

Sgt. Harold Bradley
1622746 RAFVR

Yorkshireman Harold Bradley was a young Lancaster navigator who was killed along with his crew on their third operation, a precision attack on a V1 storage site in a French cave system.



Harold (*whose crew is pictured here with only the pilot identified*) was part of the crew of Lancaster ME867 LE-N from No. 630 Squadron, one of 13 bombers lost in the attack on the caves at Saint Leu d'Esserant, north of Paris on the night of 4/5 July 1944.

They had taken off from RAF East Kirkby in Lincolnshire at 2313 hours and are believed to have been aboard one of several Lancasters shot down by night fighters at around 0155 hours over France during the homeward leg. ME867 crashed near the village of Lannou-Cuillère in Picardy after being attacked by a fighter flown by Hauptmann Heinz Siebert. There were no survivors from the bomber.

Harold came from Keighley in west Yorkshire, the 20-year-old son of Herbert and Ethel Bradley. He and his crew had joined 630 Squadron in June and all three of their operations were against French targets. Harold is buried along with five of his crew in Poix-de-Picardie (Poix-de-la-Somme) Churchyard, Row C. Grave 20.



1Poix-de-Picardie Churchyard

The others who died were the pilot P/O Ralph Taft, flight engineer Sgt. William Goodyear, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Frank Hartley, wireless operator Sgt. Eric Day, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Frederick Hard and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. George Tyler MiD.

Harold's name can be found on IBCC panel 012.

Source: 630 Squadron Association. Churchyard photo courtesy Inmemories.com © Pierre Vandervelden