

F/O John Charles Adams J/36193 RCAF



F/O Adams (far right) with five members of his crew at North Killingholme in the autumn of 1944. The others are identified as (l-r) F/O Renton, Flt. Lt. Elcoate, Sgt. Winstanley (the only survivor), Flt. Sgt. Sterman and Flt. Sgt. Papple

John Adams was one of two Canadian brothers killed flying with the RCAF during the war. They were the sons of Dr Frederick and Essie Adams of Toronto. His elder brother, Frederick, was killed in July 1941 when the Whitley he was flying on a night exercise while with 10 OTU crashed near Oxford after breaking up in mid-air.

John (23) followed his brother into the Royal Canadian Air Force, qualified as a pilot and joined 550 Squadron at RAF North Killingholme at the end of September 1944. They were a popular crew with 550 and earned praise from their senior officers for their skill and determination.

On the night of 5/6 January 1945 their aircraft, NG331 BQ-M, was one of 24 550 Squadron Lancasters that took part in a raid on Hannover. As the aircraft was approaching the target it was hit by flak and crashed at Langenhagen, on the outskirts of the city. The only survivor was the rear gunner, Sgt. Ken Winstanley, who had swapped turrets for the night with the regular rear gunner.

Others in the crew were: flight engineer Sgt. W Scott, navigator Flt. Sgt. B Sterman, bomb-aimer Flt. Lt. W R Elcoate RCAF, wireless operator Flt. Sgt. F Papple and mid-upper gunner F/O Francis Renton.

All are buried in the Hanover War Cemetery.

John's name can be found on IBBC panel 001