

# William Warburton

Sgt Flight Engineer RAF

Written by Michael Warburton; Nephew of Flight Engineer William Warburton

William Warburton volunteered for duty as Flight Engineer with 61 Squadron on Lancaster bombers in WW2.

He was stationed at RAF Skellingthorpe in Lincolnshire and later moved to RAF Coningsby on January 12<sup>th</sup> 1944.

His last operation was to Berlin on 26<sup>th</sup> / 27<sup>th</sup> January 1944. Bill and his crew never returned.

Records and research show that William's aircraft DV400 QR-Y was returning home and flying in cloud cover.

Another Lancaster Bomber DV231 SR-A from 101 Squadron was also returning in the same area above cloud. This aircraft was hit by Flak and then finished off by a German Night Fighter flown by Heinz Misch in a JU88 Night Fighter from 9/NJG2 Sqdn. The Lancaster aircraft went into the cloud and collided with DV400 Lancaster aircraft, resulting in a huge explosion; the wreckage from both bombers plunged to the ground.

One crew member from DV231 survived by getting out of the aircraft before it hit William's Bomber. The crew member was A H Smallman; he became a prisoner of war and was repatriated on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1945.

A total of 35 aircraft were lost on this raid alone.

The crew from both aircraft are buried in Hanover War Graves Cemetery, Germany.

William Warburton's Crew from DV400:

Pilot - Bob West

Sgt William Warburton - Flt Engineer

F/Sgt Phil Brander - Air Gunner

P/O Frank Langley - Air Gunner

E/O Alan Beetch - Navigator

P/O Lloyd Cuming - Bomb Aimer

Sgt Bernard Clark - Wireless operator