

Sgt Francis Alexander Jack Scott 421105 RNZAF

Francis was born on 22 February 1916 in Christchurch, New Zealand, the son of Alexander Anderson Scott and Margaret Grace Scott nee Mills.

Educated at West Christchurch District High School, Francis was employed as a regional representative for Beath & Co. Department Stores when, in April 1941, he volunteered for aircrew duties in the RNZAF.

Called up in February 1942, Francis completed his pilot training in New Zealand in September 1942 with the award of his Wings. In January 1943 Francis embarked for the UK.

Following advanced training at No 15 (Pilots) Advanced Flying Unit, RAF Greenham Common, Berkshire, 11 OTU RAF Westcott, Buckinghamshire where he converted to multi engine/multi crew ops and 1657 HCU RAF Stradishall, Suffolk for conversion to the Stirling, in October 1943 Francis was posted to 75(NZ) Sqn at RAF Mepal, Cambridgeshire.

At the end of March 1944 Francis converted to the Lancaster at No. 3 Lancaster Finishing School, RAF Feltwell, Norfolk before returning to the squadron.

On 27/28 May 1944 Bomber Command was tasked with a raid on the Rothe Erde Railway Yards, East of Aachen, Nordrhein-Westphalen, Germany. A combined force of 170 aircraft, including eighteen 75 (NZ) crews, were allocated to the op. Two crews failed to return.

At 00:45 on 28 May Francis and his crew departed RAF Mepal in Lancaster III ND802 (AA-D "The Flying Scotsman").

At 02:07 on 28 May Francis's aircraft was intercepted 25 miles NW of Eindhoven by Obstlt Gunther Radusch flying a Ju88 of Stab/NJG2 from Deelen Airfield. Fire broke out mid-fuselage, and in the port wing and port-inner engine. The aircraft began to break up in flight and Francis ordered the crew to bale out whilst he tried to hold the aircraft steady. Six of the crew were able to do so before a fuel explosion blew the Lancaster apart in mid-air.

The aircraft crashed in a forest near Gilze, 6 miles W of Tilsburg, North-Brabant, Netherlands, killing Francis and the Wireless Operator. One of those that baled out was killed on the descent, the remaining five were taken as POW. This was Francis's 27th op.

Also killed: FS Stephen Astley Cook RNZAF (AB); FS Ronald Edward Howson (WOp/AG)

Francis is buried in Gilze-en-Rijen Roman Catholic Churchyard, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands

Francis is commemorated on Wall Panel 238

Photo Source: www.aucklandmuseum.com

