

Crew and aircraft sheet

Date of compilation: 21/12/2013

Revised:

Aircraft: HP Halifax Mk III

Serial number: MZ286

Code: NP-X

Delivered to 158: 24/04/1944 as NP-Y 3 ops, 31/05/1944 as NP-X 21 ops.

Lost on: 18/07/1944

Number of ops: 24

Target: Caen

Crew

Posted in: 29/04/1944

Posted out: 18/07/1944 KIA.

Crew number of ops: 18

Pilot: F/O Henry Charles Monnier J/17208 RCAF KIA. Age 25. Buried in Harrogate (Stonefell) Cemetery; Section B, Row J, Grave 16.

2nd Pilot: N/A

Flight Engineer: Sgt Ronald Frank Burgess 649037 RAF KIA. Age 22. Buried in Alton Cemetery (Hampshire); Section H, Grave 215.

Navigator: F/S George Thomas Bishop 1394165 RAF VR KIA. Age 22. Buried in Hither Green Cemetery; Sec. G.G. Coll. Grave 328. Screen Wall. Panel 1.

Air Bomber: F/S James Edward David Fee 951326 RAF VR KIA. Age N/A. Buried in Bebington Cemetery (Cheshire); Sec. B. R.C. Grave 343.

Wireless Operator: Sgt Gordon Frederick Emery 1393444 RAF VR KIA. Age 22. Buried in Faversham Borough Cemetery; Section E, Grave 41.

Mid-Upper Gunner: Sgt Kenneth Harold Johnston 1807870 RAF VR KIA. Age 20. Buried in Liverpool (Anfield) Cemetery; Sec. 17. C. of E. Grave 1808.

Rear Gunner: Sgt Cambell McKay William Montgomery 1820975 RAF VR KIA. Age 20. Buried in Grangemouth (Grandsable) Cemetery (Stirlingshire); Sec. 13. Grave 677.

Details of loss

This crew was briefed for a daylight attack on Caen to assist the advance of the invasion forces breaking out of the beachhead at Normandy.

They took from Lissett airfield at 03:34 GMT+2 and crashed for unknown reasons approximately 03:42 GMT+2 in the sea off Bramston, S of Bridlington Bay. All aboard were killed in the crash.

The bodies of the crew were recovered and buried in their home towns except F/O Monnier, who was buried in Harrogate. The body of F/S Fee was found later in the day by an Air Sea Rescue launch. The body of F/Sgt. Montgomery was recovered on 20/7/44 from the wreckage of the aircraft.

A Court of Enquiry was held and determined that the pilot carried out his usual practice of holding his aircraft close to the ground after take-off and two minutes after becoming airborne struck the sea with its port wing first and broke up. The primary cause of the accident was considered to be the temporary loss of control of the aircraft by the pilot shortly after take-off as a result of his holding the aircraft at low altitude in peculiar conditions of air turbulence in the vicinity of the coast. These conditions of

air turbulence may have been contributed to, in some measure, by the slipstream of other aircraft which had taken off previously