

FS Donald Palmer 551743 RAF

Donald was born in 1920 in Nantwich, Cheshire, the son of Frederick William Palmer and Ethel Fry Palmer nee Sargent.

Educated at Crewe Grammar School, Donald joined the RAF prior to the War under the Boy Entry Scheme.

In June 1941 Donald was reported missing when, during practice low level sweeps, his aircraft crashed into the North Sea. The crew survived, took to the dinghy, and were rescued two days later by an Air Sea Rescue Unit, arriving back at RAF Wattisham four days after the crash.

On 2/3 August 1941, 226 Sqn deployed from RAF Wattisham to RAF Manston to participate in Circus Operations, the designation for fighter-escorted daylight bombing raids by light and medium bombers of 2 Gp, Bomber Command against targets in German-occupied northern Europe.

At 07:00 on 10 August 1941, the squadron commenced standby at RAF Manston. At 11:15, reports were received of a 2000 ton ship, escorted by 2 flak ships near Calais. Three aircraft, together with fighter escort were tasked to attack.

Donald, operating as the WOp/AG, and the crew took off at 11:50 in Blenheim IV V5854 (MQ-L). Heavy and light flak, together with fighter opposition, was encountered in the target area. Leading the low level attack (50 feet) Donald's aircraft received the full concentration of anti aircraft fire. The bombs dropped short of the target, the aircraft stalled and subsequently crashed into the sea killing all on board. One other squadron aircraft was also lost on this task.

Also killed : Sqn Ldr Martin Walter Waddington (Pilot); FS Ian Newton Forsyth (Observer)

Donald has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Donald is commemorated on Wall Panel 222