

Flt. Sgt. Walter Lawrence Chatfield R/99842 RCAF



Walter was an air gunner who served in 49 Squadron based at RAF Fiskerton. A Canadian airman, he was killed on 15 June 1943 when his plane was shot down on a mission to Oberhausen on the crew's 3rd operation. He was the 22-year-old son of Edward and Amy Chatfield of Ingersoll, Ontario.

An all-Lancaster force of 197, guided by 6 Oboe Mosquitoes, made a successful attack on Oberhausen. Despite the target being cloud-covered, accurate sky-marking enabled the bombers to cause considerable damage. Twelve Lancasters lifted off from Fiskerton's runway, the last one away by 2232 hours. The crews found themselves engaged in a savage battle, from both flak and fighters, which resulted in Bomber Command losing 17 aircraft.

Walter and crew, flying in Lancaster ED434, were shot down by a German night fighter flown by Hauptmann Hans-Dieter Frank of 2./NJG1. The bomber crashed 2 kilometers East of Dodewaard, Holland, on the north bank of the Waal, at 0113 hours. The pilot, Sgt. Reginald Frost, and flight engineer, Sgt. Nathan Hitchcock, survived to become POW's in Stalag 357, Kopernikus; Walter and the remainder of the crew are buried in Uden War Cemetery.

The others who died with Walter were the navigator F/O Alan Whittaker, bomb aimer Sgt. Victor Horsley, wireless operator/air gunner Sgt. John Coulsey and rear gunner Sgt. Peter Toms.

Walter can be found on Panel 19.

Photo and biography courtesy of the 49 Squadron Association.