

# McIntosh, John

**Age:** 23

**Nationality:** Canadian

**Rank:** AC1

**Unit:** No. 122

**Occupation:** Armourer

**Service No:** R/151517

**Birth:** 18 March 1919  
Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire  
Scotland

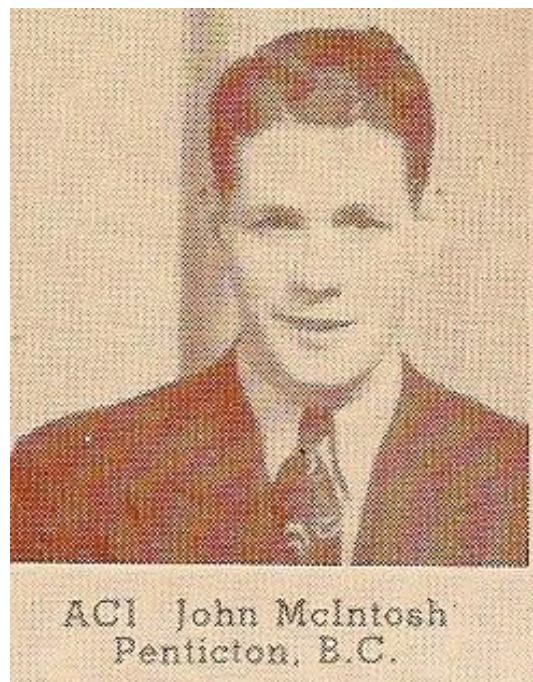
**Home Town:** Penticton, BC, Canada

**Death:** 21 July 1942

Drowned after crash of Grumman Goose 917  
Near Yakutat, Alaska, USA

**Burial:** Commemorated Ottawa Memorial

**Others:** Cpl. T.B. Donald



## Biography

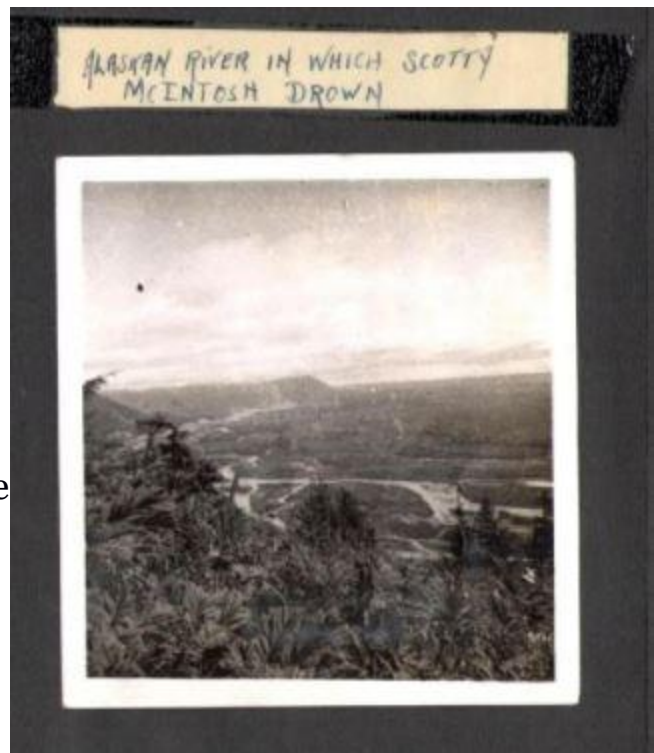
John McIntosh and his four brothers were all born in Scotland to Robert and Margaret Robertson. John, the middle child, was motherless at eight and orphaned by the time he was 13. In 1933 the second oldest son, Robert, emigrated to Canada and settled in Penticton, BC, with his Uncle James. Three years later, the eldest son, Donald, by then 21, emigrated with the other three boys, also to settle in Penticton. John who was 17, had by then left school with the equivalent of grade 10.

In Penticton John worked at the Steam Laundry until 1941, when he started work plate hanging at Burrard Dry Dock Co. In December 1941, he married Gladys Mather.

In January 1942, when three of his brothers were already in active service, John applied to the RCAF. His interviewers found him mature and alert, a very good candidate, and accepted him for training as an armourer.

The armourer's course ran from 31 March to 18 May 1942. John passed easily and was reported as conscientious, dependable, and capable of assuming responsibility. He was expected to make an excellent armourer.

On July 21<sup>st</sup> John was one of seven crew and passengers on Grumman Goose 917, flying from Yakutat, Alaska, USA to Anchorage, Alaska, when it encountered bad weather conditions and crashed in the bush near the Bering Glacier. One man was killed in the crash. John is reported to have drowned trying to ford a glacial stream in an effort to get help. The survivors were spotted by a USA plane and were rescued largely due to the efforts of a group of Alaskan civilians familiar with the area.



## Details of Crash

On 21 July<sup>t</sup> 1942, Grumman Goose 917, out of Patricia Bay, with seven men aboard, was reported missing. It was later erroneously reported to have landed safely in Cordova, Alaska, USA. The plane had, in fact, crashed in bad weather, into the bush near the Bering Glacier, killing one man, and injuring two others. The men, who were mobile, left to find aid and sometime during this effort, one of them was drowned trying to cross a glacial stream. These men were spotted by a U.S. plane, which dropped a note at Yakutaga emergency field describing their location. Four Alaskan civilians set out on a 30 mile trek to search for the survivors. They found three men, close to the crash site, whom they guided back to Yakutaga. On July 27<sup>th</sup> Patricia Bay received news that survivors had been found and F/L G.D. Preston flew to Yakutaga in Goose 940 to search for the other two survivors. The four Alaskan civilians joined with F/L Preston to search for the wreck. The crash site was found on August 6<sup>th</sup> and the remaining men brought out. The men on the plane were:

F/O P.M. Gault; Sgt. F.M. Bailey; Sgt. R.J. Powers who broke a leg; AC1 W.E.Naylor; AC1 T.S. Silburian, who fractured a leg; AC1 J. MacIntosh who drowned; Cpl. T.B. Donald, killed in the crash.

The following is an extract from a letter which was sent to the Governor General of Canada from the Minister of National Defence of Air.

*“That on or about the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1942 RCAF Grumman Aircraft No. 917 was operating from RCAF Station Patricia Bay, BC, and due to bad weather conditions crashed near Yakutat in Alaska causing death to a member of the crew and to a passenger and injury to the pilot and wireless operator and to three of its passengers, all of whom are members of the RCAF.*

*That the following four citizens, namely Messrs. Joe Maloy and B.B. Watson both of Yakutaga, Alaska and Messrs. Don George and C.A. MacMiller of Anchorage in Alaska, voluntarily set out in search of the crew and passengers of the said aircraft and, after walking all one night, the next day, and the next night located three of the injured members of the RCAF and guided them to Yakutaga.*

*That furthermore, the said four men, despite their fatigue, set out the next morning in RCAF aircraft No 940 to locate the position of aircraft No. 917 and*

*from the place of landing of aircraft 940 they proceeded to the scene of the crash a few miles from the landing position and brought out the two remaining survivors of aircraft No. 917.*

*That the help and experience of those men in the bush, coupled with their spirit of co-operation proved invaluable to the RCAF in locating the survivors of the wrecked aeroplane No. 917.*

*That while no claim has been made by any of the above mentioned civilians, compensation should be paid on an ex gratia basis.*

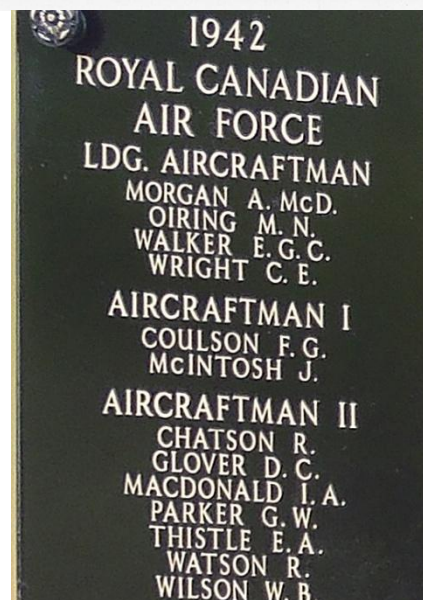
*That compensation of \$50.00 to each of the above is deemed to be fair and reasonable to the Air Officer Commanding Western Air Command.”*



Grumman Goose III No. 917



RESCUER MAC MILLER - TOMMY SILBERMAN  
FRANK BAILEY - RESCUER CAMRON RICH



1942  
ROYAL CANADIAN  
AIR FORCE  
LDG. AIRCRAFTMAN  
MORGAN A. MCD.  
OIRING M. N.  
WALKER E. G. C.  
WRIGHT C. E.  
AIRCRAFTMAN I  
COULSON F. G.  
MCINTOSH J.  
AIRCRAFTMAN II  
CHATSON R.  
GLOVER D. C.  
MACDONALD I. A.  
PARKER G. W.  
THISTLE E. A.  
WATSON R.  
WILSON W. B.



# Canadian Fliers Tell Epic Story Of Alaska Crash

WITH THE CANADIAN FORCES IN ALASKA (CP)—Detail the various aspects of Canada's military force. One of the details were made under the auspices of the R.C.A.F. by Lt. Col. J. H. ...

It is the story of the crash of an R.C.A.F. plane on a mountainous ridge from a small coastal Canadian province July 25, at an 11-day trek through the Alaskan wilderness by Baily and two companions and of Baily's discovery of a rescue plane flown by Americans to the scene of the crash where two others of the crew were found alive.

The plane crashed into a crevasse 30 miles long 200 miles from its base. Participants of the story were held up due to delay in gathering data for a month of delay.

Members of the crew were: P.O. Peter Grant of Montreal, pilot; Baily; Col. J. P. Dewar of New Westminster, B.C.; Sgt. R. Robinson of Seattle; A.C.I. J. Macintosh of Preston, B.C.; A.C.I. T. Maylor of Toronto and A.C.I. T. Silverman of Vancouver.

Donald was killed at the crash. Macintosh was drowned attempting to ford a glacial stream. Maylor and Silverman accompanied Baily in his 11-day walk to safety while Grant and Roberts were brought out by the rescue plane.

**GAVE FIRST AID**  
After the crash, which occurred in the afternoon, Baily was the first to repair parachutes. Although injured and grumpy himself, he gave first aid to his comrades and hoped being Grant armed with artificial respiration, part of the material of the oxygen tank to be dropped away so free the pilot.

The crew scattered parts of the plane over a wide area and the members of the crew were able to find only one box of emergency rations.

Baily took charge of the party. He sent Silverman, who had sustained a fractured jaw, and Macintosh on patrol in search of some signs of habitation. He told them to leave bits of torn paper on their trail so he could follow them at the first opportunity. Macintosh was placed on improvised crutches of branches and ferns and then Baily put splints on Silverman's leg, which had been fractured.

The next day, July 26, it was found that Grant had not suffered serious injury and when he and Roberts said they would take care of themselves, Baily set out with Maylor to follow the paper trail left by Silverman and Macintosh.

"There was no use staying on the mountainside waiting for something to show up, so I figured the wisest move was to set out while we still had the strength," Baily said.

For two days Baily and Maylor followed the trail through mountain glacial rivers. Then the paper trail ended. Baily spotted footprints along the banks of a stream and an hour or so later met Silverman, who said Macintosh had been drowned. Silverman was exhausted, being unable to eat even the berries he picked because of the pain in his jaw.

The weary men dragged themselves along a trail through dense woods surrounded by towering mountains with jagged peaks rising hundreds of feet above the valley they hoped would lead them to safety.

Their only weapons were a knife and an axe with a broken handle. They saw much game, but they only had a few berries, roots, bark and porcupine from animals.

"I was so hungry that I ate anything I could lay my hands on," said Baily.

### ATE AT CABIN

On the sixth day of walking, the men found an abandoned cabin. Inside there was a supply of provisions and they just to time preparing a good meal. They also found tobacco and a can of gasoline.

The next day an airplane dropped high overhead. The wanderers used the gasoline to light a fire which was spotted by the pilot of the United States craft. The next day another U.S. machine came over and the pilot dropped a message saying the men to stand aside by the way with their arms upraised. If they were members of the regular Canadian air force, Russians were also dropped by parachute, along with a map showing where the cabin was located and telling the men how to get to the nearest settlement, a day's march inland with only a half dozen inhabitants, 50 miles away.

Maylor and Silverman were taken to a Canadian base by an R.C.A.F. machine, while Baily joined the crew at the rescue plane down by Prince.

Prince made a special "all-out" landing with his amphibian craft in a glacial bay crisscrossed with ice cakes, near the site of Alexander Isberg's. From there the rescue party had to make its way through dense forest to the spot where Grant and Roberts had been left. They reached there just as the two were about to break camp and go "somewhere"—they had no idea just where.

### BURIED AT SCENE

The party buried Donald where the plane had crashed and then carried Grant and Roberts on their backs up the rugged mountain side. Prince got his stay away immediately, but not without several close calls.

As he told about the crash, Baily recalled that he is a loner after the crash with a 25 cent tin of tobacco and a tin of soap.

He recalled, too, that on the long walk through the woods he had seen a glacier with several huge boulders scattered in the ice. He was certain they were mountain boulders.

Mrs. Baily had given birth to a son two days before her husband left on the ill-fated trip. She had a serious relapse when she learned he was missing, but recovered quickly when he walked from her ward after his return, well showing the heavy growth of beard he had acquired during his arduous adventure.

### RESCUES PLANE CREW

## George Medal Given Former City Flyer; Alaska Crash Hero

Pt. Sgt. Francis M. Baily, former Vancouver man, hero of an 11-day trek through Alaska with other R.C.A.F. pilots was a crew of seven crashed into a glacial-covered mountain last July, has been awarded the George Medal.

Born in eastern Canada, Baily was a child and received his early education at General Gordon School. He later moved to Montreal with his parents, where he



PT. SGT. BAILY.

made his home. A flight instructor with the R.C.A.F., he was assigned for a time to the R. C. coast.

### PLANE HITS MOUNTAIN.

On a reconnaissance flight from a west coast base, the plane ran into Greer bog and crashed into the mountains, 200 miles from its base, instantly killing Col. J. P. Dewar of New Westminster, and seriously injuring five others.

Pt. Sgt. Baily, who escaped with minor injuries, administered first aid to his friends in a short time. A.C.I. Tawney Silverman, well-known city pilot, and A.C.I. John Macintosh, set out to find Baily. Macintosh lost his life attempting to cross a river, and Silverman was located by Pt. Sgt. Baily and A.C.I. T. Maylor when they started signal fires with 30 logs.

The three R.C.A.F. men then trekked through the wilderness for eight days with meagre supplies. On the sixth day they were sighted by a U. S. army plane and the next day were dropped provisions and medicine by a U. S. army plane.

### LED SEARCH PARTY.

Arriving at civilization with his two companions, Pt. Sgt. Baily immediately led a search party back to the wreckage to bring in Sgt. R. Roberts and P.O. Peter Grant, who were severely injured in the accident.

His work completed, Pt. Sgt. Baily returned immediately to duty with the R.C.A.F.

Pt. Sgt. Baily's wife and a newborn daughter were at 422 West Second. The parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Charles Baily, former Sparrows, are living in Montreal.

Handwritten notes at the top right of the page: "PAGE OF THE ... AND ... TABLE OF ..."

Contemporary newspaper reports make no mention of the Alaskans involved in the rescue.

Cape Yakataga Alaska.

March 2, 1943.

To. Royal Canadian Air Force. Ottawa. P.H.

your File, 1100-9-174. 2 (D of P) (P. 1)

no reply appears  
re: man - name  
information on  
C 1 266  
B. B. Watson  
John B. Carson

We thank you for your letter of appreciation, and  
cheque for \$50.00.

We would like to say a word in defence, and recom-  
mendation of B. D. Preston Sgt. Id. RCAF. in  
rescuing the survivors of your plane crash up last July,  
the fog had settled against the mountain that morning, and the  
moment it lifted enough to see under it, the plane left, and  
landed on a small Glacier lake one and a half miles from  
the wreck, and they got the people immediately. But could not  
leave for some time, as the fog had closed down again.

'Bert Ruff', a famous Alaskan pilot, was waiting at the same  
time for better visibility, his address is Anchorage Alaska,  
care Morrison - Kondison

Every thing was done that was humanly possible, by many  
willing people, and I'm shure they will be willing to attest  
it, but they are not available at this time, as this place is  
shut down now. We hope the thoughtless remarks by a very  
excitable person (we know him) will not damage the  
character of a very fine, and able man. we are respectfully  
yours.

B. B. Watson  
John B. Carson



E. M. Watson Postmaster  
Joe Meloy

