

PO Wilfred Herbert Howie J/92950 RCAF

Wilfred was born on 23 July 1925 in Glace Bay, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada, the only child of Herbert Howie and Maud Howie nee Finlayson.

Educated at Central Public School and Danforth Technical School, Wilfred was employed as a telegraph messenger boy when, in October 1942 he applied for service in the RCAF.

Called up in May 1943, Wilfred completed his aircrew training in Canada in November 1943 with the award of his Air Gunner's badge and, in November 1943, he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 30 OTU RAF Hixon, Staffordshire, and Lancaster conversion at 11 Base, in June 1944 Wilfred was posted to 101 Sqn at RAF Ludford Magna, Lincolnshire. Wilfred was posthumously awarded a commission.



On 29/30 August 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against the Baltic port of Stettin, a vital industrial centre and supply port crucial for supplying the German army on the Eastern Front. A combined force of 403 aircraft, including twenty 101 Sqn crews, were allocated to the op. Three crews failed to return.

At 21:25 on the 29 August 1944 Wilfred, operating as the Mid Upper Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Ludford Magna in Lancaster I ME592 (SR-D).

At 00:30 on 30 August as the aircraft crossed the Swedish coast, Wilfred's aircraft was intercepted from astern by Fw Gottfried Schneider from I./NJG3. Despite evasive action, the aircraft was hit in the starboard wing which burst into flames. Following an explosion, the aircraft entered a steep dive and, at 00:53, crashed into the sea. The Bomb Aimer was the only crew member to bale out and, following internment in Sweden, was repatriated in October 1944.

Also killed: FO Gordon Leslie Piprell RCAF (Pilot); PO Francis James Kendall RCAF (AG); Sgt George Farrington (SDO); Sgt James Charles Fawcett (Nav); Sgt John Alan Gibbon Brown (FE); Sgt William George Noel Heath (WOp/AG)

Wilfred was recovered from the sea and is buried in Palsjo Municipal Cemetery, Helsingborg, Sweden

Wilfred is commemorated on Wall Panel 52

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca