

**P/O Claud Morley Houghton AFM 176435
RAFVR**



Claud Houghton was a decorated 29-year-old pilot from Suffolk who was killed along with five of his crew when their Lancaster was shot down by a night-fighter during a raid on a key French railway junction.

His aircraft, Lancaster PB121 LE-F of 630 Squadron, was one of six bombers lost during a highly-accurate attack in the raid on the rail junction at Étampes on the night of 9/10 June 1944. His was one of six Lancasters lost during the raid, part of Bomber Command's policy to disrupt communications in the period following the D-Day invasion.

Claud and his crew were on their fifth operation together when they took off from East Kirkby in Lincolnshire at 2148 hours. Their aircraft was later reported to have been attacked and burst into flames after cannon shells ignited fuel tanks; it crashed near the village of Omerville, north-west of Paris. The only survivor was the bomb-aimer F/O Douglas Percy.

Claud had been commissioned earlier in the year and the award of his Air Force Medal is dated at 8 June 1944, the day before his death. He came from Bury St Edmunds and was the son of Morley and Louisa Houghton.

The others who died were the flight engineer Sgt. Horace Ison, navigator Sgt. John Cameron, wireless operator Sgt. William Bott, mid-upper gunner P/O Russel Dennis RCAF and rear gunner P/O William Barr RCAF. All are buried in Omerville Community Cemetery.

His name can be found on panel 051.

Sources: 630 Squadron Association.