

## F/O Raymond Francis Calderhead 157632 RAFVR



Raymond Calderhead was the mid-upper gunner in a 550 Squadron Lancaster shot down in bright moonlight by a night fighter during an attack on the city of Stuttgart in July 1944. He was flying on his fifth operation with 550 having joined the squadron three weeks earlier. He came from Barrow-in-Furness in Cumberland and was the son of Thomas and Florence Calderhead.

His Lancaster, LM455 BQ-T, left RAF North Killingholme at 2137 hours on the night of 28/29 July, one of 17 aircraft provided by the squadron towards a force of 494 Lancasters taking part in what was the third in a series of raids on Stuttgart. The bomber stream found itself in bright moonlight over France and during a series of engagements 39 were lost, including BQ-T.

It crashed near the village of Blamont in eastern France, close to the road between Nancy and Sarrebourg. There were no survivors and all seven crew members are buried in Blamont Communal Cemetery, the only British war graves there. A memorial stands at the site of the crash, erected by local people. Curiously, it lists four of the crew as air gunners. Unusually, the crew included six members with the rank of Flying Officer

The others who died with him were the pilot F/O Paul Roche RCAF, flight engineer Sgt. Percy Adams, navigator F/O Bob Archer RCAF, bomb-aimer F/O Donald Rudd, wireless operator F/O Stanley Spakowski and rear gunner F/O Edward Meaker.

His name can be found on panel 016  
Photographic source: 550 Squadron Association.