

## **Flt Lt Douglas Allister Macdonald DFC RCAF J/146911**

Douglas Macdonald was a 20-year-old Canadian pilot who had won a Distinguished Flying Cross with 619 Squadron at Woodhall Spa before he was killed during a raid on Berlin early in 1944.

He was the pilot of Lancaster JB532 LE-X of 630 Squadron and was among eight men killed when the aircraft was shot down by flak during the raid on the night of 1<sup>st</sup>/2nd January 1944.



Douglas and several of his crew had previously served with 619 before joining 630 when it was formed in November 1943.

JB532 was part of a force of 471 bombers attacking the German capital as part of the ongoing Battle of Berlin being staged by Bomber Command. His was one of fifteen Lancasters from 630 Squadron which took off shortly before midnight from East Kirkby and was reported to have been hit by flak before crashing at Grossbeuthen, near Trebbin (south-east of Berlin). An engine was torn from one of the Lancaster's wings before the aircraft plunged into the ground.

Douglas was born in September 1923 in the town of Ogema in Saskatchewan before his family moved to Rockglen. He was one of four children of William, a First World War veteran, and Cassie Macdonald, his older brother serving in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Douglas enlisted on his eighteenth<sup>th</sup> birthday and, after qualifying as a pilot, later moved to England to fly with 630.

The announcement of his award of a Distinguished Flying Cross came a few days before he was killed. The citation spoke of his 'very many operations' and highlighted an incident in November 1943 when his Lancaster lost an engine in bad weather and he succeeded in getting the aircraft home, adding '...his achievement was commendable.'

The others who died were the second pilot S/L Kenneth Vare AFC, flight engineer Sgt Robert Smale MiD, navigator FO Niels Westergaard DFC, bomb-aimer Flt Sgt John Turnbull, wireless operator Sgt William Tyrie DFM, mid-upper gunner Flt Sgt William Jenkins and rear gunner Flt Sgt William Roche RAAF. All were initially buried in Grossbeuthen cemetery before being reinterred in Berlin War Cemetery.

Douglas' name can be found on panel 065.

Sources: 630 Squadron Association/Canadian veterans/Aircrew Reunited.