

WO Bertram Bernard Noble 562236 RAF



The Swiss graves of the crew members of LL750

Bert Noble was the pilot of an ABC-equipped Lancaster of 101 Squadron at RAF Ludford Magna. He and his crew had joined the squadron early in 1944 and by late April had completed seven operations. Their eighth was to Friedrichshafen, close to the German-Swiss border, a centre for tank production for the German army. The raid by 322 Lancasters was deemed to be an 'outstanding success' although 18 of the 322 Lancasters taking part were shot down, the majority after they had bombed. Two of those were from 101.

WO Noble, who had already been mentioned in dispatches twice, headed a crew of eight – ABC Lancasters carried a 'special operator' to jam Luftwaffe fighter frequencies. On 27 April 1944 they took off from Ludford at 2140 hours, in Lancaster LL750 SR-P, for the long trip south. At 0219 hours on 28 April 1944, after successfully bombing, the aircraft was intercepted at around 20,000 feet by a fighter flown by Hptm Gerhard Friedrich and it exploded.

Two of the crew members were blown clear but the other six died when the Lancaster crashed in thick snow at Alp Grappelen, across the Swiss border. All six are buried in St Martin's Churchyard in Vevey, close to Lake Geneva. The two survivors, flight engineer Sgt. R K Bridges and bomb-aimer F/O H S Prowse RCAF, were briefly interned by the Swiss.

Bert Noble was 32 and the son of Albert and Amy Noble and he was married to Dorothy. His home was in Awbridge, Hampshire.

Killed with him were the navigator F/O J R Burton, wireless operator Sgt. W G Anderson, mid-upper gunner P/O O J Albrecht RCAF, special operator Sgt. M G Smith and rear gunner Sgt. F H Bathmaker.

Bertram's name can be found on panel 079

Photographic source: Aircrew Remembered