

Sqn Ldr Martin Walter Waddington 33401 RAF

Martin was born in 1918 in Hythe, Kent, the only son of Sqn Ldr Roy Morris Waddington and Angela Mary Cicely Waddington Farmer nee Ewart. In 1940 he married Pamela Jean Churchman in Oxford, Oxfordshire. Their son was born in January 1942.

Educated at Eton College between 1932 - 1936, Martin entered the RAFC Cranwell as a Flight Cadet on J37, and graduated on a Permanent Commission in December 1938.

Equipped with Fairey Battles, in September 1939, 226 Sqn was deployed to France as part of the Advanced Air Striking Force and was based in Reims. The Sqn suffered heavy losses during the Battle of France, and Martin was lucky to survive a forced landing in May 1940 at Brussels Aerodrome, receiving minor injuries. He returned to Reims a few days later and on the same day the day the squadron were ordered to abandon the airfield. The retreat eastward commenced, and the squadron evacuated from Brest in mid June.

Following conversion to the Blenheim and time in Northern Ireland, 226 Sqn arrived at RAF Wattisham in May 1941. In June 1941 Martin had his second "scrape" 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.

Martin and his 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) Martin'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 : FS Ian Newton Forsyth (Observer); FS Donald Palmer (WOp/AG)

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

Martin is commemorated on Wall Panel 258

Picture Source: <http://www.oldcranwellians.info/alumni-1920-39/37-1-.html>

