

Flt. Sgt. Albert Caile 1018880 RAFVR



Albert Caile (front, second left) with his 166 Squadron crew

Mystery surrounds the loss of Lancaster LM390 on the night of 21/22 January 1944 during a raid on Magdeburg which was to cost Bomber Command 57 four-engined bombers.

Albert Caile was the pilot of LM390 AS-F of 166 Squadron. He and his crew were on their sixth operation, leaving their base at RAF Kirmington at 1953 hours. Nothing else was heard from the aircraft, no wreckage or bodies were ever found – it was simply listed as 'lost without trace'.

What is known is that the German night fighter force was particularly successful that night, accounting for almost all the aircraft shot down. It is believed the bomber stream was picked up before it crossed the enemy coast and LM390 could well have gone down into the sea.

Albert and his crew had joined 166 in the late autumn of 1943 and flew all of their operations in January 1944. All were long-distance attacks, three to Berlin and one each to Stettin and Brunswick.

Those who were lost with him were the flight engineer Sgt. Bill Finch, navigator Flt. Sgt. John Hands, bomb-aimer Sgt. Henry Landau, wireless operator Sgt. Fred Cottee, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Leslie Collins and rear gunner Sgt. Jim Lynch. All are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

His name can be found on IBCC panel 016.

Photographic source: 166 Squadron Association.