

Sgt Ronald Giles RAFVR 1337733

Ronald Giles was a twenty-year-old wireless operator from Somerset whose aircraft was shot down off the Dutch coast as the bomber stream was heading for a costly raid on Leipzig on the night of 20 February 1944.



He was part of the crew of Lancaster JB710 LE-W of 630 Squadron which was one of several which were lost before reaching the Dutch coast as night-fighters assembled to attack some 823 bombers heading for the attack on aircraft factories in Leipzig. Some seventy-eight Bomber Command aircraft were lost during the raid, two of them from 630 Squadron.

JB710 had taken off from East Kirkby, one of seventeen from the squadron, at 00:26 and is believed to have been shot down off a few miles off the island of Ameland a little over an hour later, JB710's being the second victim of Oblt Heinz Vinke's Bf110 in just 45 minutes. No bodies were ever recovered.

Ronald's home was in the village of Highbridge on the Somerset Levels, and he was the son of William and Alice Giles.

The others who died were the pilot Flt Lt Clifford Armour, flight engineer Sgt John Byars, navigator FO Harold Kidd, bomb-aimer FO John Cross, mid-upper gunner Sgt Leslie Young and rear gunner Sgt George Griffiths. All are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

Ronald's name can be found on panel 039.

Sources: 630 Squadron Association.