

**Sugden, Alfred William Edward**

**Pilot Officer**

**Royal Canadian Air Force**

**440 Squadron**

**J/90713**



Ka ganawaitak saguenay - (He who protects the Saguenay)



Alfred William Edward Sugden was born in Outremont, Quebec, situated near Montreal on Sunday May 12, 1918. Alfred was the only child of Frederick Albert Sugden and Helen Lillian Dusseault-Sugden. They got married in Montreal on February 19, 1917. One of father Frederick Albert's brothers served during the First World War and got killed in Belgium, Passchendaele. The family belonged to the Presbyterian Church and lived at 858, Bloomfield Avenue, Outremont. Father Frederick Albert was a composer. He organised texts and pictures of books, magazines or newspapers before they were printed.



Alfred had his primary education at Guy Drummond School in Montreal from 1924 until 1931.

*Photo :*  
<https://imtl.org/montreal/building/EcoleGuy-Drummond>.

In 1931 Alfred went to Strathcone Academy in Outremont and chose the field of biology. After four years, in 1935, he went to university, Outremont Business College, and chose secretarial studies.

In 1936 he started working for Canadian Pacific Railway, Windsor Station, Montreal.



<https://collections.musee-mccord-stewart.ca/en/objects/166888/canadian-pacific-train-leavingwindsor-station-montreal-qc>

Three years later he found a new job at Marshall & Morrison, Ltd, Montreal.

He started working as a secretary and a year later, in 1940, he found, as he said himself, a better position at Canadian Car & Foundry, also located in Montreal. This was a manufacturer of buses, railway rolling stock, forestry stock and later aircraft for the Canadian market. In 1941 Alfred took on a job at Canadian Power Boat Company Ltd, also in Montreal. Canadian Power Boat Company was a manufacturer of motor torpedo boats and similar vessels in Canada. The company was located at Lachine Canal in Montreal. Alfred became a clerk there.

He was 5 ft 8 tall and weighed 155 lbs. Alfred had grey eyes and dark brown hair. During his childhood he broke his left arm. Otherwise he was a healthy young man. The sports he liked doing were skiing, golf, rugby and football. He was an excellent hockey player and athlete, who had won local sprint trophies. He also loved music and enjoyed reading. Alfred smoked twenty cigarettes a day and occasionally drank a glass of alcohol.

On August 26, 1941 he was medically examined and found fit to be trained as a pilot or an observer.

Signature *Alfred Ed. Sargent*



He had already gained some military experience with 17<sup>th</sup> Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars, with 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment as a Trooper in his spare time from 1940 until 1941. Alfred was stationed with No 5 A Manning Depot in Valcartier, Quebec on September 15, 1941.

He preferred joining the Royal Canadian Air Force and wanted to become a pilot. Alfred was given the rank of Aircraftsman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. This is where his military career started, where he learned how to bathe, shave, polish his boots, brush his buttons, maintain his uniform and behave in an otherwise orderly fashion. Every day there was two hours of physical education and instruction in marching, rifle drills, saluting and other routines. On November 8, 1941 Alfred had further training at No 4 Repair Depot in Scoudouc, New Brunswick. He was given the rank of LAC-Leading Aircraftsman on May 9, 1942.

On May 23, 1942 he was assigned to No 3 Initial Training School in Victoriaville, Quebec. Candidates to become pilots and air observers started their twenty-six to twenty-eight week training programme off with four weeks at an Initial Training School (ITS). They studied theoretical subjects and were subjected to various tests. Theoretical studies comprised navigation, flight theory, meteorology, officer's tasks, air force administration, algebra and trigonometry. Tests also included an interview with a psychiatrist, a four-hour M2 medical examination, a session in a decompression chamber and a 'test flight' in a Link Trainer.

On June 7, 1942 Alfred William Edward went for additional training to No 11 Elementary Flying Training School in Cap-de-la-Madelaine, a city in Quebec, Canada, situated at the confluence of Saint-Maurice River and St. Lawrence River.

There, for a period of eight weeks, he had fifty hours of basic flight instruction on a simple training aircraft, such as the Havilland Tiger Moth, Fleet Finch or Fairchild Cornell. On August 2 he had additional training at No 13 Service Flying Training School in Saint Hubert, Quebec, where they were trained in operating the AVRO Anson.



*AVRO Anson*

The training was part of No 3 Training Command Royal Canadian Air Force, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). Alfred was awarded with his Pilot Flying Badge 'Wings' in St. Hubert, Quebec, on November 20, 1942 and went overseas to England on December 10, where he set foot ashore at Royal Air Force Station Bournemouth, in the county of Dorset, on December 18. This coastal town welcomed thousands of air force crew and was the home base of No 3 Personnel Reception Centre.

Alfred enjoyed his Christmas leave from December 22 until January 2, 1944. On June 8, 1943 Alfred had additional training at No 59 Operational Training Unit at Royal Air Force Brunton, near the North Sea coast in Northumberland, England. On December 27 of that year, he had further training at No 1 Tactical Exercise Unit in Tealing, Angus County, Scotland, 9.6 kilometres north of the city of Dundee.



On March 1, 1944 Alfred was assigned to No 4 Tactical Exercise Unit at Royal Air Force Annan, which was situated approx. two miles north-east of the town of Annan, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland. From March 31 until October 9 he stayed with 84 Group for training.

On October 9, 1944 Alfred William Edward was assigned to 193 Squadron in Fairwood Common, in the south of Wales, a squadron that used Hawker Typhoons IB, a fighter-bomber.



In October the Squadron were operating from Belgium, from where they flew across Germany in offensive actions and attacked transport targets and troops.

On October 24 the Squadron took part in an attack on the headquarters of the German 15<sup>th</sup> Army in a part of the centre of Dordrecht, during which two generals, 17 staff officers and 36 other officers lost their lives.

Subsequently, the squadron focused its attention on isolated strong points around Arnhem and Nijmegen and attacked a torpedo factory in Utrecht on November 4. The squadron also took part in a successful attack on the Gestapo headquarters in Amsterdam on November 26, 1944.

Two days later, on November 28, Alfred was assigned to 440 Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Force. He was stationed in Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Together with the sister squadrons 438 and 439 Royal Canadian Airforce 440 Squadron was part of 143 Wing, at Eindhoven airbase (code-indication B.78). This Wing was mainly active in attacking ground targets to support the allied advance.

On Sunday December 3, 1944 in the afternoon Alfred William Edward Sugden took off in the Typhoon 1B MN251 I8-F for a so-called 'Blind Bombing' mission, together with other members of the squadron over enemy territory.

However, it was assumed that, due to engine trouble, he turned back to base after half an hour and made a landing effort with tailwind and two 1000lbs bombs still on board. His aircraft overshot the end of the runway and went into the Beatrix Canal. Unfortunately, the aircraft turned over and he did not manage to escape from the aircraft. He drowned at the age of 25.

Alfred had recently been transferred from another squadron and this was his first mission with this squadron. It is commonly known that he had an excellent service record, and Squadron Leader Alonso Edgar Monson wrote the following in a letter to Alfred's parents: 'he had an outstanding record to his credit, and I am certain that he would have been a valuable asset to this Squadron.'

By his fellow pilots he was called Freddie.

The plane was recovered by 413 Repair & Salvage Unit and brought back to England for repair by Taylorcraft.



PO. A. E. SUGDEN, 26, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Sugden of 858 Bloomfield avenue, Outremont, who was killed in a crash while landing on an airfield in Holland, according to word received here by his parents. PO. Sugden was one of the Typhoon fighter-bomber pilots who strafed Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's staff car on July 17, mortally wounding the German leader of the once famous Afrika Korps. A native of Outremont and a graduate of Guy Drummond School and Strathcona Academy and Outremont Business College, he enlisted with the R.C.A.F. in September, 1941. Prior to enlistment he was with Canadian Car and Foundry Limited and before that with the traffic department of the C.P.R. He was a former member of the 17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars. On graduating he was presented with his wings at St. Hubert by ex-Mayor Raynault and went overseas in December, 1942. He was commissioned last July. PO. Sugden was a prominent athlete in amateur hockey and track circles in Montreal, holding for several years one of the local sprint trophies.

Alfred William Edward Sugden's funeral took place at Woensel General Cemetery in Eindhoven, Netherlands, at 11 am on December 5. The service was conducted by the Royal Canadian Air Force Protestant Chaplain. Alfred was buried in grave **SS.2** in the Royal Canadian Air Force plot with other killed Canadian pilots.



On November 12, 1945 he was reburied at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, grave reference **XV.D.14.**

*The grave in the first days, in 1954 the crosses were replaced by tombstones. The family can enter a text.*

On his headstone the following words are inscribed:

AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN  
AND IN THE MORNING  
WE WILL REMEMBER HIM  
MOM AND DAD



*Photo: <http://lestweforget1945.org/>*

Alfred William Edward Sugden's awards:

- 1939-1945 Star
- France and Germany Star
- Defence Medal
- Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp

On January 27, 1947 Mrs Hellen Lilian Sugden wrote a letter to the head of the Air Force in Ottawa in which she asked for confirmation of the location of her son's body, as she was planning a trip to Europe and wanted to visit her son's grave. She asked for his remains to be returned to Canada, but this request was rejected.



Life story: Gijs Krist - Research Team Faces To Graves.

Sources:

Commonwealth War Graves

Library and Archives Canada

[www.aircrewremembered.com](http://www.aircrewremembered.com)

Thanks to Anne Gafiuk/ Typhoon Project

\* If you have a photo of this soldier or any additional information, please contact [info@facestograves.nl](mailto:info@facestograves.nl)



Sgt Stretton, William Joseph RCASC  
 Gnr Stricker, Harry Edward RCA  
 F/O Strickland, George John RCAF  
 WO1 Strickland, Leonard RCAF  
 Pte Strickland, Nathan NthNS Highrs  
 Pte Strickland, William John HLI of C  
 RPh Stride, Arthur Regina Rif  
 F/O Stringer, Allan James RCAF  
 WO2 Stringer, George Edward RCAF  
 AB Stringer, Joseph RCNVR  
 Pte Stringer, Leslie Grant RCASC  
 F/O Striowski, Albert George RCAF  
 Pte Strizzi, Antonio Rde Mais  
 P/O Strom, Carl Walter RCAF  
 Gdsm Stronach, John Donald GGFG  
 Lt Strong, Clarence Ormiston SSaskR  
 Tpr Strong, Marvin three Riv R  
 LAC Strong, William Garnet Matthew RCAF  
 P/O Stroud, Claire Douglas RCAF  
 LAC Stroud, George William Eugene RCAF  
 F/L Stroud, Wallace Dicker RCAF  
 F/L Strout, Alfred Carman RCAF  
 Spr Strum, Fred Loraine RCE  
 P/O Strumm, Maynard Lloyd RCAF  
 Pte Struthers, John Fairbank HLI of C  
 Pte Stuart, Donald Merton WestNSR  
 AB Stuart, George Alexander RCNVR  
 F/O Stuart, Robert Claire RCAF  
 Lt Cdr Stubbs, John Hamilton, DSO DSC RCN  
 WO2 Stubbs, John Lionel RCAF  
 Sgt Stubbs, Norman Richard RCAF  
 F/S Stubelt, Robert Ford RCAF  
 F/O Stubner, Richard Frank RCAF  
 RPh Studd, George Henry QOR of C  
 AC1 Stumph, Glen Joseph RCAF  
 Cpl Sturdy, Charles RCASC  
 Sgt Sturgeson, John Reginald RCA  
 Gdsm Sturim, Iffie RC Sigs  
 PO Sturmy, William John DeBlois RCAF  
 RPh Sturrock, Albert Edward QOR of C  
 Tpr Sturrock, William Marvin 14H

F/O Stusiak, Nicholas RCAF  
 P/O Stuttle, Norman Edward RCAF  
 Maj Styffe, Edward Grieg LSup R  
 Sgt Styles, Frederick Lansing QOR of C  
 F/O Sucharov, Mortimer Samuel RCAF  
 Pte Suchow, Kost Calg Highrs  
 Gnr Suddaby, George RCA  
 Cpl Suddaby, Gordon Hillis Regina Rif  
 F/O Suddick, William Edward DFC RCAF  
 Pte Sudds, Arthur Joseph Westm R  
 Pte Sudeh, James Seaforth of C  
 L/Cpl Suffron, Gordon Wilfred RC Sigs  
 S/Sgt Sugden, Albert RCA  
 P/O Sugden, Alfred William Edward RCAF  
 S/L Suggitt, William Reid, DFC RCAF  
 Pte Sullivan, David Marshall CH of O  
 Pte Sullivan, Edgar John Hastes PER  
 L/Sgt Sullivan, Edwin George RCR  
 L/Cpl Sullivan, Gordon Patrick QOR of C  
 Gnr Sullivan, James Allen RCA  
 Fus Sullivan, James Oun PL Fus  
 Gnr Sullivan, Joseph Albert Earl RCA  
 Pte Sullivan, Norman Edward L-R  
 F/S Sullivan, Patrick William RCAF  
 TEL Sullivan, Samuel RCNVR  
 F/O Sullivan, Stafford John RCAF  
 Pte Sullivan, William John CH of O  
 Pte Sulyma, Michael RCR  
 P/O Sutz, Henry RCAF  
 Pte Sumara, Albin Frank NthNS Highrs  
 P/O Summerhayes, John Wilson RCAF  
 Pte Summerhayes, Samuel Joseph HLI of C  
 Gdsm Summers, Clayton William Clarence CGG  
 Cpl Summers, Kenneth William R Regt C  
 Pte Summers, Leonard 48 Highrs  
 Pte Sundeen, Sven Line & Weld R  
 P/O Sundercock, Donald Keith RCAF