WOI Joseph Arthur Hay R/138525 RCAF



Joseph was born on 16 April 1916 in Chatham, New Brunswick, Canada, the son of Andrew J Hay and Mary Hay nee Morrison. In September 1942 he married Mary Eleanor Kelly in Montreal, Quebec. They had one daughter.

Educated at St Joseph School, St Thomas College and Chatham Grammar School, New Brunswick, Joseph was employed as a barber and had served as a Signaller for two years with the North Shore (NB) Regiment when, in July 1941, he volunteered for service with the RCAF.

Called up in October 1941, Joseph completed his aircrew training in Canada in January 1943 with the award of his WOp/AG badge. Joseph served for 9 months at No.10 Air Observers School, RCAF Chatham, New Brunswick, before completing further training at 31 OTU RCAF Debert, Nova Scotia. In January 1944, Joseph embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 81 OTU and 1665 HCU, RAF Whitchurch, Shropshire, in March 1945, Joseph was posted to 190 Sqn at RAF Dunmow, Essex.

On 10 May 1945, 190 Sqn participated in "Op Doomsday", the transportation of the British 1st Airborne Division to Norway where they were to act as a police and military force during the Allied occupation of Norway following the German capitulation. Unable to land at Gardemoen due to weather, Joseph's aircraft commenced a return to base; however, an engine failure forced the aircraft to divert to Base 78 (Eindhoven).

At 16:30 on 11 May 1945 Joseph, a passenger on the aircraft, departed Base 78 (Eindhoven) in Wellington XIII NC489, returning to his base at RAF Dunmow, Essex.

On the take-off run the aircraft swung violently to starboard, travelling off the runway, then proceeded in a straight line about 70-80 degrees to the runway across rough ground. About 125 yds from trees bounding the airfield, and having passed through the Wellington dispersal, the aircraft became airborne but struck a brick building with the starboard wing, rupturing the petrol tank. The aircraft hit some trees beyond the building, crashed and burst into flames. Four 190 Sqn crew and three 69 Sqn crew were killed.

Also killed: FO John Henry Vanular RCAF (Passenger/Nav); WO John Coghlan (Air Gunner/Passenger); FS Noel Vivian Ryder (Pilot); FS Wallace Dexter (FE/Passenger); Sgt John Sheddon Alderson (AB); Sgt James Arthur Keeping (Nav)

Joseph is buried in Eindhoven (Woensel) General Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands

Joseph is commemorated on Wall Panel - Not Yet Erected

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca