

Sgt. John Stodart Anderson 1823158 **RAFVR**

Nineteen year old mid-upper gunner John Anderson was part of a young but experienced 9 Squadron Lancaster crew killed during an operation to block a rail tunnel being used to store V1 rockets in France.

The raid, on the late evening of 31 July 1944, was mounted by 97 Lancasters and 8 Mosquitoes from 5 Group with the object of blocking both tunnels at Rilly-la-Montagne, east of Paris, where the rockets were being stored. Both tunnel mouths were hit by Tallboy bombs from 617 Squadron while the other aircraft successfully cratered the approaches.

John's aircraft, LM453 WS-E, was one of two Lancasters lost on the raid and is believed to have been shot down close to the target. There were no survivors. His aircraft had left Bardney at 1730 hours on what was his 18th operation. The second aircraft lost was a 617 Squadron Lancaster piloted by Flt Lt Bill Reid VC, who was one of two survivors.

John came from Crossford, Lanarkshire and was the son of Peter and Lilius Anderson; he was one of two 19 year olds in the crew.

The others who died were the pilot F/O Charles Worner, flight engineer Sgt. William Moseley, navigator P/O Thomas Peacore RCAF, bomb-aimer P/O Robert McKinney RCAF, wireless operator Flt. Sgt. William Phillips and rear gunner Sgt. John Kerfoot. All are buried in Clichy Northern Cemetery and are remembered on a memorial in the village of Rilly-la-Montagne.

His name can be found on panel 002.

Sources: Bombers First and Last by Gordon Thorburn/Bomber Command Losses 1944 by Bill Chorley/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.

