

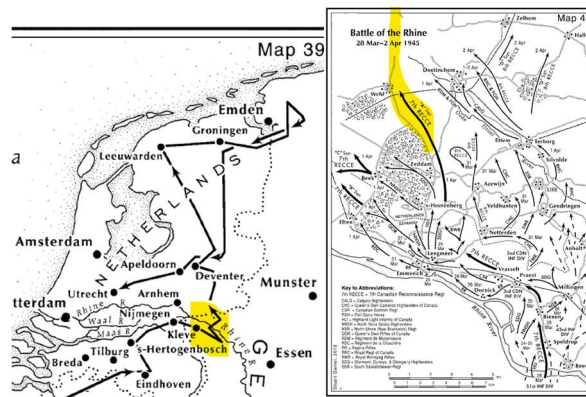
***Duggan William Francis, Sergeant (D3170)***



- William Francis Duggan was born on 19 March 1915 in Montreal, Quebec. He was 30 years old when he died of wounds on 1 April 1945 in the Netherlands.
- On 20 July 1940, he enlisted for active service with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Motorcycle Regiment (17<sup>th</sup> Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars) which became the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment (17<sup>th</sup> Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars) on 11 February 1941 and relocated to Camp Debert, Nova Scotia for training with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division before heading overseas. The unit departed by ship on 24 August 1941, arriving in Glasgow, Scotland on 2 September. William and his unit trained in southern England, and he gradually progressed through the ranks until he became Sergeant on 13 February 1943. He and his squadron were sent to France on the 17 June 1944. He was wounded on 11 August 1944 and evacuated to England. Once healed he was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Armoured Corps Reinforcement Unit as a sergeant-instructor. On 12 March 1945, he was redeployed back with the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment that was operating in the Netherlands and Germany. On 1 April 1945, he was wounded and subsequently died of his wounds.
- Prior to enlisting for active service, he had served two years with the 17<sup>th</sup> Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars in the Non-Permanent Active Militia (NPAM) starting the 16 May 1934.
- He attended public school for eleven years, four of which were at D'Arcy McGee High School in Montreal, Quebec.
- Prior to enlisting, he had worked for five years as a clerk in the Traffic Department of Canada Packers Co. Ltd. in Montreal, Quebec.
- According to his medical examination, he was 5 foot 8 inches tall and weighed 144 pounds. He had blond hair and blue eyes. He was found fit for category A.
- William was the son of Richard Michael and Harriette Duggan, who were married on 8 September 1894, in Burlington, Vermont, but later moved to Verdun, Quebec. They had three other sons and one daughter: Richard (50); Marion Davies (43); Thomas (18, deceased); and Charles (40).
- On 6 July 1940, William married Margaret Ann in Verdun, Quebec. They lived together at 4217 Verdun Avenue. Their son William (Bill) Francis was born on April 20, 1941.
- The sole beneficiary of William's will was his wife.
- His body is buried in the Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek, Netherlands (Ref I. H. 13.) (plot, row, grave)

### Context

- In 1945, as winter was ending and sufficient supplies had been accumulated, the Allied Forces resumed their drive forward. In hard fighting, they cleared a portion of Germany that is west of the River Rhine. Then, in a significant move, they established two crossings over the River Rhine, one in the north and one in the south. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Corps, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division, played a limited role in the assault across the river, but then it was ordered over the northern crossing, then turn north into the Netherlands and attack the defences of the River IJssel from the east, capture Deventer and Zutphen, seize the high ground between Apeldoorn and Arnhem, and bridge the lower Rhine at Arnhem. The River IJssel was a considerable obstacle, varying in width from 100 to 180 metres, with high flood banks.
- On 28 March 1945, the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment crossed the River Rhine on a Bailey bridge near Bienen, about ten kilometres southeast of Emmerich, Germany. It then moved north toward Emmerich, the first major town on the eastern bank of the river. "C" Squadron was placed under the command of the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade and was ordered to provide protection for the northern flank of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division, which moved in a westerly direction along the east bank of the River Rhine to capture Emmerich. The Germans fought fiercely to retain Emmerich, but the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade finally captured the town on 30 March. The high ground at Hoch Elten, north-west of Emmerich, was captured by the 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade on 31 March. The way was now clear for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division to leave the Rhine and advance northwards towards the sea along the eastern bank of the River IJssel.



- The three fighting squadrons of the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Reconnaissance Regiment moved under command, or in support, of the three infantry brigades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Division. "A" Squadron, generally came under command of the 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade. Occasionally squadrons got too far ahead of the infantry to maintain wireless communication and were forced to wait for the infantry catch up.
- On 31 March, "A" Squadron was placed under command of the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade and spent the afternoon probing to the front and the right flanks of the brigade. The squadron got off to an early start the following morning, moving up the road from Heerenberg (just outside Emmerich) to Wehl. On 1 April 1945, it began to bump the enemy in numbers, and, on the outskirts of Kilder, about ten kilometres north of Emmerich, the second Daimler Armoured

Car in Lieutenant Smith's troop was knocked out by an 88 mm anti-tank gun in an ambush. Two of its crew – Sergeant William Duggan and Trooper Earl Pullen - were killed instantly.



Sgt. W. F. Duggan      Tpr. F. A. Williams

**KILLED IN ACTION: Two**

Verdun men who have been killed in action are shown above.

Sergeant Duggan, 30, whose wife, the former Margaret Norris, and four-year-old son, live at 4217 Verdun avenue, was killed in action while serving with the 7th Rec'ce Regiment (17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars) which he joined in July, 1940. He had been wounded twice since D-day. A former pupil of St. Ann's School and graduate of D'Arcy McGee High School, he was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Duggan, of Montreal, and is survived also by two brothers, Richard and Charles, and a sister, Mrs. A. Davis. A solemn requiem mass will be held on Saturday, April 28, at 8.30 a.m. at St. Willibrord's Church, Verdun.