

FO James Allan Sneddon J/17725 DFM RCAF

James was born on 11 June 1923 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, the son of James Sneddon and Ann Allan Sneddon nee Wilson.

Educated at McLennan and Eastwood Schools, Edmonton, and Edmonton Technical College, James was employed as a shipping clerk by Horn & Whitfield Ltd, Edmonton, Alberta when, in June 1941, he volunteered for service in the RCAF.

Called up in August 1941, James completed his aircrew training in Canada in February 1942 with the award of his Air Gunner badge and embarked for the UK the following month.

Following advanced training at 7 Air Gunnery School, RAF Stormy Down, Bridgend, Wales and 26 OTU RAF Wing, Buckinghamshire, in September 1942 James was posted to 115 Sqn at RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk. Commissioned in March 1943, at the completion of his tour in May 1943 James was posted to 1678 HCU RAF East Wretham, Norfolk. In July 1943 James was awarded the DFM for his service on 115 Sqn.

In December 1943 James was posted back to ops with 514 Sqn at RAF Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire.

On 14/15 January 1944, Bomber Command was tasked with an operation to Brunswick, the first major raid on this town of the war. A combined force of 498 aircraft was allocated to the op, including 23 squadron aircraft.

At 17:06 on 14 January James, operating as the Mid Upper Gunner and the crew departed RAF Waterbeach in Lancaster II LL685 (J1-G2).

The German controller tracked the bomber stream from just off the English coastline and many German fighters entered the stream over Bremen, continuing to claim aircraft until the stream left the Dutch coast on the return leg. On approach to the target, at 19:05 James's aircraft was intercepted by Hptm Walter Barte of the Stab III./NJG3, flying a Bf110 from Stade Airfield. James's aircraft crashed 3 miles South of Celle, and ½ mile West of Bennebostel, Lower Saxony, Germany, killing all on board.

Also Killed: S/L Ernest Frank Sly DFC AM (Pilot); FO Philip Pullyn Boulter (FE); FO William Leonard Harvey DFM RNZAF (WOp/AG); FO Frank George Rosher DFM (AG); FO Edwin Horton Thomas DFM RCAF (AB); FO John Livingstone Martin RCAF (Nav)

Originally buried in Westercelle Cemetery, Lower Saxony, Germany, in October 1946 James was moved to Hanover War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany.

James is commemorated on Wall Panel 245