

Sgt. Arthur George Cole 1311910 RAFVR



A 460 Squadron Lancaster pictured at RAF Binbrook

Arthur Cole was the 21-year-old wireless operator in the crew of P/O James English of 460 (Australian) Squadron at RAF Binbrook. The crew had been together through their training and were nearing the end of their tour by the beginning of December 1943, at the height of the Battle of Berlin.

Arthur had already completed 27 operations when he joined the crew on the night of 2/3 December 1943 for another raid on Berlin, when they took with them Australian war correspondent Norman Stockton of the Sydney Sun.

As their Lancaster, W4881 AR-K, was approaching Berlin it was attacked by a night fighter, which killed the mid-upper gunner and badly wounded the rear gunner. Part of the tail section was shot away and, with a wing on fire, the Lancaster went into a dive. A series of explosions blew three of the crew clear (flight engineer Sgt. William Miller, navigator P/O Neville Anderson DFC RAAF and bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Arthur Catty) but the remainder, including Arthur, died when the aircraft crashed at Groningen, near Brandenburg.

Arthur was the son of Arthur and Annie Cole of Pennington, Hampshire.

He is buried in the Berlin War Cemetery alongside his pilot P/O James English DFC RAAF, the mid-upper gunner WO2 Ivan Rodin RCAF, the rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Alex Kan RAAF and Norman Stockton.

Arthur's name can be found on IBCC panel 021.

Picture source: Peter Green Collection