

## **Flt Lt David Ramsay DFC Croix de Guerre (Belgium) RCAF J/12973**

David Ramsay was a Canadian bomb-aimer, killed when his Pathfinder Lancaster was attacked by a night-fighter and exploded over Belgium.

He was the part of an experienced crew headed by the Deputy Master Bomber S/L Teddy Blenkinsop DFC during a raid on the marshalling yards at Montzer not far from the Belgian/German border. They were flying in Lancaster III JA976 LQ-S of 405 (Vancouver) Squadron on the night of 27/28 April 1944.

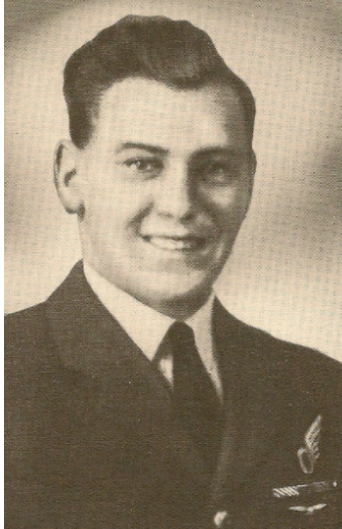
Their aircraft had taken off from Gransden Lodge seconds after midnight as part of a force of one hundred and forty-four aircraft which caused considerable damage at a cost of fourteen Halifax aircraft and a single Lancaster, David's JA976 LQ-S. It was attacked by a night fighter and exploded and crashed at Webbekon, east of Leuven. S/L Blenkinsop along with the navigator were blown clear but the others, including David, died as the Lancaster crashed near Webbekon, Diest in Belgium. The pilot was later to die in a German concentration camp while the navigator died of his injuries a few days later.

David had earned his Distinguished Flying Cross following a tour of operations with 420 (Snowy Owl) Squadron RCAF, mainly in the Middle East where he flew numerous operations as the bombing leader during the seven months he served in Africa. He is buried along with five of his crew in Webbekon Churchyard and he was awarded his posthumous Croix de Guerre by the Belgians in 1948. David was the son of Peter and Isabella Ramsay of Alberni on Vancouver Island and had enlisted during a visit to Glasgow in Scotland.

The others who died were the pilot S/L Teddy Blenkinsop DFC Croix de Guerre RCAF, second pilot Flt Lt Arnold Allen DFC RCAF, flight engineer, PO Robert Booth RCAF, navigator Flt Lt George Smith RCAF, bomb-aimer Flt Lt David Ramsay DFC RCAF, wireless operator Flt Sgt James Bradley, mid-upper gunner PO Leslie Foster RCAF and rear gunner PO Nicholas Clifford RCAF.

David's name can be found on panel 229.

Sources: Aircrew Remembered/Canadian veterans/405 Squadron Association



## FLIGHT LIEUTENANT DAVID RAMSAY

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

Born at Dysart, Sask. on December 30th, 1920, he received his education at the Alberni, B.C. Elementary and District High Schools, graduating in June, 1939. Beginning a notable athletic career when he learned to swim and dive at the age of five, he later in life participated in many regattas and swimming meets. He also played baseball, softball and tennis and frequently competed in track and field events. Basketball eventually became his chief interest and while in High School he coached the Alberni Junior Girls and Boys teams in that game, as well as in softball. He continued his athletic activities after entering the Bank, at Port Alberni, in July, 1939 and, two years after, managed and coached the Alberni Junior Girls basketball team which won the Provincial Championship. He enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in August, 1941, graduating from the last "Long Course" in navigation, gunnery and bomb-aiming in July, 1942, at Rivers, Man. He received his commission before proceeding overseas in September, where on arrival he was posted to 420 Squadron at Darlington, Yorks. On his first operational flight—the bombing of Kiel on October 13th, 1942—a German night-fighter collided with his Wellington aircraft and sheared off the rudder. The aircraft, however, returned to its base and despite the damage was landed successfully. He subsequently took part in many bombing raids with 420 Squadron, among the cities attacked being Turin, Stuttgart, Lorient, St. Nazaire, and Essen. He had been promoted to Flight Lieutenant's rank when, in June, 1943, his Squadron was sent to North Africa to prepare for the invasion of Italy. After operations over Naples, Messina beaches, Viterbo, Cape Bardi, Foggia, Taranto, Salerno, Leghorn and other strategic points he returned to England in October, 1943, and there was assigned to an Operational Training Unit as Instructor. During his sojourn in England he was decorated for his distinguished services in North Africa. Not long afterwards he was again with an operational squadron—405 (Pathfinder) Squadron—and his first target was Nurnberg. Subsequent flights in the pre-invasion pounding came in quick succession—Aachen, Dusseldorf and Karlsruhe among

