

FS Edward McDermott R/96960 RCAF

Edward was born on 15 June 1923 in St Thomas, Ontario, Canada, the son of Walter McDonald and Jessie McDonald nee Moorhouse.

Educated at Governor Simcoe School and H B Beat Technical and Commercial High School, London, Ontario, Edward was employed as a welder with Canadian National Railway when, in February 1940 he enlisted with the Canadian Fusiliers. Attached to the 15th Field Ambulance of the RCAMC, in July 1941 Edward applied to transfer to the RCAF.

In October 1941 Edward was accepted for aircrew duties in the RCAF and commenced Air Gunner training. In February 1942 Edward was awarded his Air Gunner badge and transferred to the UK the following month.

In September 1942 Edward completed his advanced training at 20 OTU RAF Lossiemouth, Scotland, and was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk. In November 1942 the squadron converted to the Stirling and moved to RAF Newmarket, Cambridgeshire.

On 3 February 1943, 263 Bomber Command aircraft were tasked with an operation against targets in Hamburg, Germany. Nine 75(NZ) Sqn Stirlings were allocated to the task. Two squadron aircraft failed to return.

At 18:21 Edward, operating as the Mid Upper Gunner, and the crew departed RAF Newmarket in Stirling I R9250 (AA-W).

At 19:46 Edward's aircraft was intercepted by Hptm Reinhold Knacke of the I./NJG1 flying a Bf110 from Gilze-Rijen Airfield and crashed in the floodplains between Eck en Wiel and Ingen, Gelderland, 8km W of Tiel, Netherlands. Several crew members baled out, but none of the crew survived. Edward's body was found near the Van der Pol & Co brick factory, Ingen, - his parachute had not deployed fully. The bodies of the Captain, the Bomb Aimer and Wireless Operator were left in the aircraft when the Germans realised that they were unable to recover it, and ordered the Dutch to bury the crashed Stirling.

Also killed: FO Harold Lowe DFC (WOp/AG); PO Kenneth Howard Blincoe DFC RNZAF (Pilot); PO Andrew James Newell Scott RNZAF (Pilot); Sgt Desmond Clearwater RNZAF (AG); Sgt George Wood Cook RNZAF (AB); Sgt Frank Arthur Boese (Nav); Sgt Desmond David Hayward (FE)

Edward is buried in Amersfoort (Oud Leusden) General Cemetery, Utrecht, Netherlands

Edward is commemorated on Wall Panel 208

Photo Source: IBCC

