

Sgt. Henry Halliwell 952897 RAFVR



A 103 Squadron Wellington at Elsham

Henry Halliwell was a young Wellington rear gunner killed while flying from an airfield only a dozen miles from his family home.

He was part of the crew of DV773 (PM-J) of 103 Squadron which was shot down by a night fighter as it returned from an attack on Essen in the early hours of June 9. There were no survivors when the Wellington crashed near the small town of Bakel, north east of Helmond, at around 0230 hours. The attack on the Wellington was later claimed by Fw Walter Spille following what was again an inconclusive attack on the Ruhr industrial centre by 170 bombers, 19 of which were shot down.

Henry and his crew had left their base at Elsham Wolds, in north Lincolnshire, at 2316 hours on the night of 8 June to take part in what was the fourth attack in a week on Essen.

His home was in the then-village of Immingham and he was the 22-year-old son of William and Catherine. He was on his seventh operation with the squadron and is now buried with the other members of his crew in Woensel Cemetery in Eindhoven. Henry is also remembered on the Immingham war memorial.

The others who died were the pilot P/O John Firman, observer Flt. Sgt. John MacQueen, wireless operator Flt. Sgt. Jean Turner RCAF and wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. Frederick Ball.

His name can be found on panel 044.

Sources: Elsham Wolds Association/Bill Chorley.