John N. Stephenson

John Norman Stephenson was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, on January 9, 1915. His father had served and died in the Great War, and his mother remarried. The family moved to Alberta while Stephenson was young, and eventually made their way to reside in Preston, Ontario. While living there, Stephenson attended the Galt Collegiate Institute, where he was an avid sportsman, participating in the rugby team and track and field. He was part of the Senior Rugby Team at GCI when it had won the Hamilton Championship in 1931, the same year he had graduated.

Stephenson was particularly well-known in Preston and was working with Mutual Life as an investment clerk when he enlisted in June 1941. He was first attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry of Canada and earned his commission as Captain while with that battalion. He was on duty in Ottawa and Esquimalt before he was transferred to the Scots Fusiliers at Allenburg, Ontario. In spring 1944, he went overseas and then served with the North Nova Scotia Highlanders while in France. While on duty, he was informed of the death of his mother. He was killed in action on September 7, 1944. Although originally reported missing, his family received confirmation in a telegram within ten days that Stephenson had been killed.

Sources:

Canadian Virtual War Memorial, accessed April 15, 2016, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2214493?John%20Norman%20Stephenson; Soldier Information Cards, Kitchener Public Library, Kitchener; Specula Galtonia 1931, p. 65; World War II Newspaper Clippings, Galt Collegiate Institute and Vocational School Archives (GCI Archives); World War II Service Cards, GCI Archives.

Photograph of Captain J. N. Stephenson, while serving with the Scots Fusiliers, stationed at Camp Borden in June 1942 (Kitchener Public Library).