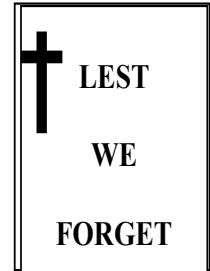


AN AIRMAN'S STORY



Service No.: 417085
Name: Edward Hurtle LAWRIE
Nickname: Eddie



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star.
Aircrew Europe Star (with clasps)
Defence Medal
War Medal 1939 - 45
Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Rank: Flight Sergeant
Service: RAAF
Enlisted: 6 Dec 1941
KIA: 21 Feb 1944

Eddie was born on 13 Nov 1922 at Tumby Bay to Hurtle Jameson Lawrie and Phylliss Marion Lawrie (nee Blyth). There were 3 children in the family, all boys, of which Eddie was the eldest. His father was a farmer at Tumby Bay on the property now owned by Chris and Graham Lawrie on Foothills Road.

Eddie took correspondence school lessons until Grade 5 and then went to school at Tumby Bay for two years, leaving at Grade 7 to help his father with the farm work; he also worked on a number of farms in the area. He continued in this employ until he enlisted in the RAAF in Adelaide (Mitcham) in Dec 1941.

After enlistment he was sent to Victor Harbour (SA) for basic training before being dispatched to Ballarat (Vic) for wireless training and then to Sale (Vic) for gunnery training.

In mid 1942 he embarked for San Francisco. He then entrained for Taunton (USA); after a very short stay it was on to Halifax (Canada) for further training, then onward to Liverpool (UK). After periods of training for crewing up and night flying and operational training on heavier aircraft including four engined aircraft, he was posted to 10 Squadron, Bomber Command at Melbourne (UK). In early 1943 he was posted to 460 Squadron, 1st Group Bomber Command at Brighton and later at Binbrook (UK). The Squadron was equipped with Avro Lancaster aircraft.

460 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, was formed at Molesworth in the United Kingdom on 15 November 1941. It was an "Article XV Squadron", formed in accordance with agreements that implemented the Empire Air Training Scheme. The squadron became part of the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command. In the ensuing years

the squadron was heavily committed to operations over Germany, Italy and German-occupied Europe

The squadron is regarded as having been the most efficient of the Australian bomber squadrons. It maintained consistently higher serviceability rates among its aircraft, set numerous operational records within Bomber Command, flew the most bombing raids of any Australian squadron, and was credited with the greatest tonnage of bombs dropped – 24,856 tons. The squadron, however, suffered heavily. It lost 181 aircraft on operations and suffered 1,018 fatal casualties, 589 of whom were Australian; the highest number of any of the Australian squadrons.

The squadron motto was ***“Strike and return”***.

Bomber Command members made up 2% of all Australian volunteers in the WW2, but suffered almost 23% of the casualties.

In this posting he was aircrew (navigator/bombardier) on Lancaster Bombers, his aircraft being *“O for Orange”* (ND419); he completed a number of operational missions in this aircraft over both France and Germany. Eddie was one of five Australians, in a crew of seven aboard this aircraft; all of the crew perished when their aircraft was damaged during a raid over Europe and crashed whilst returning to UK. He is buried in the war cemetery at Cambridge with the remainder of the crew from his aircraft.

GRANT Graham Athol – (Flight Sergeant); Service Number – RAAF 416953

CLEVELAND Francis Allan – (Flying Officer); Service Number – RAAF 422261

YOUNG A G – (Flight Sergeant); Service Number – RAAF 421426

DIETMAN John Arthur – (Flight Sergeant); Service Number – RAAF 417816

RAWSON – (Sergeant); Service Number – RAF 1683124

MCARTHY – (Sergeant); Service Number – RAF 1836186



Cambridge City Cemetery, UK

