

Sergeant Charles Robert STANFORD

Commando School RM,

Commando Cliff Assault Wing RM

Born Saturday, April 5, 1919 Ormskirk, Lancashire

Died Saturday, April 24, 1948, aged 29

Remembered with honour - Armed Forces Memorial.



up in practice.

SOLDIER LOST IN BID TO SAVE COMRADE

IN a gallant bid to save a comrade's life, a Commando instructor was drowned yesterday when the assault craft in which he was training four recruits capsized at St. Ives, Cornwall.

The instructor was 31-year-old Sergeant Bob Stamford, a Royal Marine. News of his death was telegraphed to his young wife at Buxton, Derbyshire. They had been married only six months.

Stamford, who belonged to the Commando Cliff Assault Wing at St. Ives, was instructing the four recruits in beach landings at Porthmear Beach.

When the boat neared the shore, a wave flooded it and threw the five men into a heavy swell. As they were struggling ashore, Stamford heard Marine J. Walker calling for help.

He at once battled back to the man and kept him afloat while Captain Barry, in charge of the exercise, swam to aid him. Together they brought him to the shore, but Stamford, exhausted, was dragged back by the undertow and disappeared.

An officer of the unit said: "It was only by Stamford's gallant action that the recruits reached shore safely."

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TRIBUTE TO SOUTHPORT MAN'S COURAGE

Gave Life for Comrade

The memory of a Southport man who gave his life for a comrade was honoured at St. Ives, Cornwall, on Sunday. He was Sergeant C. R. Stanford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Stanford, St. Luke's-road, who was drowned when the assault craft in which he was training four recruits in surf-boat landing exercises capsized some weeks ago.

The special church service was attended by townspeople of St. Ives, Commando officers and men, members of the Corporation, Sergeant Stanford's parents and his wife, whose home is at Taddington, Buxton.

In a tribute to Sgt. Stanford's courage, the chaplain to R.M. Commando School, Bickleigh, Devon, said the action of Sgt. Stanford in bringing the man ashore was that of a real Christian.

Before joining the Marines in 1938, Sgt. Stanford lived in Southport and was a keen member of the Southport Road Club. He had been married six months.

LAST ACT WAS ONE OF HERO

Saved Comrade then Drowned

LAST brave act of popular Southport-born Commando Sergeant C. R. Stanford was to rescue a Marine comrade from drowning at St. Ives, Cornwall, on Saturday.

Weakened by the buffeting in the angry surf, and unable to save himself, Sergt. Stan-



Sergt. C. R. Stanford and his bride, of seven months.

ford was swept back into the sea and drowned. His body had not been recovered yesterday.

Sergt. Stanford, 31-years-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Stanford, of St. Luke's Road, was training recruits in beach-landing tactics when an assault craft overturned.

He responded to a call for help from Marine J. Walker, and swam with him to the shallow water, where Capt. Barry, in command, who had dashed into the sea, took the recruit.

Sergt. Stanford turned towards the craft to see if he could do anything more, but was swept off his feet by a strong undercurrent and drowned.

Seven months ago he married a girl from Buxton, Derbyshire. News of his death was telegraphed to her.

His relatives have been asked not to go to St. Ives until his body is recovered.

His parents have been to see the young widow.

Sergt. Stanford was an instructor attached to the Commando Cliff Assault Wing at St. Ives.

He originally joined the Royal Marines in 1938. In May, 1939, he was drafted to H.M.S. Warspite in the Mediterranean, and saw much service.

APRIL 24th 1948

Taddington.

Commando Died After Saving Recruit.



In a gallant bid to save a comrade's life, a Commando instructor was drowned on Saturday last, when the assault craft in which he was training four recruits became full of water and capsized at St. Ives, Cornwall.

The instructor was 31-years-old Sgt. Bob Stanford (photo above), a Royal Marine, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Stanford, of Southport. News of his death was telegraphed to his young wife, who lives near Buxton. Mrs. Stanford was formerly Miss Mary J. Bagshawe, of Priestcliffe, and met her husband while she was serving in the A.T.S. They were married only last September.

Sgt. Stanford belonged to the Commando Cliff Assault Wing at St. Ives and was instructing recruits in beach landings at Porthmeor Beach.

When the boat neared the shore a wave flooded it and threw the five men into the heavy swell. As they were struggling ashore Stanford heard a recruit calling for help and immediately went to his assistance and held him up until an officer swam out and brought the lad in. This effort so exhausted the Sgt. that he was unable to make the shore himself and was dragged back by the undertow and disappeared.

An officer of the unit said: "It was only by Stanford's gallant action that any of the recruits reached the shore safely."

Sgt. Stanford, who joined the R.M. Chatham division early in 1938, took part during the war in many Commando landings from N. Africa to Holland. Prior to volunteering as a Commando he served on H.M.S. Warspite. In last year's Royal Tournament at Olympia he and members of Commando Cliff Assault Wing gave demonstrations of cliff climbing, the hazards of which will be remembered by those who saw the display.

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NOWLE'S

GAVE HIS LIFE

Commando Drowned at St. Ives

DESPITE a continuous search by his fellow Marine Commandoes the body of Sergt. Bob Stanford had not been recovered from the sea at St. Ives, last evening.

Sergeant Stanford lost his life in endeavouring to save one of his men who got into difficulties when a Commando surf boat capsized off Porthmeor Beach, St. Ives, yesterday morning, with four other Marines stationed at the Commando Assault Centre, St. Ives.

Sergeant Stanford and his men were engaged in landing exercises on the beach. They had landed and were endeavouring to proceed to sea again when a wave struck the surf boat, which flooded, and all five men were thrown into the water. They were making for the shore when Marine J. Walker was heard to shout for assistance and Sergeant Stanford immediately went to his aid, but himself got into difficulties, due, it is stated, to an under-current.

Four Saved

Captain Barry, of the Marine Commandos, was on the beach, and he immediately rushed into the sea and was able to pull Walker ashore, and the other three Marines, P. Rook, B. Bennett, and J. Horlock, also reached the beach.

But nothing more was seen of Sergeant Stanford.

Walker and Bennett were practically unconscious when they were brought ashore, but after artificial respiration they recovered sufficiently to be taken to their camp at St. Ives.

Sergeant Stanford was 35 and had been married about six months. He had spent 15 years in the Royal Marines.