

FS Thomas Frederick Trimmer 550766 RAF

Thomas was born in 1919 in Rugby, Warwickshire, the son of Herbert Thomas Trimmer and Dorothy Caroline Trimmer nee Gill.

Educated at Murray School, Rugby, in 1936 Thomas entered the RAF as a "Boy Entrant". Sent to France as part of the BEF where he was stationed for 9 months, Thomas was fortunate to return just before the fall of France.

Although 13 Squadron was an army support unit, it was co-opted to Bomber Command throughout the period for which the "Thousand Bomber" raids were taking place. The squadron mainly flew intruder raids to key German aerodromes in an effort to neutralise the German night-fighter effort. The Sqn arrived at RAF Wattisham at 19:00 on 25 May 1942 from RAF Detling. On 28 May, they were put on immediate readiness for "Intruder Operations".

The night of the 1/2 June 1942 was planned as the second "1000" bomber raids, this time the target was Essen. In a major effort to help the bomber force, 48 Blenheims of 2 Group and Army Co-Operation Command were sent out to intrude over German airfields in an effort to disrupt the Nachtjagd activities.

Thomas, operating as the WOp/AG, and the crew departed at 22:35 on 1 June 1942 in Blenheim IV Z6186 (E), tasked with an intruder operation against Venlo Aerodrome, Holland. This was one of 6 squadron aircraft despatched on this mission.

Whilst en-route, the aircraft was coned by the 11./III./Flak-Regiment 26 and hit by the 3./Reserve-Flak-Abteilung 646 south of Rheinberg, Nordrhein-Westfalen. The aircraft crashed close to a railway line which ran through a farm at Graft near Rheinberg. The Wehrmacht sealed off the crash site and the bodies of the crew were taken to the mortuary at Rheinberg Hospital from where they were handed over to the Wehrmacht for burial.

Three Blenheims were lost this night, this was the only one from 13 Sqn.

Also killed were: Flt Lt Douglas Grant Redman (Pilot); FS Peter Fini Pentland Enna (Observer)

Thomas is buried with his crew in a collective grave in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen Germany. His remains were transferred in July 1947 from his original burial place in Annaberg Cemetery, Kreis Wesel, Nordrhein-Westfalen Germany.

Thomas is commemorated on Wall Panel 255