Sgt Walter Meadows 924395 RAFVR



Walter was born in 1915 in Wigan, Lancashire, the youngest son of Walter Meadows and Hannah Meadows nee Dootson.

Educated at Leigh and Ashton-in-Makerfield Grammar School, before enlisting he was employed as a buyer for a Bedford furnishing firm.

Joining the RAF in June 1940, Walter trained as an Observer in Canada before returning to a posting onto 18 Sqn at RAF Horsham St Faith, Norfolk with his crew in July 1941 via 17 OCU.

Of their 11 Ops, one of the most famous was "Op Leg" on 19 Aug 41. On 16 August 1941, 18 Sqn were detached to RAF Manston, Kent for a series of "Circus Ops". On 19 August 1941, six aircraft were ordered to attack a power station at Gosnay, France. Whilst flying over St Omer on route to the target, Walter's crew was additionally tasked with dropping a replacement leg for Wg Cdr Douglas Bader who had lost his right prosthetic leg when he bailed out on 9 August, and was recovering in the Luftwaffe Hospital in the town. This was successfully achieved.

On 20 September 1941, eight Blenheims from 18 Sqn were ordered on a low level mission to attack shipping off the Dutch Coast.

At 12:37 on 20 September 1941 Walter, operating as the Observer, and the crew departed RAF Horsham St Faith, Norfolk, in Blenheim IV R3843 (WV-F)

Whilst bombing a convoy off Zandvoort, North Holland, Walter's aircraft flew through the bomb burst of another Blenheim and, at 14:18, was seen to crash into the sea with the starboard engine on fire.

Also killed: FS John Murray Nickleson RCAF (Pilot); Sgt John Edward Pearson (AG)

On 11 October Walter's body was washed ashore at Huisduinen, Den Helder and buried in the local cemetery. In May 1947 his remains were transferred to Bergen-op-Zoom War Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Holland

Walter is commemorated on Wall Panel 211

Photo Source: probusbasingstoke.club