

THE UNIQUE "BATTLE of BRITAIN" 64 Sqd & 71 U.S.A. "EAGLE SQUADRON" (Singapore) DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (1942) Spitfire Casualty group of six. To: Flt/Lt Arthur 'Art' Donahue.3 Kills. KILLED IN ACTION. 11.9.1942

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THE UNIQUE "BATTLE of BRITAIN"



64 Sqd, 71 U.S.A./ R.A.F. "EAGLE SQUADRON",
258 Sqd (Battle of Singapore) & 91 Squadrons.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (1942)

Spitfire Casualty group of six.

To:

Flt/Lt ARTHUR 'ART' DONAHUE. RAF(VR)

A farmer's son from St Charles, Minnesota,



**KILLED IN ACTION 11th September
1942.**

*(Lost without trace in the English
Channel after a dog fight with a JU88 off the French
coast at Gravelines. The German aircraft was
destroyed)*

[CITATION]

London Gazette. 27 March 1942, Distinguished Flying
Cross awarded to Flying Officer Arthur Gerald
Donahue (81624),
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 258 Squadron.

"This officer has carried out many low level reconnaissance sorties and has successfully attacked enemy shipping and ground objectives. On one occasion, whilst carrying out an attack against enemy troops attempting a landing, Flying Officer Donahue silenced the enemy's fire, thus enabling the rest of the formation to press home their attacks with impunity. He has destroyed several enemy aircraft."

“Art Donahue was a very sharp and poignant example and commentator on the dislocation between America and what happens abroad in war, he said. **“America was standing by while democracy was going up in flames.**

He felt very angry about that.



THE FIRST OF ONLY 'EIGHT' AMERICAN BORN PILOTS WHO FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN. ART DONAHUE WON ONE OF ONLY TWO D.F.C.'s & WAS THE ONLY DECORATED AMERICAN CASUALTY.

A Man With an Incredible Story of Sheer Guts & Valour.

81624 Arthur Gerald Donahue – No. 64 Squadron** (DFC) killed

Four of Art's equally famous US pilots were the following men whose names are also immortalised in RAF 'Battle of Britain' circles:

81622 Eugene Quimby 'Red' Tobin – 609 Squadron**

killed
(From Los Angeles California)

*81621 Andrew 'Andy' Mamedoff – 609 Squadron***
killed
(From Connecticut)

81620 Vernon Charles 'Shorty' Keough – 609
*Squadron** killed*
(From Brooklyn N.Y.)

William 'Billy' Meade Lindsley Fiske – 601
*Squadron** killed*
(From Brooklyn N.Y.)



**THIS IS ONE OF
THE MOST
HISTORICALLY
IMPORTANT
BATTLE OF BRITAIN FLYING
GROUPS EVER
OFFERED FOR
SALE**

**DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
(1942)
1939-45 Star (Battle of Britain
Clasp)**

**Aircrew Europe Star
Burma Star
Defence Medal
War Medal.**



**ART DONAHUE's
"SPARE" BATTLE
OF BRITAIN
FLYING GLOVES.**

**(These are the classic 1933 issue
made by STAGG's of AUSTRALIA
and used extensively by the pilots of
the Battle of Britain)**

**(The gloves were taken home to the
U.S. while on leave as a gift to his father in March 1941)**

[BIOGRAPHY]

P/O Arthur Gerald Donahue was born in St Charles, Minnesota, U.S.A. on 29th January 1913. The Son of Frank P. Donahue and Ada G. Donahue. He learned to fly privately with the famous MAX CONRAD at Conrad's Flying Services. Conrad himself was a world beating pilot who held several world records prior to WW2, some of which are still unbroken. Conrad clearly trained Donahue well as he qualified for his private and commercial pilot's licenses before he was 19. For several years he instructed trainee pilots, gave pleasure flights and did some "Barnstorming" & display flying around the US air display circuit in pre war America.

In June 1940 he heard that pilots were being enlisted in Canada for the R.A.F. He immediately went to



Canada & claimed to be a Canadian and was accepted for service in The Royal Air Force.

The legal situation for Americans was however very

dire as American citizens were prohibited from serving under the various US Neutrality Acts and if it was found that an American citizen had defied the strict neutrality laws, there was a risk of losing their citizenship and even imprisonment. It is believed that another four Americans misled the British authorities about their origins, claiming to be Canadian or other nationalities. The RAF officially recognises seven aircrew personnel who were from the United States of America as having taken part in the Battle of Britain.



Ten days after being accepted for the R.A.F. in Canada Donahue sailed for the UK and just six days after landing he was in training at the advanced fighter unit at 7 O.T.U. Hawarden near Chester.

Arthur "Art" Donahue was hence the very first American who volunteered to join the Royal Air Force in the early days of the Second World War. Flying a Spitfire in the Battle of Britain, he became the first American fighter pilot to fly in action in the Second World War, he was the first U.S. pilot to score a German kill, as well as being the first American pilot to be shot down in combat during the war. He was also the first and one of only two of the early American pilots to be awarded the British DFC.

It is reported that Pilot Officer Art Donahue DFC stayed with the 71 Eagle Squadron only a short time before requesting a transfer back to his original RAF 64 Squadron unit. He did not appreciate the unruly behavior of many of the American pilots. Also, during his short time with 71 Squadron, this unit had not one serviceable aircraft. The only aircraft on the unit was an unserviceable Miles Magister trainer. Their Hurricane fighters had yet to arrive.



**THE OFFICIAL PLAQUE
PRESENTED TO THE DONAHUE
FAMILY BY THE BATTLE OF
BRITAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.**



**[COMBAT
FLYING RECORD, 64 SQUADRON. R.A.F.]**



**[BATTLE OF BRITAIN] 5th AUGUST 1940.
Forced down at RAF Kenley with serious damage to his
Spitfire (K.9991) after combat with Me109's off the
French coast.**

**12th AUGUST 1940.
Shot down during an engagement off the South Coast
of England.
Baled out with burn injuries to right ankle and severe
burns to his hand. His Spitfire Mk1 (X4018) crashed
and burned out at Selling near Canterbury.**

**[COMBAT FLYING RECORD, 91 SQUADRON. R.A.F.]
7th MAY 1941.
2 x Me109's , one aircraft 'badly damaged' / 'one
probable kill'**

**17th AUGUST 1941.
Me109 'confirmed kill'**

**26th SEPTEMBER 1941
Klemm trainer 'confirmed kill' France**

***SERVED WITH 258, (HURRICANE) SQUADRON
DURING "THE BATTLE of SINGAPORE" FLYING
AGAINST THE JAPANESE INVASION LANDING***

CRAFT.

Art was seriously wounded in the leg by a Japanese anti-aircraft shell while in an ultra low level strafing attack on landing craft. He flew his Hurricane aircraft back 100 miles to his Singapore base with his fist pushed into the hole in his left calf to stem the bleeding and landed using one hand! Escaped the Japanese capture of Singapore by the skin of his teeth as he managed to get onto the last aircraft to leave his base at Singapore before the Japanese troops arrived. The squadron ops' books & records did not survive the evacuation, but Art's activities in action are superbly recorded & described in great detail in his second book 'Last Flight From Singapore'

RETURNED TO THE U.K. JULY / AUGUST 1942



11th SEPTEMBER 1942
(Art' Donahue's Final Sortie)
JU88 'confirmed kill'

Having taken off from RAF HAWKINGE at 05:50am in Spitfire Mk5b (BL511) for the first recce sortie of the day, to Ostend, Art Donahue was patrolling the coastal area between Flushing & Gris Nez. At about 06:30 he intercepted a Ju88 and engaged it. The German aircraft which was based at Schiphol was heard to transmit a message reporting that an engine was on fire, that the rear gunner had been killed and that it was attempting to return to Brussels. However, the enemy aircraft had already returned fire during the combat and had clearly hit the cooling system piping or the radiator of Art's Spitfire which had caused his engine to quickly overheat. He actually managed to report back to base on the aircraft's radio that he was about to ditch as he was too low to bale out. A weak three second R/T 'Mayday' message was received from Art' and as he was apparently well below parachute safe hight, (probably under 600 feet) he ditched the

Spitfire in the Channel off Gravelines which is a few miles west of Dunkirk.

He was flying in very poor conditions with visibility of less than 500 yards and falling. Despite an extensive motor launch & aerial search by his fellow pilots who spent all day until dark going out over the channel looking for him (some 20 sorties are recorded in the squadron ops' book) his body was never recovered.



**[REPORT FROM AIR RAID
PRECAUTION DEPARTMENT AT
AARDENBURG, HOLLAND.]**

Police-sergeant Domise reported at 09.30 hours on 11th September 1842.that a German plane had made an emergency landing close to Aardenburg. Research confirms that a crash landing had taken place at 07.30 hours.

" I immediately went to the spot and I noticed that it was a German bomber, type unknown.....

(* further research has confirmed that it was a JU88 A-5 of 3(F).33 Luftflotte 3, Werk No.10603, flown by Uffz Wilhelm Jung.)....

which had crash landed at the farmland of Mr. Buyck. The landing gear and one of the props were damaged whilst the other prop was torn off. The frontsite and the belly of the plane were also heavily damaged.

No damage was caused to the farmland or it was negligible but the wires of the radio station were brought down by the crash-landing. There were four crew, one slightly hurt.

(*an earlier radio transmission from the aircraft reported one Gunner as killed.)

When I arrived there were already German soldiers guarding the area and one of them told me that the crash-landing had taken place at 07.30 hours"



**KILLED-IN-ACTION. 11th
September 1942.**

**Art' Donahue DFC is
Commemorated on The Runnymede
Memorial to the Missing Men of the
RAF**

**BY PRIVATE TREATY PURCHASE
DIRECT FROM ART' DONAHUE'S
FAMILY WE ARE PROUD TO
OFFER HIS MEDALS FOR SALE.**

The Research Continues.....



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£CURRENTLY RESEARCHING (Enquiries Welcome)

THE UNIQUE "BATTLE of BRITAIN" 64 Sqd & 71 U.S.A. "EAGLE SQUADRON", Singapore DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (1942) Casualty group of six. Aircrew Europe, Burma. To: P/O-Flt/Lt Arthur 'Art' Donahue.Three Kills. Baled out. Killed in Action 11th Sept 1942. One of only eight American born pilots who flew with the R.A.F. during the Battle of Britain. A fabulous group of the upmost historical importance.