



A Burial Service for

Pilot Officer C. F. J. Sprack DFM

Pilot Officer A. B. Smart DFM

Pilot Officer R. E. Moore DFM

Lancaster ED603

Thursday 9 October 2025 at 11:00 hours

Workum (Spoordyk) General Cemetery, The Netherlands

Lancaster ED603

Lancaster ED603 was part of 83 Squadron, Bomber Command.

On the night of 12/13 June 1943, the plane took off from RAF Wyton to take part in a bombing raid on Bochum in Germany. During this raid ED603 was hit by flak causing damage to the port wing.

As the damaged plane made its return journey from the raid it was intercepted and attacked by a German fighter plane, resulting in a fire in the fuselage. This fire proved catastrophic and the plane crashed into the IJsselmeer in The Netherlands, with the loss of all seven crew on board.

The bodies of four crew members – the Pilot Eric Tilbury, the Navigator Harold Howsam, the Bomb Aimer Arthur Fletcher and the Rear Gunner Gordon Sugar – were recovered from the lake shore and buried at cemeteries in Staveren, Workum and Hindeloopen, whilst the remaining three men were listed as Missing in Action, and later commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

In 2023 the remains of the Mid/Upper Gunner Charles Sprack, Flight Engineer Arthur Smart and Wireless Operator Raymond Moore were recovered from the wreckage of the plane by a team funded by the Dutch authorities.

Pilot Officer Charles Frederick John Sprack DFM
23 September 1919 – 13 June 1943



Pilot Officer Charles Frederick John Sprack DFM was born in Brading on the Isle of Wight to parents Harry Sprack and Dora (nee Reed). His occupation before enlistment was a Metal Worker and he was employed at a ship builders. He enlisted in June 1939 and was described as 5ft 4 inches tall with brown hair and eyes. Charles was 23 years old when he was killed.

Pilot Officer Arthur Bertram Smart DFM
10 January 1923 – 13 June 1943



Pilot Officer Arthur Bertram Smart DFM was born in Darjiling, West Bengal to parents Carlton Wernicke Smart and Eliza Maud (nee Mallins).

His occupation before enlistment was a Fitter and he was employed by Evans & Sons in Portsmouth. He enlisted in July 1938 and was described as 5ft 8 inches tall with brown hair and hazel eyes. He married Doreen Wilmshurst in 1942. Charles was 29 years old when he was killed.

Pilot Officer Raymond Edward Moore DFM
1922 – 13 June 1943



Pictured with his parents at Buckingham Palace after being awarded his DFM by HM King

Pilot Officer Raymond Edward Moore DFM was born in Camberwell, London to parents Edward 'Ted' Smart and Ethel Maude (nee Watts).

He enlisted in 1938 when only 16 years old and was described as 5ft 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches tall with light brown hair and grey eyes. He married Elizabeth Watson and they had a son called Graham in 1942. Raymond was 21 years old when he was killed.

Order of Service

conducted by
The Reverend Dr (Wing Commander) Philip Wilson
Staff Chaplain to the Chaplain-in-Chief

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with you all.

We are gathered today in this burial place, to give thanks for the lives of Charles Frederick John Sprack, Arthur Bertram Smart and Raymond Edward Moore, and to commit their earthly remains to be buried near where their lives were lost eighty-two years' ago, in the service of King and country; and to commend them and one another to the loving purposes of Almighty God.

Bidding Prayer

If it is your tradition, I invite you to pray with me and to respond in the section in bold.

Merciful Father,
hear our prayers and comfort us;
renew our trust in your Son
whom you raised from the dead;
strengthen our faith
that all who have died in the love of Christ
will share in His resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Reading:

Lie in the Dark and Listen (excerpt) - Noel Coward

Read by Shelley Collard, Great Niece of Pilot Officer Raymond Moore

Lie in the dark and listen.
It's clear tonight so they're flying high,
Hundreds of them, thousands perhaps,
Riding the icy, moonlit sky.
Men, machinery, bombs and maps,
Altimeters, guns and charts,
Coffee, sandwiches, fleece-lined boots,
Bones and muscles and minds and hearts,
English saplings with English roots
Deep in the earth they've left below.
Lie in the dark and let them go;
Lie in the dark and listen.
There's one debt you'll forever owe.
Lie in the dark and listen.

Scripture Reading:
John 15:9-17

Read by Ms. Petra van den Akker, Alderman for Cultural Heritage.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.

Address

The Reverend Philip Wilson

Reading:

Night Bombers by Owen Chave

Read by Mr Nykle Dijkstra,
Missing Airmen Memorial Foundation.

Eastward they climb, black shapes against the grey
Of falling dusk, gone with the nodding day
From English fields,
Not theirs the sudden glow
Of triumph that their fighter-brothers know;
Only to fly through cloud, through storm, through
Night unerring, and to keep their purpose bright,
Nor turn until, their dreadful duty done,
Westward they climb to race the awakened sun.

The Committal - Padre

Our days are like the grass;
We flourish like a flower of the field
When the wind goes over it; it is gone
And its place will know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures
For ever and ever.

Almighty God, we have entrusted these men to your eternal keeping.
We now commit their earthly remains to the ground, earth to earth,
ashes to ashes, dust to dust in the sure and certain hope of the
resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Now, Lord, let your servants go in peace:
your word has been fulfilled.
My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared
In the sight of every people:
A light to reveal you to the nations
And the glory of your people Israel.

The Airman's Prayer

Pilot divine, and Lord of all on high
Thine are the starry squadrons of the sky!
Lead us whose wings for freedoms sake now soar,
Into our hearts Thy faith and courage pour
Oh hear our prayer.

Set Thou our course whose trust is laid in Thee!
Oh Thou who chartest all eternity!
Through cloud and sunshine, through darkest night
Guide Thou our wings who battle for the right
Oh hear our prayer.

Father and friend, in whose almighty name
We dedicate our lives to freedom's flame,
Bless now our wings as on through space we wend.
Bless us who to Thy care our souls commend
Oh hear our prayer.

Amen.

The Exhortation

Read by Lance Corporal Jared Coombs
King's Colour Squadron, Royal Air Force

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.
We will remember them.

The Last Post

Played by Air Specialist (Class 1) Holly Boddice-Jones,
The Central Band of the Royal Air Force

Silence

Reveille

Kohima Epitaph

Read by Air Specialist (Class 1) Craig Anderson
King's Colour Squadron, Royal Air Force

When you go home tell them of us and say:
'For your tomorrow, we gave our today.'

Laying of Wreaths

Collect of The Royal Air Force

Read by Flight Sergeant Shawn Newton,
King's Colour Squadron, Royal Air Force

Almighty God, who makest the clouds Thy chariots and walkest upon the wings of the storm, look in mercy we beseech thee upon the Royal Air Force.

Make us a tower of strength to our King and to our country. Help us to do our duty with prudence and with fearlessness, confident that in life or in death the eternal God is our refuge and strength.

Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Trusting in the compassion of God, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

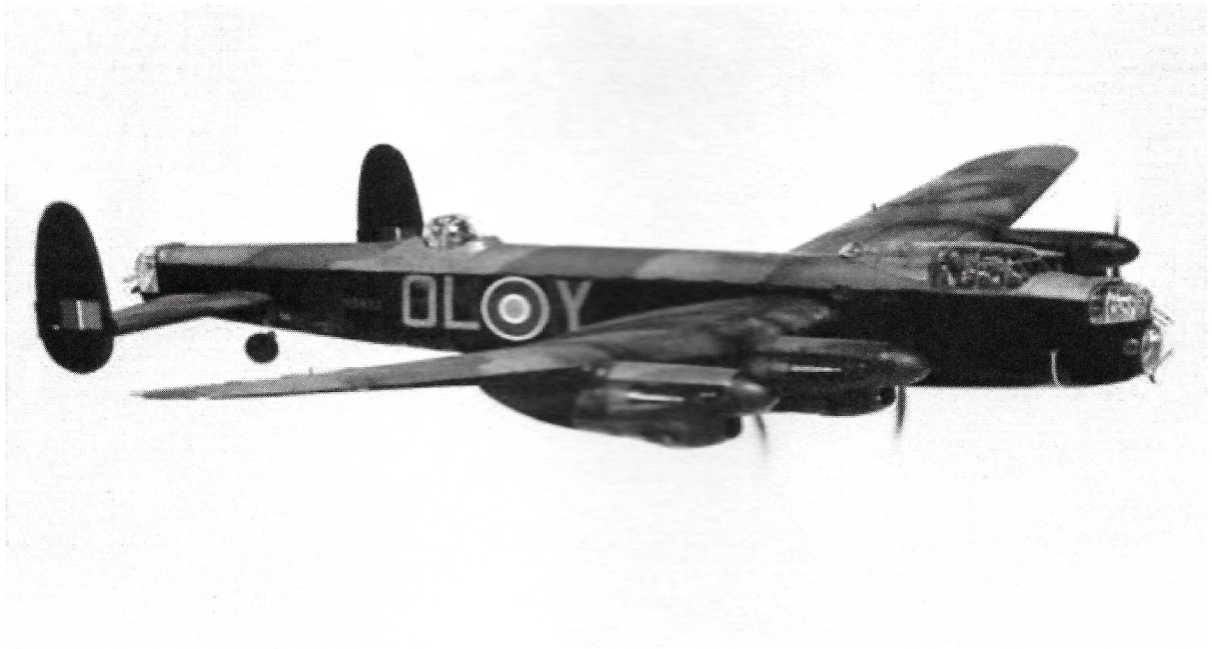
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Blessing

Support us, O Lord, all the days of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening falls, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, Lord, in Your mercy grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last; through Christ our Lord.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, rest upon you and remain with you and all those you love and for whom you pray, this day and always.

Amen.





The Ministry of Defence, through the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, is responsible for the research, identification and burial of all British casualties worldwide.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for the graves, memorials, records and memory of the 1.7 million Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two World Wars.

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