

Sergeant Peter Maxwell Bennett 926721 RAFVR



A No. 103 Squadron Wellington at RAF Elsham Wolds

Peter Bennett was the second pilot in a No. 103 Squadron Wellington bomber which disappeared during a raid on Turin in September 1941.

Five aircraft were lost on the attack, but the crew of Wellington 1C R1396 are believed to have been the only casualties in a raid which was directed primarily at the Fiat steelmaking plant in the northern Italian city.

His aircraft had taken off from Elsham Wolds at 2004 hours on the evening of 10 September, one of six provided by the squadron for the raid. All landed at RAF Honington in Suffolk to top up their tanks before flying on to Italy. What happened to R1396 was never established; the aircraft and crew were recorded as 'lost without trace', the presumption being that the Wellington probably crashed in the sea.

Peter was part of an experienced 103 Squadron crew. He was the 20-year-old son of Arthur and Gladys Bennett and came from the small Gloucestershire village of Stinchcombe.

The others who died were the pilot P/O David Petrie, observer Sgt. George Rye, bomb-aimer/wireless operator Sgt. Charles Wagon, wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. Aubrey Vernon and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. George Blackmore RCAF. All are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial (panel 39).

His name can be found on IBCC panel 008.

Sources: Elsham Wolds Association/Peter Green photographic collection.