

Sqn Ldr Peter Frank Hickling 68134 DFM RAFVR

Peter was born in 1914 in Nottingham, the only son of Captain Frank Goodliffe Hickling and Antoinette Hickling nee Bancroft.

Educated at Nottingham High School, Peter trained as an accountant with Stanley Blythen and Co., Chartered Accountants, Nottingham. Early in 1939 Peter joined the RAF and trained as a pilot, commencing ops with 10 Sqn at RAF Leeming, Yorkshire in September 1940.

In April 1941 Peter was awarded the DFM *“for gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations”* and was commissioned two weeks later in May 1941.



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In October 1942 Peter was posted to 218 Sqn at RAF Downham Market and in November was appointed as “A” Flt Commander.

On 9/10 November 1942 Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Hamburg, a key industrial hub housing significant military production facilities, including oil refineries and factories that supported the German war effort. The Port housed shipyards and U-boat pens and was also crucial for the transportation of goods and military supplies. A combined force of 213 aircraft, including five 218 Sqn crews, were allocated to the op, although only four departed.

At 17:15 on 9 November Peter and his crew departed Downham Market in Stirling I W7475 (HA-H).

Whilst returning to base, at 21:15 on 9 November Peter’s aircraft was hit by heavy flak of 1.-3./schwere Flak-Abteilung 461. The Stirling crashed at Hufte Farm near Lashorst, Nordrhein-Westphalia, 20 miles ENE of Osnabruck, Lower Saxony, Germany, killing all on board. This was Peter’s 29th op.

Also Killed: Sgt Henry William Bending (FE); Sgt Ronald William Arthur Follett (AG); Sgt Ian Ignatius Friend RNZAF (Obs); Sgt Vivian Howe (AG); Sgt William Wynne Morgan RNZAF (WOp/AG); Adam Hadden Thomson DFM RNZAF (WOp/AG)

Originally buried in Alswede Cemetery, Minden-Lubbecke, Nordrhein-Westphalia, in August 1947 Peter was moved to the Hanover War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany

Peter is commemorated on Wall Panel 181

Photo Source: IBCC