

Flight Sergeant Stanley Claude Bennett 1620198 RAFVR

Navigator Stanley Bennett and his Lancaster crew were the first aircrew from No. 49 Squadron to be killed following the unit's move from Fiskerton to RAF Fulbeck, near Grantham.



They were killed on their second operation when their Lancaster was shot down during an attack on Dusseldorf on the night of 2 November 1944. The squadron had moved to Fulbeck two weeks earlier following the expansion of 1 Group, 49 Squadron's Lancasters replacing the C47s of the USAAF 440th Trooper Carrier Group.

His aircraft, Lancaster PB385 EA-V, took off at 1616 hours, one of 961 heavy bombers and 31 Mosquitoes which carried out the final major raid on Dusseldorf. His aircraft was seen to be on fire before crashing at the Golzheim area of the city, close to the river Rhine. There were no survivors.

Stanley was the 20-year-old son of George and Norah Bennett and came from the Derbyshire village of Old Whittington, near Chesterfield.

The others who died were the pilot F/O Peter Harford, flight engineer Sgt. James Mitchell, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Alexander Findlay, wireless operator Flt. Sgt. William Shaw RAAF, mid-upper gunner Sgt. John Rix and rear gunner Sgt. Harry Roxby. All are buried in Rheinberg War Cemetery, grave ref. 5. C. 23.

His name can be found on IBCC panel 008.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Lincolnshire Airfields of the Second World War by Patrick Otter.