
David Leigh Sproule

A Westmount Legacy



David Sproule's name on Westmount High School memorial plaque



David Leigh Sproule

F/O R.C.A.F

Killed On Active Service

Introduction

By Farangis Dabiry

David Leigh Sproule was one among many Westmount High school students who fought in the Second World War. Like most of the other students, he sacrificed his life during combat. In this digital biography, I, as current Westmount High student, would like to express my gratitude to the fallen soldier. May his sacrifice be remembered and honored.

Early Life

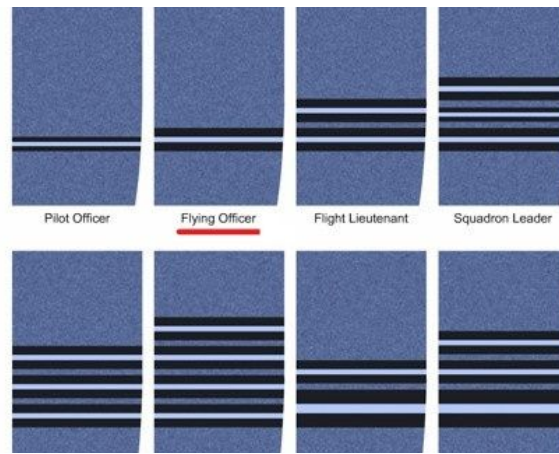
David Leigh Sproule, graduated in 1937, was a former student of Westmount High School. Son of professor Gordon St. George Sproule, of McGill University, and Mrs. Helen Louise Sproule of 39 Thornhill avenue, Westmount, Flying Officer (F/O) Sproule was born in St. Lambert, Westmount, Montreal, Quebec, Canada on May 29, 1919 . He was educated in Westmount and was prominent in school athletics, at one time holding the city championship in school gymnastics. He attended McGill University for three years and was twice captain of the McGill Gymnasium Club.

Leaving school to join the R.C.A.F (Royal Canadian Air Force), he received his wings and commission at Uplands in July, 1942. For some time he was engaged in anti-submarine patrol work on the Canadian east coast and was later posted overseas. In the United Kingdom he was pilot of a Sunderland flying boat. He was killed on active service on October 16, 1943. He was only twenty four years old at time of his death. Unfortunately there are no records of his battle details. Sproule was buried in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. A brother Flt-Lt. Robert Stanley Sproule, on mobile duty near London, was present at the funeral. Another brother, William Kelvin Sproule who was engaged in research with the International Nickel Company, visited his parents with his family.

Royal Canadian Air Force

Rank, Unit and Duties

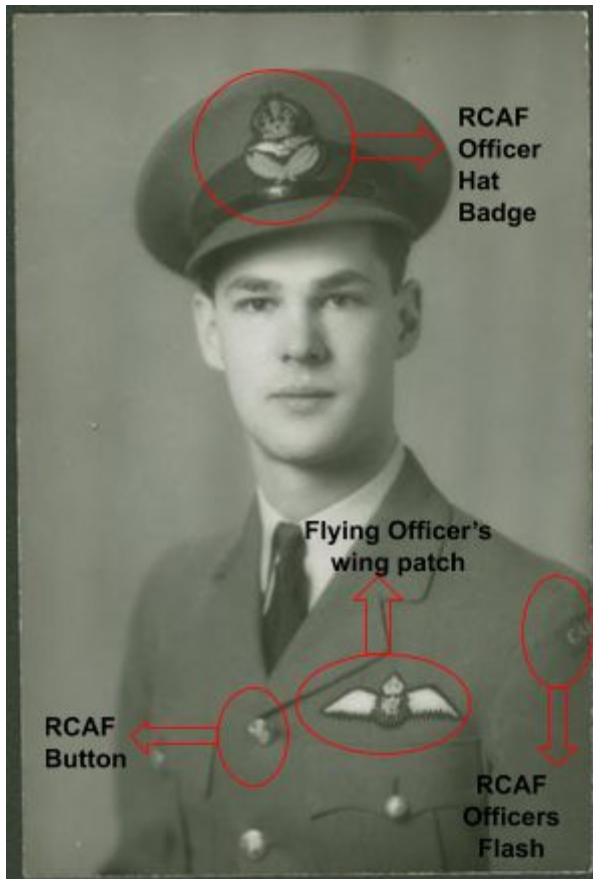
David Leigh Sproule was a flying officer(F/O). He left school to join the R.C.A.F(Royal Canadian Air Force), he received his wings and commission at Uplands in July, 1942. For some time he was engaged in anti-submarine patrol work on the Canadian east coast and was later posted overseas. In the United Kingdom he was pilot of a Sunderland flying boat.



RAF Officer Ranks

The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) is a part of [National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces](#). It defends and protects Canadian and North American airspace in partnership with the United States. The RCAF also contributes to international peace and security.

The Royal Canadian Air Force played a vital role in the Second World War, providing thousands of air personnel, ground crew, and aircraft to all theatres. It is responsible to provide International peace and security.



Details of A Flying Officer Uniform



Royal Canadian Air Force Logo

Awards

David Leigh Spoule was awarded the War Medal 1939-1945 and the 1939-45 Star.



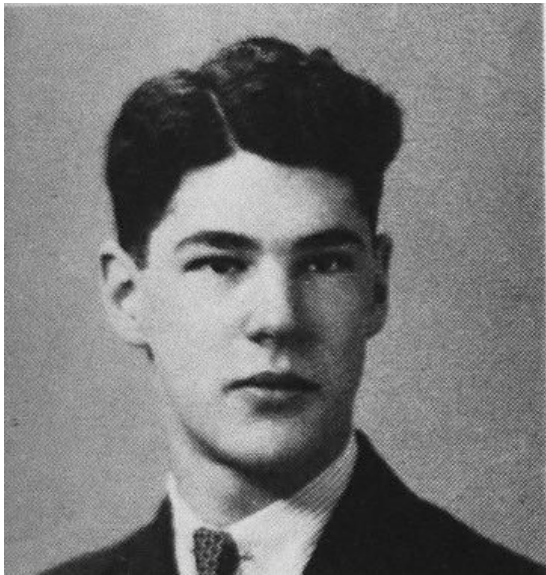
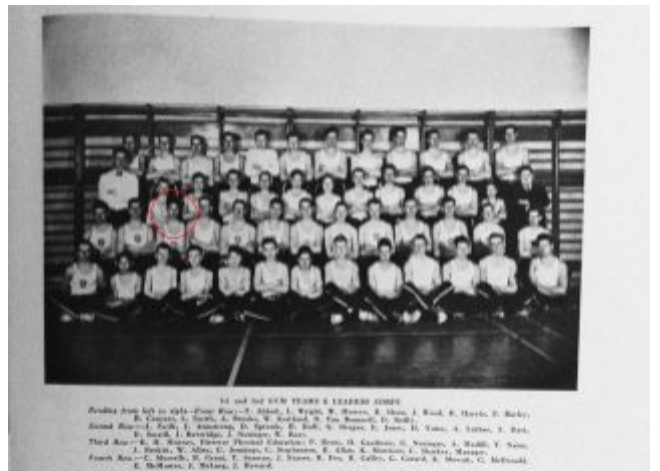
The War Medal 1939-45



1939-45 Star



David Leigh Sproule's name on page 216 of Second World War Book of Remembrance



*"He floats through the air
With the greatest of ease."*
DAVID SPROULE (Dave)
 Fav. Exp.—"Do any of you babies want milk."
 Pet Avers.—Fresh air fiends.
 Pastime—Gym.
 Ambition—Olympics 1940.
 Activities—Sr.. Gym Team '35, '36, '37; Leaders Corps, '34, '35,
 '36, '37; Life Saving Med. '35; First Aid '35, '36, '37.

David L. Sproule's yearbook graduating picture



Westmount high school's war memorial plaque: In memory of former pupils of WHS who made the supreme sacrifice

David L. Sproule's School Life And his passion for sports

As shown in his yearbook graduating picture, David was very passionate about sports. He was prominent in school athletics, at one time holding the city championship in school gymnastics. He was twice captain of the McGill Gymnasium Club. Above you can see David's picture in his gymnastic team through three years of high school.

Burial

David L. Sproule was buried in Irvinestown church of Ireland churchyard, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. His grave reference number is plot 1. grave 28. A brother Flt-Lt. Robert Stanley Sproule, on mobile duty near London, was present at the funeral. Another brother, William Kelvin Sproule who was engaged in research with the International Nickel Company, visited his parents with his family.

GR	NO. and BACK	GRAVE	NAME and SURNAME	UNIT	DATE of DEATH	DEGREE of GRAVE	BY whom notified of GRAVE	DATE	REMARKS
23	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 24
24	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 23
25	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 23
26	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 23
27	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 23
28	113096	1	SPROULE, D.L.	R.C.A.F.	16.10.43	25.5.43	By whom notified of GRAVE	20	See entry 23

Grave registration report

ORR, Sgt. (Pilot), JOHN SAMUEL, 978191. R.A.F. (V.R.), 30th December, 1942. Age 21. Son of Samuel and Evelyn May Orr, of Armagh. Plot 1. Grave 17.

PAIGE, Flying Offr. (Pilot) ERNEST FRANKLYN, J/6007, D.F.C. R.C.A.F. 422 Sqdn. 25th May, 1943. Age 27. Son of Ernest B. Paige and Elva E. Paige, of Bridgeport, Ontario, Canada. Plot 1. Grave 21.

PICKFORD, Flt. Sgt. (Nav.) NORMAN BARON, 657043. R.A.F. 201 Sqdn. 22nd August, 1943. Age 25. Son of James and Edith Pickford, of Leicester. Plot 1. Grave 9.

SPROULE, Flying Offr. (Pilot) DAVID LEIGH, J/13096, R.C.A.F. 16th October, 1943. Age 24. Son of Gordon St. George Sproule and Helen Louise Sproule, of Westmount, Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada. Twice Captain, McGill University Gymnasium Team. Plot 1. Grave 28.

THOMAS, Sqdn. Ldr. PHILIP MICHAEL HERMANN, 72030. R.A.F. (V.R.), 423 (R.C.A.F.). Sqdn. 5th December, 1943. Age 25. Son of Arthur Hermann Thomas, M.A., LL.D., and Marie Louise Sophie Thomas; husband of Daphne Gertrude Thomas, of Hassocks, Sussex. B.A. Hons. (Cantab.), Trinity College. Plot 2. Grave 36.

Grave registration report(2)

Z/1202/1/T/5 Flying Officer F.H. Grainger Air Gunner Royal Canadian Air Force 16th October 1943 Age 20 (Cross)	1.27(S.P.)	23	Z/1202/1/T/5 2.34(S.P.) Warrant Officer II F.H. Lopper Flight Engineer Royal Canadian Air Force 23rd October 1944 Age 29 (Cross)
Z/1202/1/T/5 Flying Officer D.L. Sproule Pilot Royal Canadian Air Force 16th October 1943 Age 24 (Cross)	1.28(S.P.)	24	"O for the touch Or a vanished hand" Loving wife Kathleen And daughter Nola Jane

Headstone details



His grave marker



Irvinestown church of Ireland churchyard, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland

Sources

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Archives Canada. "Item." *Library and Archives Canada*, 10 Nov. 2017, www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/second-world-war/second-world-war-dead-1939-1947/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=33702&.
Cemetery, www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/73457/irvinestown-church-of-ireland-churchyard/?fbclid=IwAR39-g1FGRorY2TBhU3mTaixNmh00D0RIFf8xhVyy6fV44e1uZH5rtXW5Zs.