registration number: 894, Registration district: Old Luce, ED: 8, Household schedule number: 41, LINE: 15, Roll: CSSCT1891_407

⁵ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for William Loane, Province: Manitoba, District: Brandon, District Number: 15, Sub-District: 27 - Town of Oak Lake, Sub-District Number: 27

⁶ "1891 Scotland Census," entry for William Loan

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ "1911 Census of Canada," entry for William Loane

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² "1891 Scotland Census," entry for William Loan

¹³ "1901 Scotland Census," entry for George Loan

¹⁴ "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for Geo Loan

¹⁵ "Terminology and Abbreviations," Library and Archives Canada (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/>; accessed 12 November 2015)

¹⁶ "1911 Census of Canada," entry for William Loane

¹⁷ "1916 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 March 2015), entry for George Loan, Sub District Desc.: Townships 9 and 10, ranges 23 and 24 W.P.M., including the Town of Oak Lake

¹⁸ "Camp Hughes," Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_Hughes; accessed 1 November 2015)

¹⁹ "Canada, Soldiers of the First World War, 1914-1918," entry for George Loan

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- ²⁰ "1st Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles, CEF," Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Battalion,_Canadian_Mounted_Rifles,_CEF; accessed 13 November 2015)
- ²¹ "MIKAN 2004667: War diaries - 1st Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles," Library and Archives Canada (<http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca>; accessed 12 November 2015)
- ²² "Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914-1948," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 12 November 2015), entry for George Loan, Service number: 718493
- ²³ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," *Library and Archives Canada*, (records accessed 2013 & 2015), Record Group 9, series IIC10, volume 4556, Record number 653
- ²⁴ "Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 7 October 2015)
- ²⁵ "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=FINN&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015)
- ²⁶ "Vital Statistics Agency, Manitoba," (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/>; accessed 13 November 2015), entry for Janet Loan, Registration Number: 1917-024022
- ²⁷ "Vital Statistics Agency, Manitoba," (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/>; accessed 13 November 2015), entry for Thomas Loan, Registration Number: 1920-017124
- ²⁸ "Vital Statistics Agency, Manitoba," (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/>; accessed 13 November 2015), entry for Myrtle Loan, Registration Number: 1922-014052
- ²⁹ "Vital Statistics Agency, Manitoba," (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/>; accessed 13 November 2015), entry for William Loan, Registration Number: 1925-048163
- ³⁰ "Vital Statistics Agency, Manitoba," (<http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/>; accessed 13 November 2015), entry for William Loan, Registration Number: 1912-004991
- ³¹ "British Columbia Death Registrations, 1872-1986; 1992-1993", database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FLB9-T6K> : accessed 13 November 2015), entry for Agnes Loan, 1970.