

P/O Eric Joseph Frank McCarthy
190699 RAF

Twenty-five-year-old Eric Newby was a Lancaster wireless operator who was killed by gunfire from a night-fighter on his fourth operation during Bomber Command's final attack to halt traffic on the Mittelland canal in northern Germany.



His No. 49 Squadron Lancaster, NG327 EA-K, was attacked by a Ju88 fighter during the raid on the night of 21 February 1945. Eric and the mid-upper gunner were both killed instantaneously while the flight engineer and bomb-aimer both managed to successfully bale out. However, the latter was killed in a 'friendly fire' incident involving RAF aircraft days before the war ended.

Eric and his crew had taken off from Fulbeck at 1717 hours, part of a relatively small 5 Group force of 165 Lancasters and nine Mosquitoes. Nine Lancasters were lost, including two from 49 Squadron. Eric is buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery (Coll. grave 19. C. 13-17).

The others who died were the pilot F/O Edward Smith RNZAF, navigator Flt. Sgt. Joe Newby, bomb-aimer F/O Edwin Hook (killed 4 April), 19-year-old mid-upper gunner Sgt. Colin Burridge and rear gunner P/O Robert Simpson RCAF.

His name can be found on panel 070.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command War Diaries by Martin Middlebrook.