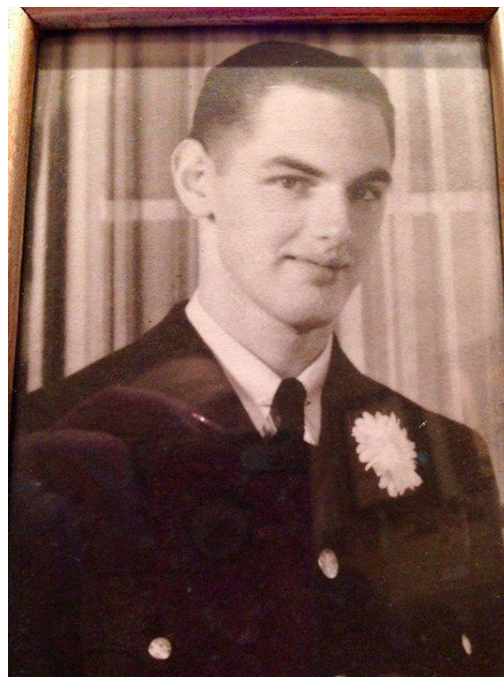


Kiteley, Raymond Valentine

Age: 20
Nationality: Canadian
Rank: LAC
Unit:
Occupation: Ground Duties
Service No: R/255935
Birth: 14 February 1925,
Victoria, BC,
Canada
Home Town: Vancouver, BC,
Canada
Death: 13 July 1945



Consolidated B-24 Liberator 11121,
hit mountain seven miles from
Bamfield, BC, Canada

Burial: Commemorated Ottawa Memorial
Buried near Bamfield, BC.

Others: All RCAF: F/O William Edward Davies, pilot; F/O Robert Joseph Martello, 2nd Pilot; F/O Nicholas Maxwell Popovitch, Navigator; WO 1 Victor Gilbert Crosson, WAG; F/S Donald William Hope, F/E; F/O Harry Alexander Lowe, WO; WO 2 Joseph Bertrand Presse, WAG; Sgt Pamela Bennett, Corporal Nora Johnson, LAC Margaret Mann, LAC Lloyd Tull, Corporal Norman Johnson, LAC Raymond Kiteley, Corporal William Hrysko

Biography

Raymond Kiteley, born in Victoria, BC, on 14 February 1924, was the youngest child of Wesley Kiteley and Mary Jane Corbett. He had two sisters, Mary, who died in 1913, and Viola, as well as three brothers; Lloyd, James, and Christopher. Raymond's mother died in 1942, before Raymond enlisted in the RCAF, in Vancouver on 8 June 1943.

Raymond left school in 1940, having concentrated on commercial subjects. Until he enlisted he worked as a commercial clerk, his last place of employment being at Safeway. He would have liked to be a hospital assistant in the RCAF but no suitable vacancies were available and he was recommended for General Duties. After a brief time in Edmonton he was sent to Vancouver and on 18 June 1945, he was transferred to Tofino.

A month after being transferred to Tofino, on 13 July 1945, Raymond was permitted to fly to Patricia Bay for unspecified compassionate reasons. He was a passenger on Consolidated B-24 Liberator 11121 when it flew into a mountain while trying to reach altitude. None of the crew or passengers survived and Raymond is buried in a group grave with the other men who were on the aircraft.

In 1944, on July 29th, Raymond married a deeply religious girl, Violet Whitney, who at the time was working in a biscuit factory in Vancouver. After he completed his service they planned to go to Africa as missionaries.

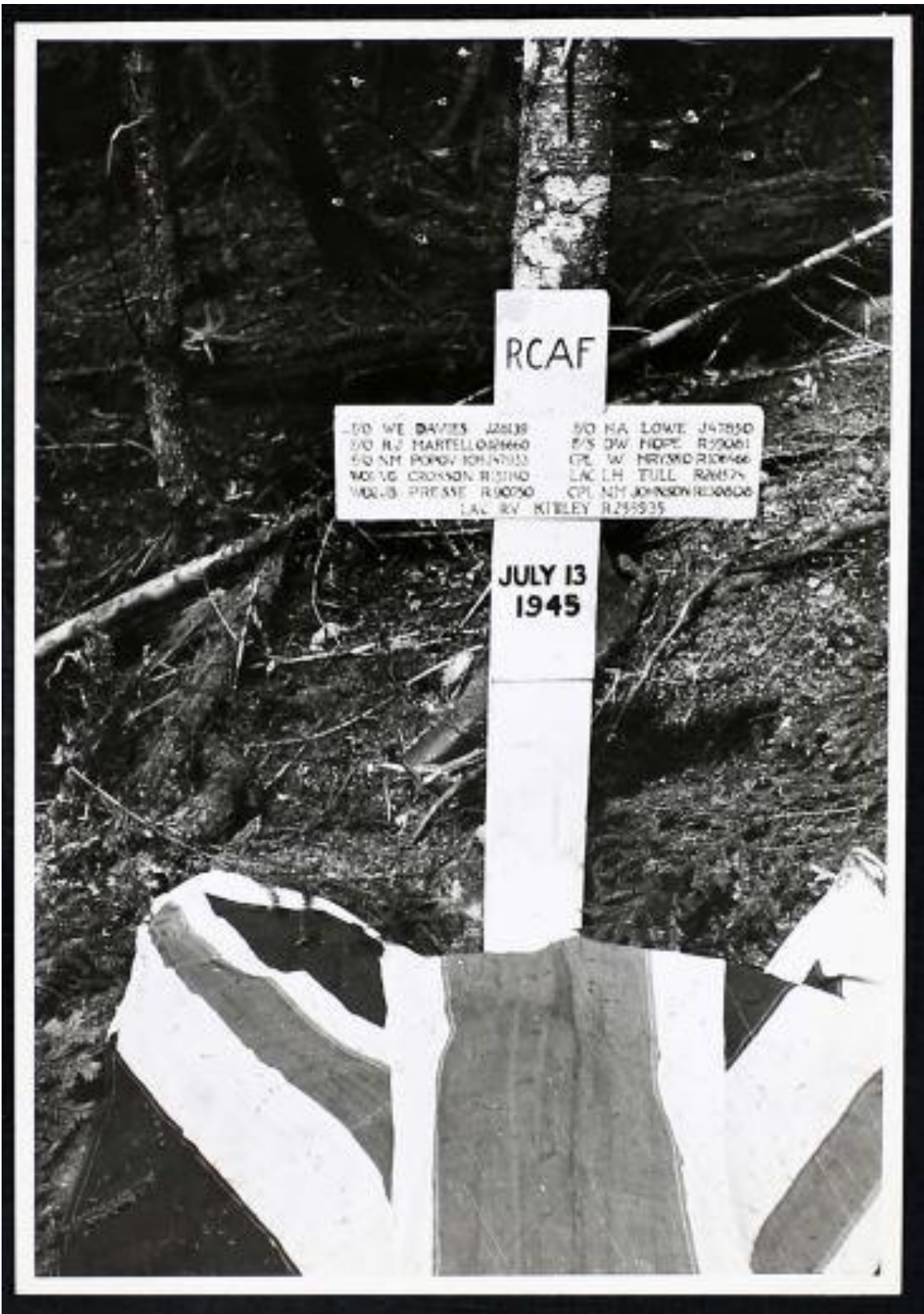
In a book "Women and the Landscape of American Higher Education", Abraham Ruelos writes this of her:

Violet's parents were very devout members of the Holiness movement, and at age six she came to know the Lord. When she reached the age of twelve Violet was last in line to be baptized in water at the Kingsway Foursquare Church in Vancouver. As she approached Aimee Semple McPherson, the minister baptizing the converts, Violet remembers that Aimee "put her hand on my head and said that the mantle of God was on [me] and I would minister around the world."¹ As at that time there were few women in public ministry, Aimee served as an inspiration and role model for Violet to follow as she answered God's call on her life.

Violet was already preaching when Raymond met her and he sometimes joined her and by playing the piano. When he was killed she was expecting their only child, David Ray Kiteley, b. 10 October 1945. Partly because Raymond's body was not identified, it took months before Violet could receive his gratuity and, as a single mother, after David was born, she became desperate writing to the RCAF several times and pleading for some help.

Violet never remarried; she became Reverend Dr. Violet Kiteley and founded Shiloh Bible College in Oakland California, USA, where she was pastor. Raymond's son, David, followed his mother into the church as did her grandchildren.





Details of Crash

On Friday, 13 July 1945, F/O William Edward Davies took off from Patricia Bay station at 08:51 on a standard exercise. He was flying Consolidated B-24 Liberator 11121 with a crew of six; all members of RCAF No. 11 Squadron in Patricia Bay:

F/O Robert Joseph Martello	2 nd Pilot
F/O Nicholas Maxwell Popovitch	Navigator
WO 1 Victor Gilbert Crosson	WAG
F/S Donald William Hope	F/E
F/O Harry Alexander Lowe	WO
WO 2 Joseph Bertrand Presse	WAG

Davies had flown this exercise once as second pilot, but this was his first time as first pilot. He was a qualified first pilot both day and night on Liberators. He had been trained at USAAF Field, Smyrna, Tennessee, had been with No. 11 squadron about a year, and was fully confident for instrument flight. The second pilot and remaining crew members were also fully qualified.

The exercise was an ordinary cross country flight used to familiarize pilots with the aerodromes in the immediate area, as well as giving Navigators a chance to familiarize themselves with the coast of Vancouver Island. The route was from Patricia Bay to Comox, via Abbotsford and Boundary Bay, followed by Comox to Tofino via Port Hardy, and ending with Tofino to Patricia Bay. Before leaving Patricia Bay the pilot filed a flight plan to Comox. There were no passengers on this leg of the trip.

At Comox, three passengers were approved for the flight: Sergeant Pamela Bennett, Corporal Nora Johnson and LAC Margaret Mann. A fourth passenger, LAC Lloyd Tull, was reported to have boarded the flight just before departure. Before leaving Comox the pilot filed the flight plan to Tofino.

At Tofino, it was arranged that three more passengers would be taken on board: Corporal Norman Johnson, LAC Raymond Kitely and Corporal William Hrysko. The weather report at Tofino showed extensive fog banks to the south and west. The aircraft took off at 4:43 pm and the pilot planned to be at 10,000 feet at Ucluelet, which indicated that he planned to cross the island at high altitude rather than follow the coast where the fog lay. At 4:46 pm the aircraft made

contact reporting to be at 49°05N 125°45 W, still, after 13 minutes, within the vicinity of Tofino airfield.

This was the last contact made with 11121 and when it failed to arrive at Patricia Bay at its ETA, search procedures were instigated.

The wreckage of the aircraft was found four days later on 17 July 1945, about seven miles east south east of Bamfield, BC. It took ground searchers four days to reach the crash site where they confirmed there were no survivors.

At the inquiry into the crash, F/O W.G. Skerik, Air Search Rescue Officer at Tofino, gave the following information:

“I was on the first rescue party to reach the crash of Liberator 11121. The position of same was 48°48N, 124°58.30W. I estimated the track of Liberator 11121 prior to the crash to be 77°T.

I identified the body of Cpl. N. M Johnson by a wallet on his clothing, Cpl. Hrysko by his wallet, F/O Martello by his wallet, F/O Popovitch by his identity bracelet, F/O Davies by a belt buckle, initial ‘D’ and by a ring initialled ‘W.E.D.’, and an RCAF watch serial No. 1165702, F/S Hope by his identity discs. Seven bodies were found which could not be identified, one of which was definitely a woman and one probably a woman. The other five were definitely identified as men.

I searched the slope for about 300 yards below the point of impact for evidence of anyone jumping etc. But nothing was found.”

Due to the difficulty in locating the crash site, the bodies could not be brought out for burial and two graves, one for men and one for women, were dug by the wreckage. The chaplain accompanying the search party conducted a funeral service and crosses were erected over the graves. Coinciding as closely as possible with the funeral service, a memorial service was held at Patricia Bay in front of a Station Liberator, conducted by the Station Chaplain and attended by all available officers and airmen of No. 11 Squadron.

In 1982, airmen from Comox Base erected a more permanent cairn and bronze plaque, which were dedicated in an official ceremony in 1983.

The conclusion of the inquiry into the crash blames the pilot, in that, contrary to orders, he flew into cloud instead of finding a route through the breaks in the overcast to reach his planned altitude. While in the cloud he flew into the side of a mountain ESE of Bamfield. The Tofino Base was also found at fault for allowing the pilot to take off for Patricia Bay in the weather conditions that afternoon.



