Sgt Raymond Charles Grossey 516460 RAF

Raymond was born on 12 June 1915 in Southsea, Hampshire, the son of Charles Albert Grossey and Louisa Beatrice Grossey nee Crouch.

In 1938, Raymond was a member of 42 Sqn, Coastal Command, RAF Bircham Newton, Norfolk. In June 1939 he was sent on the Navigational Reconnaissance Course and then attached to 110 Sqn at RAF Wattisham, Suffolk on navigational duties.

When war was declared on the 3 September 1939, Raymond was still attached to 110 Sqn and the squadron was tasked with flying the first bombing operation of the war the following day.

A reconnaissance flight on the day war was declared had observed the German “pocket” battleship Admiral Scheer, cruiser Emden, and other warships anchored at the German naval base at the entrance to Wilhelmshaven on Germany’s north coast. Orders were issued by 2 Group Bomber Command that fifteen Blenheims were to attack the warships, five from each of 107, 110, and 139 Sqns.

The morning of 4 September 1939 was cloudy over southern England with heavily overcast skies and a strong NW wind. Together with four crews from 107 Sqn, at 15:45 Raymond and the crew departed RAF Wattisham, Suffolk in Blenheim IV N6199 (VE). Poor weather conditions over the Channel forced the aircraft to fly at very low level and the five aircraft from 139 Sqn jettisoned their bombs and turned back after failing to locate the warships; however, 110 Sqn aircraft found the targets.

The first wave of aircraft took the Germans by surprise, but as Raymond and the crew attacked in the second wave, return German fire was both more intense and accurate. Raymond's aircraft was hit and crashed into the bow of the battleship "Emden", killing nine German seamen and wounding twenty. All on board the aircraft were killed.

Also killed : FO Henry Lovell Emden (Pilot); Sgt Stanley George McKenna Otty (Observer); AC1 Ralph Evans (WOp/AG)

Raymond has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Raymond is commemorated on Wall Panel 174