



Name: Sinden, Roger J.

Reg.nr: B160086

Roger was born on November 28, 1924 in Brownsville, Ontario (Ont.). After 3 years he moved to Brantford, Ont.

His parents are Arthur Angus (53) and Myrthe Agnes (47). Father was born in Corinth, Ont., mother in Tillsonburg, Ont.

Father is a foreman in a paint department.

Roger has 2 brothers: Murray Keith (18) and Douglas Edward (17).

Roger goes to school from the age of 7 to 15, the Central School in Brantford. He was president of the Skylark club. He passes grade 8. He leaves school of his own accord.

In the winter of 1941-1942 he goes to a welding course at an evening school twice a week.

In 1942 he takes a welding course. This course is given because of the war conditions.

Roger did 8 months of unskilled work at Sterling Action & Key. After that he works as a carpenter for 2 years. When he reports for the army, he works for 2 years at Coach and Body Co. where he welds cars as an arc welder.

Between April 1943 and March 1944 he is a reservist with the 2nd Battalion, 54th Battery, as a gunner. He participates in 1 camp and practices once a week in the evenings. He also obtains his driver's license there, Driver I/C Class III.

On March 15, 1944, Roger reports for active service in Toronto.

Roger is 1.70 m. tall and weighs 63.5 kg. He has brown eyes and blond hair. He wears glasses.

He has a hernia on the outside of his left leg that can cause cramps or pain with or after activity.

Roger is, as a Baptist, active in church activities. such as singing in the choir. He is also a member of the Young Peoples Society. He spends his free time roller skating, playing billiards, bowling, visiting shows and collecting stamps. In school he played sports: softball and ice hockey.

He is described as young, on his way to adulthood, "unspoiled". He is cooperative and has average abilities. It is expected that in the army his self-confidence will grow.

He is not approved for the Canadian Air Force.

Roger arrives at #2 District Depot on 15 March 1944. On 1 April 1944 he is assigned to A1 Canadian Artillery Training Centre at Camp Petawawa, Ont. On 5 May 1944 it is noted that training is going well. On 12 July Roger is fully trained and qualified. He is ready for overseas deployment. On 4 August 1944 he leaves Canada, on 10 August he reports to 1 CARU, a reserve unit of the artillery, in England. On 26 September 1944 Roger was transferred to the Winnipeg Grenadiers Company B, Infantry. On 28 September he was placed on the X4 list of the infantry. For the men who ended up there this usually meant that they were in one of the reinforcement units, waiting for a front line unit to be replaced. On 29 September 1944 Roger arrived in France, on 7 October 1944 he was placed with the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

October 13, 1944 is known as "Black Friday". Lieutenant Colonel Withaker calls it in his book (see source) "the day of betrayal of the 'citizen in uniform', the young volunteer of the Black Watch who had enthusiastically enlisted for the Canadian Army".

The Black Watch had already suffered heavy losses. The 1st Battalion suffered more casualties than any other Canadian infantry battalion in North-West Europe. Disaster seemed to follow the Regiment into almost every battle.

During the Battle of Verrières Ridge on July 25, 1944, there were 97% casualties. Of the 325 men who left the start line, only 15 returned to their own lines. The others were killed or wounded and, from a company of 90 men, only four survived.

Another 40% casualty rate occurred 10 days later in Operation Totalize. A month before Operation Angus they lost 60 men in 36 hours from 12-14 September. In October the Regiment expected to be fully manned and supplied, but that was not to be. The Regiment, which had lost many trained men in the previous months, was supplemented by inexperienced infantry and was still below its original strength.

The order for the attack was given by Major-General Foulkes, Commander of the 2nd Canadian Army Corps, who knew the situation of the Black Watch. Lieutenant-Colonel Ritchie, Commander of the Black Watch of Canada and Brigadier Megill, Commander of the 5th Canadian Infantry

Brigade, had their doubts about the success of Angus, but the order was given.

The attack was a major disaster. The intelligence was bad, the Germans in the area were well organised, offensively minded, well dug in and elite troops. The Black Watch were poorly prepared. The attack was during the day, in an area where the only cover was the beetroot. Support from tanks etc. was not possible due to the marshy ground.

In the morning hours, B and C companies attacked the Germans. The starting point was the Grindweg in Woensdrecht, the target was the railway embankment on the Kreekrakdam. The attack started at 6:15. Within a short time, the attack came to a standstill due to heavy losses. The men fell like pins on a bowling alley. A smoke screen could not improve the situation. A number of men from C company managed to reach the railway embankment, they were taken prisoner.

From C company, 25 men returned, from B company 41. Normally a company consists of 130 men.

The companies lost many leaders.

At 17:00, the attack was resumed by A company, supported from the flank by D company and the remainder of B company. In one hour, A-company lost almost 70 men, 9 men returned unharmed. D-company also lost several dozen soldiers. The Black Watch no longer had any company commanders. The losses of the Black Watch are the highest losses in 1 day of the battle of the Canadians in the Netherlands. The Black Watch of Canada counted 145 losses, 56 men killed, 62 men wounded and 27 men taken prisoner of war.

Roger belonged to C-company on that day. He was killed on October 13, 1944, killed in action, 19 years old, exactly 7 months after he entered service. Initially, he was reported missing.

On October 24, the Calgary Highlanders find dozens of missing men of the Black Watch during their advance to the Caterspolder.

Roger was temporarily buried on 29 October 1944 in Ossendrecht at the temporary cemetery on the current Burgemeester Voetenweg, near the Ossendrecht war memorial.

A reburial took place on 16 May 1945. Roger was buried at the Canadian cemetery in Bergen op Zoom, plot 2, row E, grave 9.

In December 1944, the surviving relatives received a token of thanks from the mayor and aldermen of Ossendrecht, on behalf of the population

Roger was awarded the 1939-1945 Star, the French-German Star, the War Medal and the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with clasp.





Pte. Roger J. Sinden

Pte. Roger J. Sinden, 19-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sinden, 23 Elgin St., was among the many other Canadians who gave their lives to secure the vital causeway leading out to the Beveland Peninsula, on the north bank of the Schelde, and thus open the great port of Antwerp to the ships of the United Nations. It was on October 13, 1944, that young Pte. Sinden, in the Black Watch Regi-

ment of Canada, went forward in an attempt to capture the great dyke which connects South Beveland with the mainland. Upon this dyke are the road and the railroad running out from Bergen op Zoom to Flushing and as the land on each side was low and wet, it was hard to attack and easy to defend. The Canadians attacked it with great bravery, Pte. Sinden to the death. He was too young to have had a great deal of military training. On March 13, 1944, in Toronto, he had joined the Royal Canadian Artillery. Seven months later, to the very day, his anxious family had the bad news that he was missing. His first four and a half months of training, until he moved overseas on August 1, 1944, were with the Royal Canadian Artillery at Petawawa. Then he was transferred to "B" Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, and three weeks later was on his way to Holland where he was immediately attached to the Black Watch. Now his body rests in the village cemetery at Ossendrecht, Holland. As a boy, he attended Central School and was President of the Skylark Club. He was a faithful member of the Calvary Baptist Church, singing in the choir and finding interest in the Young People's Society. He had taken a course in welding at the Collegiate Institute and Vocational School and found employment at the Brantford Coach and Body Limited.

Bronvermelding:

[Ancestry.com - Canada, World War II Records and Service Files of War Dead, 1939-1947](https://www.ancestry.com/canada/world-war-ii-records-and-service-files-of-war-dead-1939-1947)

[Casualty Details | CWGC](https://www.cwgc.org/)

[Private Roger J. Sinden \(1924-1944\) - Find a Grave-gedenkplek](#)

https://web.archive.org/web/20010712105529/http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/laird.niven/public_html/Ossendrecht.htm

https://web.archive.org/web/20010709165059/http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/laird.niven/public_html/oct_44.htm#burial

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