

F/O Wilfred Pearce 52032 RAFVR

Wilfred Pearce was one of six men killed when his aircraft was shot down in March 1944.

He was a bomb-aimer in Lancaster ND672 (EA-U), of 49 Squadron, which was intercepted during a raid on Frankfurt on the night of 22 March, a raid that cost Bomber Command 33 of the 816 bombers sent to Frankfurt.

His was one of 19 Lancasters to take off from RAF Fiskerton and it was attacked over the Westfalen region in western Germany, crashing near the small town of Beckum, near Hamm. The only survivor was mid-upper gunner Sgt. Peter Valesco, a Chilean national who had previously lived in California.



Wilfred's crew were on their fourth operation together but at least three of the crew had previously flown together, surviving a crash-landing on a Lincolnshire beach following a raid on Berlin in November 1943.

He came from the Lancashire town of Denton, near Manchester, where he lived with his new wife, Irene. He was the 25-year-old son of Frederick and Edith Pearce.

The others who died were the pilot F/O Don Turner, 19-year-old flight engineer Sgt. Eric Lee, navigator Flt. Sgt. Stanley Upton, wireless operator Sgt. Linton Nightingale and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Jack Bennett RCAF. All were buried locally and later reinterred in the Reichswald Forest War Cemetery.

His name can be found on panel 083.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/Bomber Command Losses 1944 by Bill Chorley.