

RONALD RICHARD DENSHAM

Rank/ No.: Flight Lieutenant (Pilot) 121088
Service: 29 Squadron R.A.F.V.R

Ronald Richard Densham was born in 1918, the fourth child of William Richard Densham and Edith Maria (nee Elliot). His parents moved to Kent from Devon shortly after their marriage in 1909. His father was a farmer, at Studdale Farm in Studdal. The births of all four children were registered at Eastry.

On 9th August 1940 Ronald became engaged to Beatrice Elizabeth Carter of Townwall Street, Dover and they married early in 1941. His wife later lived at 'Three Gables', Archers Court Road, Whitfield.

During the Second World War, Ronald Densham was a member of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. He qualified as a pilot in 1942 and joined 29 Squadron, based at RAF West Malling and equipped with Beaufighters. In October 1942 he was promoted to Flying Officer. On 4th January Densham and his radio officer Henry William Ellis encountered and shot down a Dornier 217 some 25 miles north east of Foreness.



Mosquito NF Mk, XII (photo: IMW)

In May 1943, 29 Squadron was equipped with the Mosquito aircraft, a two-seater fast bomber adapted for many roles during the war. On 28th April 1944 Densham was promoted to Flight Lieutenant.

As part of Operation Overlord, 912 sorties were flown between 2100hrs on 5th and sunrise on 7th June 1944, attacking enemy airfields, gun positions, searchlight sites, bridges and any train or convoy encountered. Eight aircraft were lost, including the Mosquito NF Mk XII, flown by Ronald Densham and Henry Ellis. On a defensive patrol over Normandy on D-Day, they were involved in a dog-fight and crashed in a field in La Bigne, near Caen. The farmer is said to have buried the bodies and the plane to hide them from the Germans.



The bodies were recovered and the two airmen now lay side by side in Bayeux War Cemetery, just yards from the Cross of Sacrifice. Bayeux is the largest Commonwealth cemetery in Normandy and was the focal point for commemorations marking the 70th anniversary of D-Day in June 2014.

Ronald Richard Densham is also remembered on the memorial plaque in St Peter & St Paul's Church, Sutton-By-Dover.