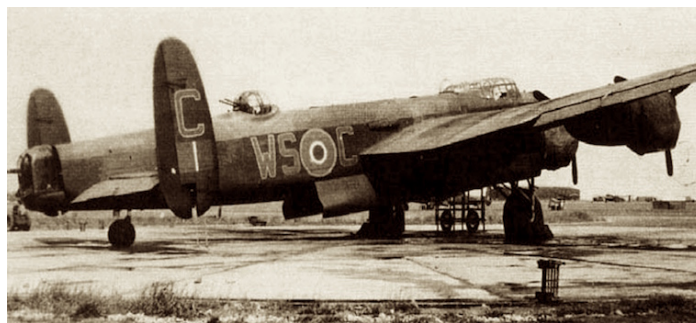


**Sgt. Herbert Alfred
Masters 1291811
RAFVR**

Herbert Masters was a young Lancaster wireless operator/air gunner who was killed along with his crew on their first operation.



His aircraft was one of 33 Bomber Command aircraft lost in an attack on the southern German city of Schweinfurt on the night of 24/25 February 1944, part of the RAF/USAAF 'Big Week' assault on Nazi targets.

Herbert and his crew had only been with 9 Squadron at Bardney for a few days, after leaving No. 1654 Heavy Conversion Unit, before their name came on the Battle Order for the attack.

They were to be part of Bomber Command's first wave of attackers, the second wave to take off two hours later. It was the first wave that suffered the highest casualties and Herbert's aircraft, Lancaster LM433 WS-H, was believed to have been shot down by a Do217 night fighter, crashing in the small town of Tiefenbronn, a few miles south-east of Pforzheim. The wreckage landed close to houses and a number of people from the town, including a few children, were later believed to have been killed by delayed action bombs exploding.

Herbert came from the Westbourne area of Bournemouth and was the 23-year-old son of Alfred and Elsie Masters.

The crew were all initially buried in Tiefenbronn Churchyard and later reinterred in Durnbach War Cemetery. The others who died were the pilot P/O George Denson, flight engineer Sgt. Colin Todd, navigator Sgt. John Charlier, bomb-aimer Sgt. David Marshall, mid-upper gunner P/O Stephan Loftson RCAF and rear gunner Sgt. Leonard Parker.

Herbert's name can be found on panel 69.

Sources: Bombers First and Last by Gordon Thorburn/9 Squadron/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.