

FO Edward John Norman MacDonald 404346 RAAF

Edward was born on 17 November 1914 in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, the eldest son of John Valentine MacDonald and Emily Grace MacDonald nee Fletcher. In January 1939 he married Nancy Ruth Dignan in Queensland. They had one son.

Edward was employed as clerk in the Federal Taxation Office in Brisbane when, in August 1940, he enlisted in the RAAF. Following basic training in Australia, in January 1941 Edward was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme where, in May 1941, he was awarded his Observer badge, granted a commission and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Bassingbourn, Hertfordshire where he converted to multi crew/multi engine ops on the Wellington, in October 1941 Edward was posted to 458 Sqn at RAF Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, Yorkshire.

On 5/6 January 1942 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on the Naval Dockyard, Brest, France. A combined force of 154 aircraft, including five 458 Sqn crews, were allocated to the op.

At 04:37 on 6 January Edward, operating as the Wireless Operator, and the crew departed RAF Holme-on-Spalding Moor in Wellington IV Z1182 (FU-G).

Eight minutes after take-off, Edward's aircraft was unable to climb due to frozen snow and severe icing on the wings. Despite jettisoning the bomb load, the aircraft crashed in a field near North Howden railway station, killing Edward and the 2nd Pilot. Four crew members survived.

In a later report on the accident the Captain stated: *"Shortly after take-off, I noticed that the aircraft was not climbing. We attained a height of 2/300 feet and then slowly sank in a slow left turn. I jettisoned the bomb load and immediately afterwards we crashed in a field."*

Also Killed: PO David Norris Carmichael RAAF (Pilot)

Edward is buried in All Saints Churchyard, Holme-on-Spalding Moor, Yorkshire

Edward is commemorated on Wall Panel 65