



P/O Donald Edward Jackson J/85182, Royal Canadian Air Force.

Donald Jackson was born on 1 November 1920 in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, the son of Edward and Matilda Jackson. The family lived at 636 Assumption Street, Windsor; sadly, his mother died when he was a young boy in 1928. He attended Assumption Street School and Patterson College in Windsor before starting an apprenticeship in pharmacy. This involved studying at the Ontario College of Pharmacy between 1939 and 1942.

He enlisted for RCAF service on 25 February 1942 and after basic assessments gained his Air Bomber's wings on 22 January 1943. Just prior to being posted abroad, he married Winifred Alice Long of 824 Howard Avenue, Windsor, on 30 January 1943.

Arriving in England in March 1943, he trained at 22 (O)AFU from 24 May 1943, 23 OTU from 22 June and 1659 HCU from 28 September that year, before receiving his commission to the rank of P/O before being posted to 434 Squadron on 26 October 1943.

434 (Bluenose) Squadron was, at the time, equipped with the Handley Page Halifax V bomber and operated out of RAF Croft in Yorkshire.

On 18 March 1944 Donald was the air bomber and part of the crew of eight, which took off at 1834 hours from RAF Croft, Yorkshire, in Halifax LL178, Code WL-R, (which bore the name "The old straw Hat"), to undertake a mine laying operation in the Heligoland area. This operation was a diversionary raid whilst Frankfurt was being bombed by 846 other aircraft. This aircraft was one of 98 which had taken off for this diversion.

All went well on the outward trip with the mines being successfully dropped. Returning home the crew were advised that bad weather had developed over Croft. For reasons unknown, LL178 descended through cloud over the North Yorkshire Moors, something they and all crews were briefed not to do. The crew may have thought that they were over the last hill and in poor visibility began their descent to land. The aircraft struck the ground and crashed near Kepwick Bank Top, 7 miles ESE of Northallerton, at 2300 hours killing all on board. The crash report stated that the aircraft crashed whilst flying at a steep angle.

Donald Jackson was 23 years old.

He is buried in the Harrogate (Stonefall) Cemetery, Yorkshire.

He is commemorated on IBCC Panel 188.

Photo source: www.veterans.gc.ca.