

Sgt Philip Amies
RAFVR 1445907



Philip Amies was a young Lancaster wireless operator who was killed over Belgium when his aircraft was shot down by a Luftwaffe night-fighter.

He was on his fourth operation with 630 Squadron when his Lancaster, ME737 LE-S, was attacked by a Ju88 fighter fitted with upward-firing cannons during a 5 Group raid on the German military depot of Bourg-Léopold on the night of 11/12 May, 1944. It is believed he was one of four members of the crew killed instantly in the attack.

The raid involved 190 5 Group Lancasters and five of the group's PFF Mosquitoes in a raid hampered by poor visibility cut short by the master bomber because of the threat of hitting civilian areas. Five Lancasters were lost, including two from 630 Squadron.

ME737 had taken off from East Kirkby in Lincolnshire at 22.28 and was reported to have been attacked at 00.27, cannon shells badly damaging the Lancaster and killing Philip, the navigator and both gunners. The flight engineer and bomb-aimer managed to get clear before the Lancaster exploded and crashed near the village of Herenthout.

Philip's home was in Highgate in north London and he was the 22-year-old son of Henry and Mary Amies. He is buried along with three of his crew members in Schoonselhof Cemetery in Antwerp.

The others who died were the pilot PO Wilfred Watt RNZAF, navigator Sgt Leslie Thompson, 18-year-old mid-upper gunner PO Alfred Grant RCAF and 19-year-old Sgt Peter Rowthorn.

His name can be found on panel 002.

Sources: 630 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.