

Sgt. Frederick Edward Ashman 1337269
RAFVR

Frederick Ashman was a 19-year-old Lancaster navigator who was killed along with five of his crew after being shot down during a raid on Berlin in November 1943. His aircraft, JB362 EA-D of 49 Squadron, was one of 443 Lancasters which caused widespread damage to the German capital on the night of 26/27 November, an attack which led to the loss of 28 Bomber Command aircraft.

Frederick's aircraft appears to have been attacked after completing their bomb-run and crashed near Gransee Lake, north of Berlin and on the homeward route of the bomber stream. The only survivor was the bomb-aimer, Sgt. John Burrows.

The crew (*pictured here four days before their aircraft was lost*) had taken off from RAF Fiskerton at 1731 hours on what was their 13th operation. Frederick was among the youngest navigators in Bomber Command. He came from the village of Lenham, near Maidstone, in Kent and, after leaving school, had briefly

worked for Lloyds Bank. During his time with the bank, he joined the Home Guard before he was old enough to volunteer for the RAF. He was the son of Herbert and Edith Ashman. He is seen on the group photograph on the extreme left before Lancaster JB362 headed off to Berlin on 23 November.

The others who died were the pilot WO Ronald Brunt RAFVR, flight engineer Sgt. Harold Bronsky RAFVR, wireless operator Sgt. Ronald Norley DFM RAFVR, mid-upper gunner Flt. Sgt. Ronald O'Dea RAAF and rear gunner Sgt. Edward Wilson RAFVR. All are now buried in Berlin War Cemetery.

His name can be found on panel 014.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries and the Berlin Raids by Martin Middlebrook/IBCC.

