

Sgt. Leonard Ernest Walford
1249971 RAFVR

Len Walford was a wireless operator killed on his first operation, the notorious Nuremburg raid on the night of 30/31 March 1944.



He and his crew took off from RAF Fiskerton at 2210 hours on board Lancaster JB314 EA-Q, part of a force of 795 Lancasters and Halifaxes heading for southern Germany. The expected cloud coverage did not materialise, with the bombers left in bright moonlight, and they were attacked almost constantly by night-fighters eventually losing 95 aircraft, the heaviest loss of the entire war.

Len's aircraft was shot down on the outbound leg, crashing near the village of Quotshausen, west of Marburg. Two members of the crew escaped with severe burns, one dying the following day. This was the 36th of the 95 to be shot down.

Len was the 23-year-old son of Leonard and Maud Walford, of Shepherds Bush in London. The others who died were the pilot P/O Leslie Kellow, flight engineer Sgt. Sydney Silver, navigator Sgt. David Rowcliffe, bomb-aimer Sgt. Terence Baker and rear gunner P/O Jim Latham RCAF. All are buried in Hanover War Cemetery. The survivor, mid-upper gunner Sgt. A J McAvoy, spent much of the rest of the war in hospital.

His name can be found on panel 110.

Sources: 49 Squadron Association/The Nuremburg Raid by Martin Middlebrook.