

**F/O Lawrence Duckworth
77116 RAFVR**



Lawrence Duckworth was a rear gunner who died along with six other men when their Avro Manchester was shot down over Berlin.

He was part of a crew of No. 61 Squadron, that had recently exchanged its Hampdens for newly-introduced Manchesters, at RAF North Luffenham. The new aircraft had proved troublesome right from the start but four aircraft were selected to take part in a small-scale attack on the German capital on the night of 2/3 September 1941.

To help boost morale the crew was joined by both the squadron commander, W/C George Valentine DSO, and the station commander, G/C John Barrett DSO and Bar, DFC. Taking off at 2030 hours, they chose to deliver the attack on Berlin at a relatively low level, however, their aircraft, Manchester I L7388, was picked up by searchlight and quickly hit by flak, crashing in the Schronfeld area of the city. There were no survivors.

Lawrence was the 27-year-old son of Hugh and Beatrice Duckworth and lived in Ealing, in London, with his wife Margaret.

The other crewmen who died were the pilot F/L Alan Harrison DSO, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Ernest Dowse, wireless operator Sgt. James Nicholson and mid-upper gunner Sgt. Walter Hamer RNZAF. All are buried in Berlin War Cemetery.

Lawrence's name can be found on panel 030.

Sources: RAF North Luffenham Heritage/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook