

FS Darcy Leslie Conrad Haub 42326 RNZAF

Darcy was born on 10 September 1919 in Whangarei, New Zealand, the son of Reuben Leopold Haub and Violet Alma Haub nee Hartnell.

Educated at the Whangarei High School, Darcy was employed as a labourer in Wakefield, New Zealand when, in August 1940, he volunteered for service in the RNZAF.

Called up in January 1942, following basic training in New Zealand, in March Darcy was sent to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme. In February 1943 Darcy was awarded his AG badge and immediately embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 11 OTU RAF Westcott, Buckinghamshire, 1483 Gunnery Flight, RAF Marham, Norfolk and 1651 HCU RAF Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, in July 1943 Darcy was posted to 75 (NZ) Sqn at RAF Mepal, Cambridgeshire.



On 31 August/1 September 1943 Bomber Command was tasked with an op against Berlin, Germany. A combined force of 622 aircraft was allocated to the op, including eighteen 75(NZ) crews.

At 20:19 on 31 August 1943 Darcy, operating as Rear Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Mepal in Stirling III EE918 (AA-D).

Whilst on the return, at 23:59 on 31 August, Darcy's aircraft was intercepted by Lt Heinz Grimm of Stab IV./NJG1 flying a Bf110 from Leeuwarden Airfield, Netherlands. The aircraft flew on for a further 10-15 minutes during which time the Captain requested that the Mid Upper Gunner, who was the closest to the rear gun turret, go back and check on Darcy because he had heard nothing from him since the attack. The Mid Upper Gunner reported that Darcy had been killed in the attack.

Returning to his position, there was an explosion which broke the plane into two pieces and the Mid Upper Gunner, the only member of the crew not in his position and not in his harness, fell out of the plane which went down with the rest of the crew, all still harnessed in.

The aircraft crashed at Derental, Lower Saxony, Germany, 5 miles SSE of Hoxter, Neidersachsen, Germany, killing six of the seven-man crew. The Mid Upper Gunner was captured and was taken as a POW. This was Darcy's 9th op.

Also killed: FO Robert Gorman Rainford (Nav); PO John Cecil Giles (AB); FS Kensington Campbell Jackson RNZAF (WOp/AG); FS Eric John Roberts RNZAF (Pilot); Sgt Eric Saunders (FE)

Originally buried in Hoxter Cemetery, Neidersachsen, Germany, in October 1947 Darcy was moved to the Hanover War Cemetery, Neidersachsen, Germany.

Darcy is commemorated on Wall Panel 178

Photo Source: aucklandmuseum.com