



James Gerald Edward Ploughman

Royal Air Force 798572

World War II

Born: 21 Jun 1922

Died: 02 Mar 1992

Place of Birth: Bay Roberts, Newfoundland

Parents: John (Jack) Douglas and Addie (nee Hedges) Ploughman

The son of John and Addie Ploughman, James Gerald was one of three sons who enlisted to serve in World War II. His father John had himself served in World War I as a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The boys, Reuben, Vernon and James Gerald continued that legacy of service.

James Gerald was one of a family of five boys and 2 girls. His father, although born in Port Rexton had come to the Bay Roberts area presumably to work as a teacher in the Anglican Church school system in the early '20's.

James Gerald tried to enlist in the Navy in October of 1939 but was deemed too young to join.

Undaunted by this, he enlisted in the RAF (Royal Air Force) a year later in 1940. After graduating in Canada as an air-gunner proceeded overseas in

August 1941. On November 4th, 1941, he received his commission as pilot flying officer and was subsequently promoted to flight Lieutenant on April 25th, 1943. He was 23 at the time.

Following the war, James Gerald is found listed in the 1945 census as being single and living at home with his parents in Bay Roberts.

James Gerald married Daisy Elsie Peral Mercer. Daisy was born in New Brunswick in 1924 but both parents were from the Bay Roberts area. They are located in Bell Island in 1935 and in Bay Roberts in 1945. It seems rather likely that James Gerald and Daisy met in Bay Roberts and were married here.

The couple is found on a 1965 voters list for the Hamilton South area.

James Gerald passed away in March of 1992 at the age of 69. He is buried in Woodland Cemetery, Hamilton, Ontario. Daisy died in August 1995.



GERALD PLOUGHMAN IN DIEPPE RAID

**"Proud To Be In On It"—
Made Two Trips Over Dieppe**

In a recent letter to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Ploughman, Sergeant - Gerald Ploughman of the RAF, writes of his experiences during the Dieppe raid. Below are a few interesting extracts from his letter:

"You will notice that I haven't been writing so much myself lately. Well, I've been pretty busy this last couple of weeks and haven't had time for anything. You will notice the last time I wrote it was only a very short note which I scribbled in quite a rush. Well, the reason for that is: We received word sometime early in the morning that we would be leaving right away for another drone, and, if we wanted to write anyone to do so right away, as we would not be allowed to do so after we moved.

"We left right away, and as soon as we arrived at our destination we were informed of this Commando raid and that we were taking part in it. I guess by this time you have heard all about it.

"I made two trips across Dieppe that day, and boy, it was certainly hot at times, although not one of our aircraft was hit. Our job was to silence the gun posts and batteries there, and also cover for our troops on evacuation, and I think we made a splendid job of it, as probably you know by now.

"It was one of the biggest raids ever carried out by the RAF, and I was proud to be in on it. The night it finished we all went into Brighton to sort of celebrate, including the Group Captain and the Commanding Officer. We certainly did spend a marvellous night there. Quite a bunch of us went ice-skating. (They have an arena there). Boy, it was good. Half the boys there couldn't skate at all, which made it all the merrier. The Group Captain got out with us and, as he couldn't skate at all, fell down on the ice and cut his eye open. He didn't mind that at all, but just carried on. After the ice-skating, to round up the night we all went to a dance where we had quite an enjoyable time. I think it's about the best time ever I had and I'll never forget it."

From the above extracts we have described the experiences of a local airman who took part in the now-famous Dieppe raid. This letter describes the spirit of young airmen serving in the Royal Air Force. A raid over Dieppe. Back to their base. A skating party in which the

group captain cuts his eye open. And then a big dance. All in a wonderful day. A spirit such as this is certainly a fine example to all on the home front.

His many friends will also be pleased to learn that Gerald Ploughman has now completed about 40 operational flights over enemy territory. He has been over Holland and France seven times in one week.

Bay Roberts Guardian 14 Sep 1943

RECEIVES R. A. F. COMMISSION

On January 6 Mr. J. Ploughman received a cablegram from his son, WO/AG Gerald Ploughman, of the Royal Air Force, stating that on that day he had received a Commission. Further particulars of the promotion are not available as yet, but will be officially published in the near future. Gerald first joined the Royal Navy in Sept. 1939 but was rejected owing to being under age. He then joined the R.A.F. in July 1940 and went overseas after training in Canada in August 1941. He has made practically 100 flights over enemy territory, and during some of these he had many

narrow escapes, being wounded by enemy gunfire on, at least, one occasion.

Location: RAF Gatwick, Surrey, England - [United Kingdom](#)
Phase: Landing
Nature: Military
Departure airport: RAF Great Massingham, Norfolk
Destination airport: RAF Gatwick, Surrey

Narrative:
Boston AL744: Took off at 18:16 hrs for bomb Marshalling Yard at Abbeville. 30/04/1942
Badly hit by flak. The aircraft crashed at RAF Gatwick on return from an operational flight.
Upon returning to base the aircraft was inspected on 7 May 1942 and was deemed DBR.

Crew:
F/Lt (45301) Hadley James HOUGHTON DFC (Pilot) RAF - injured
W/O (563533) Walter George DAVIES (Obs.) RAF - Ok
F/Sgt (629792) William Stanley DOSSETT DFM (WOP/AG) RAFVR : Ok
Sgt (798572) James Gerald Edward PLOUGHMAN (AG) RAFVR : OK

Date: Thursday 30 April 1942

Time:



Type: [Douglas DB-7B Boston Mk IIIA](#)

Owner/operator: 107 Sqn RAF

Registration: AL744

MSN: OM-S

Fatalities: Fatalities: 0 / Occupants: 4

Aircraft damage: Destroyed

GDSM. VERN PLOUGHMAN NOW IN CANADA

F/O Gerald Ploughman Trans- ferred to Middle East

Word was received by his parents here last week that Gdsm. Vern Ploughman of the Canadian Grenadier Guards Tank Regt., who was wounded in action on Aug. 10th near Falaise, France, and had since been convalescing in hospital in England, recently arrived in Canada to undergo further treatment, and is now in Christie St. Hospital, Toronto. On his arrival at Toronto he was greeted by his sister Gertrude who had recently arrived there. Already Vern has had nine operations, and an X-ray taken this week showed that too much bone had been shot from his leg, that it will make a grafting operation necessary. He expects to be in hospital there for 8 to 12 months.

Word was also received last week that his brother, Flying Officer Gerald Ploughman, R.A.F., has now been promoted to Flight Lieut., and will shortly be proceeded from England to the Middle East on Administration duties.