FO Douglas Haig Baker J/25179 RCAF



Douglas was born on 6 June 1917 in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, the only son of Alfred Leonard Percival Baker and Edyth Annie Baker nee Otton

Educated at Alexander School, Moose Jaw and Central Collegiate, Regina, Saskatchewan, followed by 3 years study at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario in Mining and Engineering, Douglas was employed as a mining surveyor and draughtsman by McIntyre-Porcupine Mines Ltd, Schumaker, Ontario when, in May 1940, he joined the Canadian Army. In June 1940 Douglas embarked for the Uk and was employed with the 2nd Canadian Road Construction Company RCE, Canadian Army Overseas at the Aldershot Camp, Hampshire.

In November 1941 whilst still in England, Douglas applied to transfer to the RCAF, and in March 1942 he made the transition. Following training at No. 1 Initial Training Wing, Babbacombe, Devon, and No 1 Elementary Air Observer School, Eastbourne, East Sussex. In November 1942 Douglas returned to Canada to complete Navigator training.

Douglas completed his aircrew training in Canada in April 1943 with the award of his Navigator badge, was granted a commission and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 62 OTU at RAF Ouston, Northumberland and 51 OTU RAF Cranfield, Bedfordshire, in April 1944 Douglas was posted to 410 Sqn at RAF Hunsdon, Essex.

On 23/24 June 1944, the squadron was continuing with air support over the Normandy beaches, and Douglas and his pilot were tasked with a night patrol. At 00:15 on 24 June they departed RAF Zeals, Wiltshire in Mosquito XIII HK463 (RA-R).

The only transmission made by the crew was at 02:00 on 24 June stating they had been hit by flak, and the aircraft was on fire. The aircraft crashed in the English Channel, 18 miles off Barfleur, Normandy, France.

Also Killed: FO John Robert Steepe RCAF (Pilot)

At 03:00 Douglas's body was recovered by Motor Launch 1399, H.M.S. "Hornet", Gosport and landed on "Omaha" beach by an M.T.B.

Originally buried in St Laurent Cemetery near Omaha Beach, in November 1944 Douglas was moved to the Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France.

Douglas is commemorated on Wall Panel – Not Yet Erected

Baker Island, Primrose Lake, Saskatchewan was named in his honour.

Photo Source: veterans.gc.ca