

Sgt. David Cooke Orme
1836099 RAFVR

David Cooke was the Welsh flight engineer in an otherwise all-Canadian 166 Squadron Lancaster crew lost in a daylight raid aimed at helping the advance of American ground forces in November 1944.

His Lancaster III, PB648 AS-B, was one of 25 provided by 166 for the attack on Düren during the afternoon of 16 November involving 485 aircraft from Nos. 1 and 5 Group. The raid utterly destroyed the town, which lay in the path of the US advance towards the Rhine. Only three aircraft were lost, all to flak, and David's was one of them, crashing close to the American lines in Belgium. There were no survivors.



David and his crew had left RAF Kirmington at 1235 hours on what would have been their seventh operation since joining the squadron on 16 October 1944.

David was 20 and came from the village of Penpedairheol in the Rhymney Valley, in Glamorgan. He was the son of Samuel and Budd Orme and is buried along with five of his fellow crew members in Rheinberg War Cemetery.

Those killed with David were the pilot F/O Ted Coles RCAF, navigator F/O Ken Farrow RCAF, bomb-aimer Flt. Sgt. Ralph Carroll RCAF, wireless operator Sgt. Ralph Schnauffer RCAF, mid-upper gunner Sgt. Neil Smith RCAF and rear gunner Flt. Sgt. Joe Leaman RCAF.

David's name can be found on IBCC panel 081.

Photographic source: 166 Squadron Association.