

PO Robert Joseph Cartmell J/15883 RCAF

Robert, known as Bobby, was born on 21 April 1918 in Lincoln, Ontario, Canada, the son of Joseph Aloysius Cartmell and Daisy Cartmell nee Crittenden. In August 1941 he married Jean Elizabeth MacDonald in Ontario.

Educated at St Joseph's School and Thorold High, Robert was employed as a paper mill worker by Provincial Paper Ltd, Thorold, when, in July 1940, he volunteered for service with the RCAF.

Called up in December 1940, Robert completed his aircrew training in Canada in August 1941 with the award of his Wings, and he embarked for the UK in September. Following advanced training at 20 OTU RAF Lossiemouth, Scotland, in June 1942 Robert was posted to 214 Sqn at RAF Stradishall, Suffolk. Robert was granted a commission posthumously in October 1942, backdated to June.

On 13/14 September 1942, Bomber Command was tasked with an attack on Bremen, Germany's second largest port and home to military-industrial facilities including the shipyards of Vulkan, AG Weser and Atlas Werke, the Valentin submarine pens, oil refineries and the aircraft works of Focke-Wulf. A combined force of 446 aircraft, including eight 214 Sqn crews, were allocated to the op.

At 00:37 on 14 September 1942, Robert and his crew departed RAF Stradishall in Stirling I R9166 (BU-H).

Approaching the target area, at 03:46 on 14 September Robert's aircraft was hit by flak and exploded in the air. The Stirling crashed on the south bank of the River Weser, Habenhausen, South of Bremen, killing six of the seven-man crew. The Navigator was taken as POW.

Also Killed: PO Harry Edward Orr RCAF (WOp/AG); FS Joseph George Spouler RCAF (WOp/AG); Sgt Ronald Dicks (FE); Sgt Roy Frederick Reynolds (WOp/AG); Sgt Stanley Watson (AG)

Originally buried in the Russian Cemetery, Vechta, Lower Saxony, in September 1947 Robert was moved to the Sage War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany

Robert is commemorated on Wall Panel 142

Photo Source: veterans.gc.ca

