

Flt. Lt. George Cooley Bailey J/20211 RCAF



George Bailey was an American pilot from Connecticut who had volunteered for the RCAF. He was killed on 22 November 1943 on the crew's 17th operation. The son of Vernon and Sarah Bailey, of New Canaan, Connecticut, he was only 21 years old.

On the night of 22/23 November over 760 bombers set out for the German capital Berlin – the majority were Lancasters but 50 Stirlings were making what was to be the type's last raid into Germany. With German night-fighters hampered by poor weather conditions on the ground, the bomber force made a virtual straight in and out attack. However, 26 of the bombers were brought down.

Twenty Lancasters failed to return, including George's, when their aircraft, JB368 EA-G, failed to return. The bodies of the crew were never located after the war. They may have crashed into the sea, or on battlefields yet to be fought over, and all are now remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

The others who died were the pilot F/O Cyril Cottingham RCAF, flight engineer Sgt. Alex Mathieson, navigator F/O Russell Richard RCAF, bomb-aimer F/O Maurice Wright, wireless operator Sgt. Geoffrey Tabenor, rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Colin Byers and mid-upper gunner Sgt. George Falck.

Photo and biography courtesy of the 49 Squadron Association.

George can be found on panel 4.