

Flt. Sgt. Weston Robert Berry 33396 RAAF



Weston Berry was an Australian rear-gunner who was one of 32 aircrew from No. 12 Squadron killed in a disastrous night for the Lincolnshire-based unit in the summer of June 1943.

He was a member of the crew of Lancaster W4791 PH-W, which was one of five Lancasters and their crews lost during a raid on Dusseldorf on the night of 11/12 June 1943. Only five men on board the lost aircraft from No. 12 Squadron survived to become prisoners-of-war. It was the first operation for Weston and the rest of his crew after joining No. 12 Squadron.

His Lancaster had taken off from RAF Wickenby at 2301 hours, one of 12 bombers from the squadron taking part in the attack on the Ruhr industrial city. The attack involving 782 Bomber Command aircraft caused extensive damage, wrecking much of the city but 38 bombers were lost, including the five from No. 12 Squadron.

W4791 was homebound and had almost reached the relative safety of the North Sea when it was hit by marine flak batteries on the Dutch coast and crashed on the dunes at Paasduin, Wijk-aan-Zee and there were no survivors.

Weston came from the small town of Dungog in New South Wales, Australia. He was the 29-year-old son of Raymond and Florence Berry. He was educated at West Maitland Technical School and had worked as a storeman before enlisting. Weston and the rest of his crew are buried in Beverwijk General Cemetery.

The others who died with him were the pilot Flt. Sgt. Horace Shepherd, flight engineer Sgt. Frederick Pink, navigator Sgt. William Cunliffe, bomb-aimer Sgt. Alan Gill, wireless operator Sgt. Leslie Stephenson and mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. Keith Davidson RCAF.

Weston's name can be found on panel 009.

Sources: Australian Virtual War Memorial/Aviation Safety Network/Find-a-Grave/RAAFA Aviation Heritage Museum/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt/IBCC Losses Database (photo)