

Flt. Sgt. Ralph William Carroll R/176957 RCAF



Ralph Carroll (back row, second left) with his Canadian colleagues at Kirmington

Ralph Carroll was the bomb-aimer of a No. 166 Squadron Lancaster lost in a daylight raid aimed at helping the advance of American ground forces in November 1944.

His Lancaster III, PB648 AS-B, was one of 25 provided by 166 for the attack on Düren during the afternoon of 16 November involving 485 aircraft from Nos. 1 and 5 Group. The raid utterly destroyed the town, which lay in the path of the US advance towards the Rhine. Only three aircraft were lost, all to flak, and Ralph's was one of them, crashing close to the American lines in Belgium. There were no survivors.

Ralph and his crew, which was made up of six Canadians and a Welsh flight engineer, had left RAF Kirmington at 1235 hours on what would have been their seventh operation since joining the squadron on 16 October 1944. He is buried along with five of his fellow crew members in Rheinberg War Cemetery.

Those killed with him were the pilot F/O Ted Coles RCAF, flight engineer Sgt. David Orme, navigator F/O Ken Farrow RCAF, wireless operator Sgt. Ralph Schnaufer RCAF, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Neil Smith RCAF and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Joe Leaman RCAF.

Ralph's name can be found on IBCC panel 018.

Photographic source: 166 Squadron Association.