

**Flight Sergeant David McFarlane
Forsyth Bell 1566466 RAFVR**



David Bell was a 29-year-old bomb-aimer who died along with his crew on the worst night of the war for No. 49 Squadron.

His Lancaster was one of six lost by the squadron during an attack on the Wesseling synthetic oil plant on the Rhine south of Cologne on the night of 21/22 June 1944.

His aircraft, ME675 EA-R, was one of 20 Lancasters from the squadron which took part in a raid of 133 aircraft. Thirty-seven of these were lost, in percentage terms one of the highest losses of the war for the Lancaster force.

ME675 took off from RAF Fiskerton at 2303 hours and was shot down over Holland less than two hours later. The Lancaster was claimed by both a night-fighter and a flak battery, the bomber crashing near the village of Lage Mierde, close to the Belgian border. There were no survivors.

The crew were on their eighth operation and now are all buried in Woensel Cemetery in Eindhoven (grave ref. Plot KK. Coll. grave 85- 88)

The others who died were the pilot F/L John 'Jack' Hill, flight engineer Sgt. George Witty, navigator F/O Kenneth Jones RNZAF, wireless operator Sgt. Thomas Whewell, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Thomas Hall and 19-year-old rear gunner Flt. Sgt. George Wood.

His name can be found on IBCC panel 008.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.