



Dambuster Who Cracked the Dam: The story of Melvin 'Dinghy' Young

Arthur G. Thorning



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On September 25, 1939 Melvin Young reported to No. 1 Initial Training Unit. He was selected as a bomber pilot and promoted to Flying Officer. Having undertaken a Lancaster conversion course Melvin and his new crew were posted to 57 Squadron at Scampton – soon to become 617 Squadron. On 15 May the Order for Operation Chastise was issued - the raid to be flown the next night, 16/17 May. The plan for the operation was that three waves of aircraft would be employed. The first wave of nine aircraft, led by Gibson, would first attack the Mohne Dam, then the Eder followed by other targets as directed by wireless from 5 Group HQ if any weapons were still available. This wave would fly in three sections of three aircraft about ten minutes apart led by Guy Gibson, Melvin Young and Henry Maudslay. At 00.43 Melvin and his crew made their attempt on the Mohne dam. Gibson recorded that Young's weapon made 'three good bounces and contact'. Once the dam had been breached Gibson with Melvin as his deputy led the three remaining armed aircraft towards the Eder Dam. On the return trip Melvin Young and his crew fell victim to enemy guns. At 02.58 gunners at Castricum-an-Zee reported shooting down an aircraft and several batteries also reported firing at it. A.J.-A crashed into the sea. Over the North Sea, Guy Gibson called Melvin on the radio...there was no reply.



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Susan Roundy:

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