

P/O Charles Francis Hart J/3268 RCAF



Charles was born on 23 August 1911, the son of Charles Michael and Helen Hart, of Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada. He was married to Lorraine MacKimmie Hart, of Montreal. They married on 5 October 1940 and had one child, Charles, during their marriage. He was a partner of a stockbroker's firm prior to joining the war effort in June 1940, and had previously completed the OTC course, Air Wing, whilst at McGill University.

Charles was an observer with No. 7 Squadron, based at RAF Oakington. His service file states "A most efficient and competent air navigator. Strongly recommend as an instructor after operational experience."

Charles had been interned in Portugal on 16 May 1941, when his aircraft crashed three miles north of Pedro de Muel, Portugal, not returning to his squadron until 4 June 1941.

He and his crew took off from Oakington, in Short Stirling W7438 MG-A, at 0115 hours on 29 August 1941 on a night mission to attack Duisburg, Germany. Although they were last heard from at 0245 hours, the plane was reportedly coned by searchlights and hit by flak in the Ruhr area at around 0408 hours. It was witnessed burning in the air before exploding on impact as it crashed at Kaarst, WSW of Dusseldorf. All the crew were killed.

Charles is buried with the rest of the crew at Rheinberg War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany. Coll. Grave 6. C 1-7. His inscription reads "Beloved husband of Lorraine MacKimmie and father of Charles, Montreal. Canada". He was 30 years old.

The others who died with Charles were:

Pilot
2nd Pilot
Flight Engineer
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
Air Gunner

P/O John Ernest Chilvers
Sgt. John William Blakey
Sgt. Frank Cecil Child
Flt. Sgt. Alfred Penn
Sgt. Gordon Jeoffre Truscott
Sgt. Norman Richard Cowin

Charles is commemorated on Panel 178.

Picture courtesy of ancestry.co.uk