



Frank Charles Montgomery

J28240

Bombardier-Pilot Officer

Personal matters:

- Frank was the son of Robert Ivan and Edith L. Montgomery (née Turl). He had two sisters; two brothers and another sister had died at birth. His father passed away on October 10, 1982, and his mother on August 20, 1967.
- He had an athletic build, blue eyes, and brown hair. His records list two different sets of measurements: 1.69 m and 63 kg, and 1.75 m and 69 kg.
- He played football, basketball, baseball, and hockey.
- Wikipedia notes that Frank was unmarried but had a brief relationship in England with a young English woman named Vivienne Ivy Dean, resulting in the birth of a daughter, Deirdre Mary. She would never know her father, as she was born on February 27, 1945.
- Frank aspired to become a navigator, but the role proved too demanding; he failed the training course and was subsequently trained as an air bomber. His final report describes him as having a "good bearing" and being "young, smart, and of above-average intelligence." He received his air bomber badge on July 9, 1943.
- His headstone bears the following inscription:

"While you, dear Frank

Rest and sleep

Your loving memory

We'll always keep"

Military affairs:

- Frank was assigned to No. 622 Squadron and flew as an air bomber in a Lancaster. The squadron's motto was "We wage war by night."
- On August 3, 1943, Frank embarked and crossed the Atlantic in a convoy. He disembarked in England on August 11. He may well have already been flying alongside pilot Alan Leslie Smit and navigator John Joseph Chigwidden at that time—the men with whom he would later form a bomber crew in No. 622 Squadron.
- On July 5, 1944, the home base (Mildenhall)—shared by No. 622 Squadron, among others—was honored by a visit from King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, and Princess Elizabeth. Not only were various photographs taken, but a report was also filmed for Pathé and Movietone newsreels. What makes this particularly interesting is that at least two crew members of the LL859 appear in the photos and footage. There are three different videos of the visit on YouTube; the one found at https://wikimiddenbrabant.nl/Montgomery,_Frank_Charles is the most interesting. At the 1:05 mark of that video, the LL859's navigator, Flight Sergeant John Joseph Chigwidden, can be seen talking to King George VI.
- The night of July 20–21, 1944, was one of the busiest nights for the Tilburg Air Raid Protection Service. That night, the Allies carried out attacks on the synthetic oil plants at Rheinpreußen (in Meerbeck-Homburg) and Bottrop-Welheim. The 138 Avro Lancaster bombers of No. 3 Group, Bomber Command, were targeting the facilities in Meerbeck. Frank's aircraft (LL859) came under fire from, among others, the night fighter piloted by Oberleutnant Dietrich Schmid. The plane crashed at Haansche Hoef, right on the border between Tilburg and Dongen. Along with Frank, the entire crew perished in the crash: John Joseph Chigwidden, Reginald Ivon Lewis, Edward Albert O'Connor, Alan Leslie Smith, Jack Spencer, and Francis Donald Brandom. Spencer was found on Dongen territory and was therefore buried in Dongen.

Sources :

- <https://wikimiddenbrabant.nl/Montgomery, Frank Charles>
- <https://losses.internationalbcc.co.uk/loss/219734/>
- <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/715876>
- <https://caspir.warplane.com/personnel/unit-search/p/600014213>
- <https://www.morethananame.ca/montgomery>
- [https://ww2rafproject.org.uk/people/Flying Officer Frank Charles Montgomery/](https://ww2rafproject.org.uk/people/Flying_Officer_Frank_Charles_Montgomery/)
- [https://ww2rafproject.org.uk/squadrons/No 622 Squadron/](https://ww2rafproject.org.uk/squadrons/No_622_Squadron/)
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Story compiled by CdG and HdG, Faces to Graves Bergen op Zoom.