

F/O John Frederick Armstrong J/24240 RCAF

John Armstrong was a Canadian navigator in one of two 5 Group Lancasters lost during an attack on a key French rail junction as the Battle of Normandy reached its height.

He was part of a young crew from 9 Squadron, a crew that included an Englishman, a Scottish teenager, three Australians and two Canadians.

Taking off from Bardney at 2149 hours on the night of 12 July 1944 his target was the rail junction at Culmont-Chalindrey, south-east of Paris. His aircraft, Lancaster LM221 WS-K, was shot down close to the target, crashing near the village of Cour l'Eveque. There were no survivors and all seven men were buried in the local cemetery. In 1946 a monument was erected at the crash site and included a propellor from LM221 (pictured).



John was the 21-year-old son of Guy and Francis Armstrong. He was a student before enlisting, his mother living in Victoria, in British Columbia, while his father was in Los Angeles in California.

The others who died were the pilot F/O William Hallett RCAF, flight engineer Sgt. Allan Grieve, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Donald Brown RAAF, wireless operator Sgt. Frank Shaw, mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. Allen Tagget RAAF and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Malcolm Payne RAAF.

His name can be found on panel 003.

Sources: Bombers First and Last by Gordon Thorburn/Canadian Veterans/Jérôme Blanrue.

