FS John Henry Brown 418915 RAAF



John was born on 4 August 1912 in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, Australia, the son of William Alfred Brown and Beatrice Alice Brown nee Newstead. In June 1939 he married Mollie Gwendoline Payne in Zeehan, Tasmania; they had one daughter.

Educated at Fremantle Boys' State School, John was employed as a miner when, in December 1941, he volunteered for service in the RAAF.

Called up in June 1942, John completed his aircrew training in Australia in March 1943 with the award of his WOp/AG badge and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 2 (O) Advanced Flying Unit RAF Millom, Cumbria, 27 OTU RAF Lichfield, Staffordshire and 1660 HCU RAF Swinderby, Lincolnshire, in March 1944 John was posted to 463 Sqn at RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire.



On 10/11 May 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with attacks on the Belgian and French marshalling yards at Courtrai, Dieppe, Ghent, Lens and Lille. A combined force of 506 aircraft, including fourteen 463 Sqn crews was allocated to the op. The squadron's target was Lille, used by enemy forces for the transportation of supplies to the Western Front.

At 22:14 on the 10 May John, operating as the Wireless Operator, and the crew departed RAF Waddington in Lancaster I LL881 (JO-E).

Post war it was established that, whilst outbound, John's aircraft exploded mid-air and the bulk of the wreckage fell on a factory in the southeast suburbs of Lille, France, killing all on board.

Also killed: FO George Oswald Jones RAAF (Nav); FO Dudley Francis Ward DFC RAAF (Pilot); PO William John Lewis RAAF (FE); WO Lloyd George McKenzie RAAF (AB); FS George Martin Dann RAAF (AG); FS Colin Henry Eastgate RAAF (AG)

John is buried in Hellemes-Lille Communal Cemetery, Nord, France

John is commemorated on Wall Panel 14

Photo Source: naa.gov.au