WOII John Harrison Cowieson R/122979 RCAF



John was born on 10 June 1916 in Queensville, Ontario, Canada, the son of Arthur Lloyd Cowieson and Mary Edna Cowieson nee Proctor. In March 1940 he married Margaret Lucille Martin in Brantford, Ontario. They had one son.

Educated at Aurora Public and High Schools, John was employed as a clerk and butcher when, in January 1941, he volunteered for aircrew duties with the RCAF.

Called up in September 1941, John completed his trade training in Canada in August 1942 with the award of his WOp/AG badge and, following advanced training at 34 OTU RCAF Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick, in March 1943 he embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at 13 OTU RAF Bicester, Oxfordshire, in August 1943 John was posted to 226 Sqn at RAF Foulsham, Norfolk, followed by a move to RAF Swanton Morley, Norfolk.

On 8 November 1943, No. 2 Group of the 2nd Tactical Air Force were tasked with an attack, consisting of 3 waves, on the Fortress Of Mimoyecques, Landrethun-le-Nord, France, the underground military complex under construction for the purpose of housing a battery of V-3 rockets permanently aimed at London. Fifteen 226 Sqn aircraft were allocated to the third wave of the op.

At 08:15 on 8 November 1943 John, operating as the Wireless Operator, and the crew departed RAF Swanton Morley in Mitchell II FV927 (MQ-R).

Flying in a box formation of six aircraft at 1000 ft, John was number three, positioned to the rear of the lead aircraft. Intense and accurate flak was encountered from the coast to the target and, as John's aircraft approached the target, the Mitchell received a direct hit from an anti-aircraft shell on the port engine and wing. The aircraft burst into flames and crashed. Despite returning crews reporting the sight of 2 or 3 parachutes, all on board were killed.

Also Killed: WOII Carl Martin Berg RCAF (Nav); WOII Joseph Amedee Grenier RCAF (AG); FS Keith McRae Smith RAAF (Pilot)

Originally buried in the Marquise Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, in August 1945 John was moved to the Calais Canadian War Cemetery, Leubringhen, Pas de Calais, France

John is commemorated on Wall Panel NYE

Photo Source: www.veterans.gc.ca