

# Quigley, Edward Gerald

**Age:** 22  
**Nationality:** Canadian  
**Rank:** Sergeant  
**Unit:** No. 32 OTU  
**Occupation:** Wireless Operator/  
Air Gunner  
**Service No:** R/191291  
**Birth:** 14 October 1922  
Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
Canada



**Home Town:** Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
Canada  
**Death:** 28 January 1944  
Crash of Handley Page Hampden P1200,  
Washington coast, USA  
**Burial:** Commemorated on Ottawa Memorial,  
Ontario, Canada  
**Others:** P/O William Dishman, Navigator, RAFVR;  
Sgt. Ronald Watson, Pilot, RAFVR.

## **Biography**

When Edward Quigley enlisted in the RCAF, at No. 6 Recruiting Office in Manitoba, he was almost 21 and employed as vault manager in a Dry Cleaners and Furriers. It was September 1942 and his employer asked for Edward to be granted two months leave in order to assist in moving out the 6,000 to 7,000 fur coats, stored over the summer, a task he felt was impossible without Edward's presence. The RCAF declined the request.

In his spare time Edward was an entertainer, tap dancing and singing, a talent he thought might be useful in his service. He had graduated from St. Paul's High School with Manitoba Grade XI, played golf and skated. He had started an apprenticeship in the fur trade but stopped after six months.

Edward passed his medical, fit, alert and intelligent, and was judged excellent aircrew material. He was sent for Pre-Aircrew education, which he completed in March 1943 with marks of 80 in science, 73 in mathematics, and 100 in signals. He was recommended for further training as a wireless operator/ air gunner (WAG).

Following his Initial Training, Edward was sent to No. 3 Wireless School. He passed 63<sup>rd</sup> out of 92 and received his wireless operator badge in October 1943. He was not at all suitable to be a signals instructor.

Wireless School was followed by No. 5 Gunnery School where he received his WAG badge in November 1943. At this point he was reportedly "*average, very likeable, should do well with experience*" but not suitable for further training. He was posted to No. 32 OTU at Patricia Bay in November 1943. Two months later, on 28 January 1944, Edward was WAG on Handley Page Hampden P1200 when it disappeared into the sea off the Washington coast while on Navigational exercises. Neither the aircraft nor any bodies were found and, lacking a grave, he is commemorated on the Ottawa Memorial.

Edward Gerald Quigley was born on 14 October 1921 to Patrick Quigley and Emma Rose Graber, the eighth of nine children. He had five older brothers, Patrick, Allen, James, John and William, the last three serving overseas when he died, and two older sisters, Mary and Lillian. A third sister, Leonore, was born in 1924.

## Details of Crash

Handley Page Hampden P1200 was the fourth Hampden to crash due to poor weather conditions near the Washington coast. On 28 January 1944 it carried a crew of three:

P/O	William Dishman	Navigator	RAFVR
Sgt.	Edward Quigley	WAG	RCAF
Sgt.	Ronald Watson	Pilot	RAFVR

Nine Hampdens took off that evening. The object of the exercise was night familiarization, crew co-operation and astro navigation. The meteorological representative sanctioned the trip to be carried out at 6,000 ft. The route was Base to 48° 10N 130° 00W to Tofino to Base. The duration of the trip was estimated to be four hours during which the crews were to make maximum use of wireless aids and navigational aids. The crews were instructed not to enter cloud due to the risk of icing conditions, and to return to base if bad weather was encountered.

After take off, none of the crews were able to complete their exercises owing to the weather conditions. Contact with P1200 was lost after 7:15 pm and crews of 139 and 114 entered cloud, in direct disobedience of their briefing, and got into serious trouble.

P1200 was the only aircraft that failed to return to base and a search was instituted the following morning. The search was focused on the area between Cape Flattery and Gray's Harbour, both in Washington, USA. Six Beechcraft C45 Expeditors covered the area to a depth of ten miles landward and seaward for about three hours. A Douglas C-47 Dakota searched the straits of Juan de Fuca from Victoria, BC, to Cape Flattery along both shores. Other stations also participated in the search which was continued until January 30<sup>th</sup>. No trace of the aircraft was found.

In the findings of the subsequent investigation, the cause of the accident was deemed obscure, and was presumed to be that the aircraft encountered icing conditions with which the pilot was unable to cope, either due to inexperience, or to the severity of the icing. It was stated that the Hampden was unsuited to icing conditions.



