



P/O Victor Hector Bernyk J/86027 RCAF

Victor Bernyk was one of two Canadian brothers killed within eight months of each other flying on operations in 1 Group Lancasters from Lincolnshire.

Victor was the pilot of a 626 Squadron aircraft, based at Wickenby, shot down during an attack on the city of Karlsruhe in April 1944. His younger brother, Michael, was a navigator with 166 Squadron at Kirmington and was killed at the end of December during a raid on Osterfeld

They were the sons of William and Mary Bernyk of Windsor, Ontario. Victor was born in Sudbury, Ontario, and was educated at Windsor Vocational School before joining the Windsor Tool and Die Company. He enlisted in the RCAF in December 1941.

He was the pilot of Lancaster DV244 UM-L2 that left Wickenby at 2123 hours on the night of 24 April, as part of a force of 637 bombers taking part in what turned out to be a scattered and inconclusive raid. Nineteen aircraft were lost, including three Lancasters from 626 Squadron.

DV244 was reported to have been shot down by a night fighter and crashed at Plittersdorf, south of the target area. There were no survivors and all seven crew members are now buried in the Durnbach War Cemetery.

The others who died were the flight engineer Sgt. Jack Wilson, navigator P/O George Bainbridge RCAF, bomb-aimer F/O Paul Korbyl RCAF, wireless operator Sgt. James Hodge, mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. George Davies and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Rowland Crystal.

Victor's name can be found alongside his brother's on panel 008.

Sources: 626 Squadron Association/Canadian Virtual War Memorial.

