

**Private Dan C. McMaster®**  
**Regimental Number: 415079**  
**17th Reserve Battalion and 25th Canadian Regiment**

**born: 8 May 1892 – died: 9 March 1916**

Private Dan C. McMaster is buried in Plot II. C. 233, in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, North, Pas-de-Calais, France, northwest of Armentières.<sup>1</sup> Although he was known to everyone as Dan, he had been christened Donald Charles McMaster at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Stellarton, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, on 12 May 1892.<sup>2</sup> The names Daniel and Donald were interchangeable among early Scottish/Gaelic settlers in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.<sup>3</sup>

Dan's father was Angus McMaster, who was a descendant of Donald "The Weaver" MacMaster, who came from Moidart, Scotland, in 1801 and settled in Creignish, Inverness County, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Dan's mother was Catherine MacInnis, who was born in Judique, also in Inverness County, Cape Breton. Her family had come from Moidart as well and were early settlers in the Inverness area of Cape Breton.<sup>4, 5, 6, 7, 8</sup> Both Angus and Catherine grew up in Inverness County.

Dan's parents were married at St. Andrew's Church in Judique on 9 June 1891;<sup>9</sup> they moved to Pictou County after they married and then spent some time living in Woburn, Massachusetts. Dan, their first son, was born in Pictou County on 8 May 1892.<sup>10</sup> Angus and Catherine had three other children born over the next six years: Duncan Joseph (b. 1894),<sup>11</sup> Angus A. (b. 1898)<sup>12</sup> and Mary Catherine (b. 1900).<sup>13</sup> Angus and Catherine moved back to Port Hood, Inverness, sometime before the turn of the century, where they lived near their extended families.

Dan enlisted with the 17th Reserve Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 29 March 1915. Dan had been working as a miner before his enlistment. His attestation papers describe him as a single man of 5 feet, 7 inches with blue eyes, brown hair and a fresh complexion.<sup>14</sup>

His unit sailed from Montreal on 9 October 1915 on the SS *Missanabie*, arriving in Plymouth England, on 25 Oct 1915<sup>15</sup>. Dan got into a little trouble on 5 January 1916, when he was disciplined for drinking while on leave in Folkestone.<sup>16</sup> Dan was transferred to the 25th Canadian Battalion early in February 1916, when he and his unit moved out to the Western Front in France.<sup>17</sup> The 25th Battalion went to France as part of the 5th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Canadian Division.

Just one short month later, on 9 March 1916, Dan died at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, as a result of a gunshot wound to the abdomen received in action. He was shot on 8 March 1916 and died at 4:50 a.m. the next morning. He was 24 years old.<sup>18</sup> Just five days earlier, on 3 March 1916, Dan's younger brother Angus had enlisted in the CEF and although wounded he survived the war.<sup>19</sup> Dan's other brother Duncan Joseph (known as Joe) was living in the USA when WWII was declared, and although he was 48 years of age he registered for service.

Dan and his brothers began a tradition of service for the McMaster family, with Angus's sons and grandsons serving in the Navy in the Second World War and the Korean War.<sup>20</sup>

By the time of Dan's death his mother Catherine was living on Glebe Avenue in Sydney, Nova Scotia, where she resided until September 1923. She then moved to Buffalo to live with her married daughter, Catherine Moore. Catherine McMaster lived there for the rest of her life and died on 17 February 1958 at 95 years of age.<sup>21</sup> Dan's brother Angus moved to western Canada after the war and died in Dawson Creek, British Columbia, on 13 October 1977.<sup>22</sup>

Dan McMaster's sacrifice was reported in the *Oxford Journal News*, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, on Thursday, 6 April 1916, where it was noted that "he died of wounds on March 9th."<sup>23</sup>

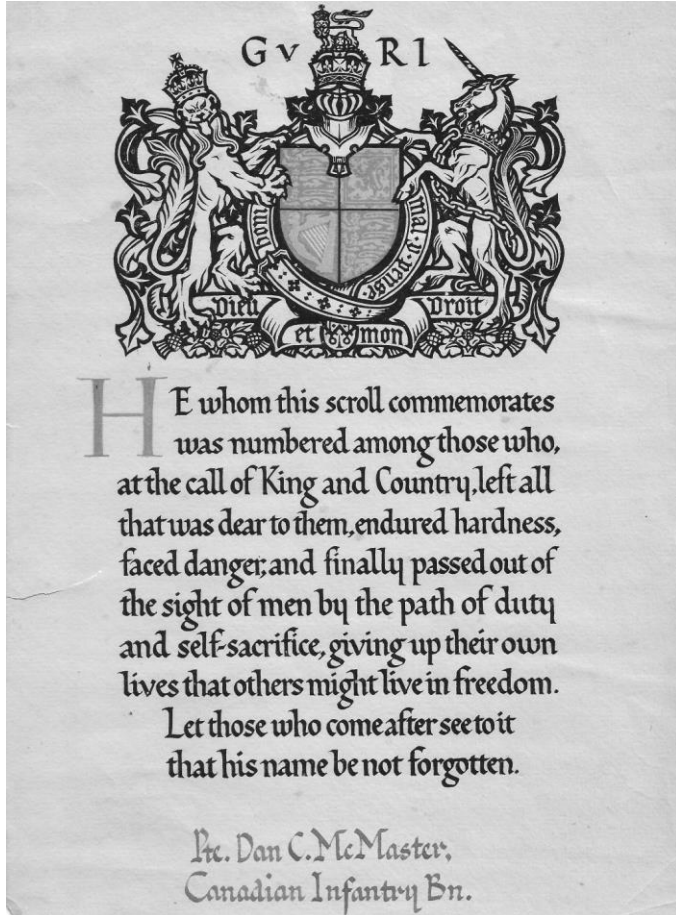
An article was also written in the *Port Hood Greetings* newspaper; it included the text of the letter to his mother announcing his death and the following paragraph.

“Private McMaster referred to above is a native of Port Hood having lived here with his mother before going to Sydney. He is a nephew of Hugh McMaster of this town and of Duncan McMaster, South West, Port Hood. The Greetings extend sincere sympathy to the bereaved mother.”

His name is also displayed on page 129 in the Book of Remembrance found in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower in Ottawa.

The following death certificate, remembrance scroll, letter from the chaplain attending Dan on his death and its transcription were graciously provided by Barbara Caldwell, a grandniece of Dan McMaster.





mortal one. So we sent for a priest, a French man. He arrived in time to give your son the last sacraments of the church, and very shortly afterwards he passed peacefully into the presence of His Maker. He will be buried tomorrow morning, by the same priest, Father Du Columbier, with military honors in the beautiful cemetery of the town in which we are located and his grave marked with a cross with his name on it, so that it can be located at any time. He has given his life bravely for his country and I believe that even in your great sorrow with which we greatly sympathize, his mother and father will be proud of their boy. R.I.P.

Yours Very Sincerely,

C.K. Masters  
Capt. & Chaplain

Transcription of Letter from the chaplain in France (typed copy)

No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station  
France,

March 9th 1916

My dear Mrs McMaster

You will doubtless have [received] before this reaches you notification of the death of your son, Pte. D. C. McMaster 415,679 25th Canadian Batt. I thought however that there are some particulars you would like to have. He was brought into our hospital the 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station last night and given every care and attention that Medical Science and the skillful nursing of our Red Cross nurses could give him here, but his wound in the stomach was quickly seen to be a

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his life bravely for his  
country and I believe that  
even in your great sorrow  
with which I can only  
sympathize, his mother  
and father will be proud  
of their boy. R. I. P.  
Yours very sincerely  
C.K. Masters  
Capt. & Physician

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<sup>1</sup> "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 28 April 2014) entry for Dan C. McMaster, C.E.F., Service No: 415079.

<sup>2</sup> "Nova Scotia, Antigonish Catholic Diocese, 1823-1905, Baptism Registration Index," *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 15 May 2014), entry for Donald Charles McMaster, Event place: Our Lady of Lourdes, Stellarton, Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication, 7 May 2014, from the New Glasgow Library/Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library ([newglasg@nsngp.library.ns.ca](mailto:newglasg@nsngp.library.ns.ca)).

<sup>4</sup> "History of Inverness County, Nova Scotia, Chapter XL, - Creignish," *Electric Scotland* ([www.electricscotland.com/canada/inverness/chapter40.htm](http://www.electricscotland.com/canada/inverness/chapter40.htm): accessed May 2014).

<sup>5</sup> "1871 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 8 May 2014), entry for Duncan and Sarah McMaster and family, Province: Nova Scotia, District: Inverness, District number: 203, Sub-district: Judique, Sub-district number: E.

<sup>6</sup> "1881 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 June 2016), entry for Angus McMaster, son of Duncan and Sarah McMaster, Province: Nova Scotia, District number: 4, District: Inverness, Sub-district number: E, Sub-district: Judique, Division: 2.

<sup>7</sup> "1891 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 8 May 2014), entry for Angus McMaster, Province: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District number: 39, Sub-district: Stellarton.

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<sup>8</sup> “1901 Census of Canada,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 June 2016), entry for Angus McMaster, Province: Nova Scotia, District: Inverness, District number: 35, Sub-district: Glencoe, Sub-district number: C-1.

<sup>9</sup> “Nova Scotia, Antigonish Catholic Diocese, 1823–1905, Marriage Registration Index,” *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 15 May 2014), entry for Angus McMaster and Katie McIsaac, Event place: St. Andrew’s, Judique, Inverness, Nova Scotia, Canada.

<sup>10</sup> “Nova Scotia, Antigonish Catholic Diocese, 1823–1905, Baptism Registration Index,” entry for Donald Charles McMaster.

<sup>11</sup> “Massachusetts, Birth Records, 1840–1915,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 21 June 2016), entry for Duncan Joseph McMaster, Birth place: Woburn, Massachusetts, USA.

<sup>12</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx): accessed 12 May 2014) entry for Angus McMaster, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7104-47, Item number: 168595, Paper service file.

<sup>13</sup> “Nova Scotia, Antigonish Catholic Diocese, 1823–1905, Baptism Registration Index,” *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 15 May 2014), entry for Mary Catherine McMaster, Event place: St. Andrews, Judique, Inverness, Nova Scotia, Canada.

<sup>14</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* ([www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx): accessed 5 May February 2014) entry for Dan C. McMaster, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7105-4, Item number: 668607, Paper service file.

<sup>15</sup> “Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group—The Matrix Project, 17th Reserve Battalion,” *Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group* ([cefresearch.ca/matrix/Utilities/reserves/17th.htm](http://cefresearch.ca/matrix/Utilities/reserves/17th.htm): accessed 25 June 2016), entry for 17th Reserve Battalion.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> “Commonwealth War Graves Commission,” ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 28 April 2014) entry for Dan C. McMaster, C.E.F., Service No: 415079.

<sup>19</sup> “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 12 May 2014) entry for Angus McMaster, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 7104-47, Item number: 168595, Paper service file.

<sup>20</sup> Personal communications from Barbara Caldwell, Dan McMaster’s grandniece 21–23 May 2014).

<sup>21</sup> “U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1895–1956,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 June 2016), entry for Catherine Macmaster [sic], Record Type: Manifest of Alien Arrivals at Buffalo, Lewiston, Niagara Falls, and Rochester New York, 1902-1954.

<sup>22</sup> “British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872–1990,” *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 12 May 2014), entry for Angus McMaster, Death Location: Dawson Creek, Registration number: 1977-09-015359, BCA Number: B13580, GSU number: 2051017.

<sup>23</sup> “Oxford Journal News, Oxford, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia - Thursday April 6, 1916” *Rootsweb—Ancestry*, ([www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nscumber/oxford/06april1916.html](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nscumber/oxford/06april1916.html): accessed 15 May 2014 and 23 June 2016), entry for Daniel C. McMaster.