

2020

Unknown Spitfire crash Huijbergen

Joop Hendrix / Marnix Vinke



Planehunters Recovery Team
12/17/2020



Introduction

In the spring of 2020 Marnix Vinke approached Joop Hendrix, a member of Planehunters Recovery Team. Marnix found parts from a crashed WW2 airplane in the woods south of Huijbergen Holland.

A researcher approached Marnix and claimed it to be the crashsite from Flight Lieutenant Malcolmson, who crash landed at a unknown position near Huijbergen february 8, 1945. Malcolmson flew a Spitfire Mark (Mk) XIV. Until now the exact crash landing site is not known. Planehunter members Joop Hendrix and Thijs Hellings found it to be a premature conclusion.

Dutch Airwar Studygroup 1939-1945						Loss Chart on: T5216			
Day or Night of operation			Operation			Target			
8 Feb 45			Armed Recce			Kleve			
Factory	Aircraft	Mk	Serial/Wnr.	Call Sign	Unit	Air Force	TO/t	Airfield	
Supermarine	Spitfire	XIV	RM805	OI-	2 Sqdn	RAF	0839	Gilze Rijen (B.77)	
Time	Cause of the Crash		Crash Location			Damage	Province		
1010	Weather conditions		Crash landed near Huijbergen				Noord-Brabant		
Source			Mag / Page			Additional sources			
Verliesregister 1939-1945 SGLO			131			Archive H. Welting for airfield, TO/t, cause and crew data			
Function	Mil Rank	Ini	Name	Hon	Mil reg	Air Force	Cemetery	Grave	Remark
Pilot	F/Lt	G.K.	Malcolmson		414315	RNzAF	Bergen op zoom RCAF	6 F 1	
Data on those who were killed from:						www.CWGC.org www.Volksbund.de www.abmc.gov		Design SGLO(V.1000104)	
						© Dutch Airwar Studygroup 1939-1945 / Studiegroep Lucht oorlog 1939-1945		Last update April 2020	

The investigation on the actual crashsite done by Marnix took several months. Over 10.000 square feet of woods had to be searched for small parts. Pictures of the parts were sent to Joop and Thijs for determination. On 2 occasions Joop joined Marnix in the search. **The aim was to find out what subtype Spitfire crashed and possibly proof it to be the Mk.XIV from Malcolmson.**



First an explanation of part numbers from Spitfires.

Parts are stamped with 300 numbers. An example of these numbers seen below

361	Spitfire	Merlin 61 (IX)	M11874 prototype & production
362	Spitfire PR X	Merlin 266 (XVI)	M11191 prototype & production
363	Spitfire Trop	Griffon 11B	Design, May 1942
364	Spitfire Trop	Griffon 61	Design, May 1942
365	Spitfire PR XI	Merlin 61	Production
366	Spitfire XII	Griffon III	DP845 & production
367	Spitfire PR XIII	Merlin 32	Production
368	Spitfire VIII	Merlin 61	Heston project. Malinowski wing
369	Spitfire XIV	Griffon 61/65/83	J1316 to 21 F VIII converted
370	Spitfire PR XI Trop	Merlin 61	Design Oct 1943
371	Spitfireful	Griffon 61	NN660 prototype
372	Spitfire 23	Griffon 61	K1204 semi-laminar wing
373	Spitfire XIV	Griffon 85	DP851 prototype & production

There are about 70 subtypes from the original **Mk.I Spitfire. The Mk. I parts itself were numbered 300.** From each new subtype Spitfire only the changed parts carried the new sub type number. All other parts kept the original number 300. Some examples of found numbers at the crashsite.



A 300 number from a Spitfire Mk.I, the number 36 means it is from electrical equipment.

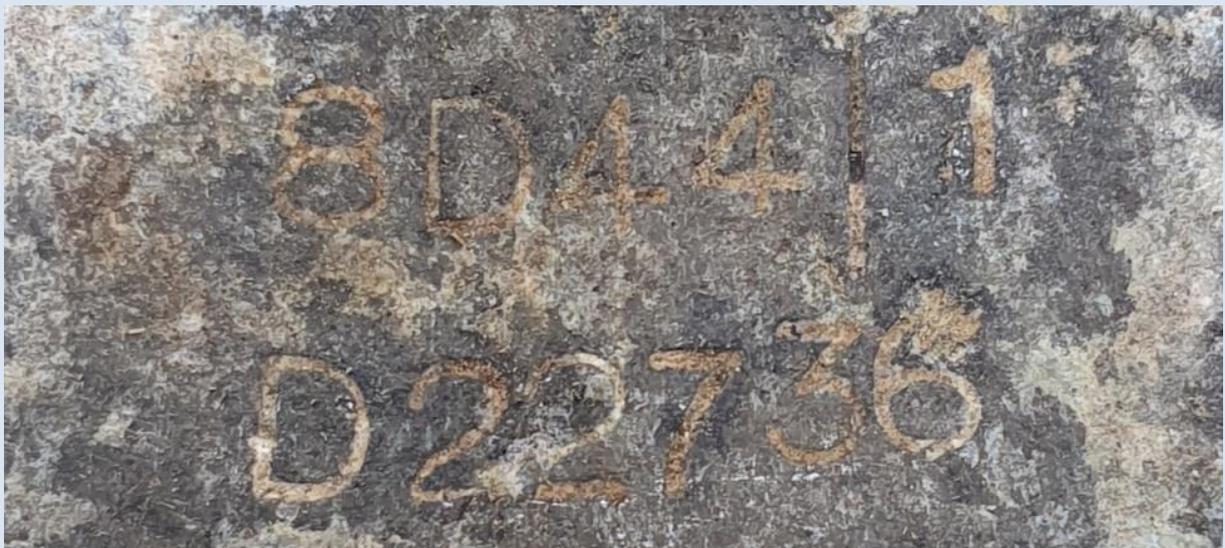


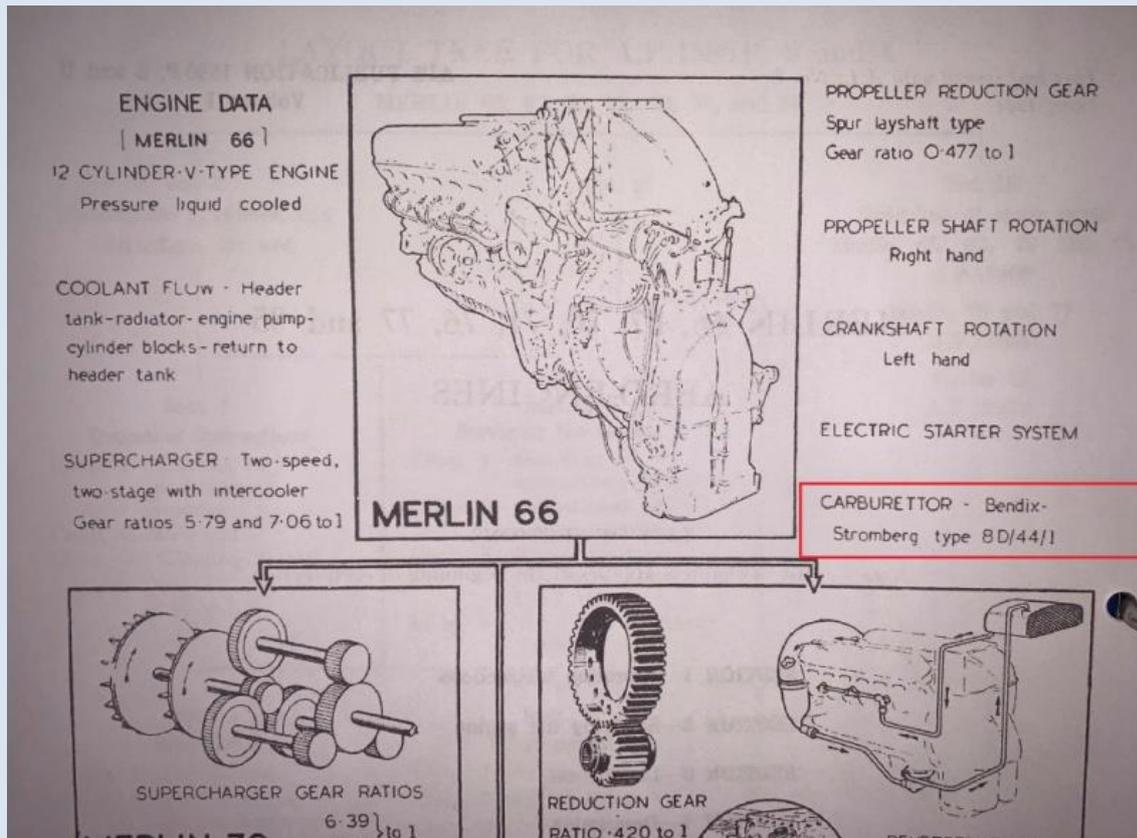
349 refers to a Mk.VC and 08 to a fuselage part

The highest number found is 361, a Mk.IX or Mk.XVI number



An important find was a part of the elbow intake (D22736) of the carburetor : **This carburetor (8D44/1) was used on the Mk.IX Spitfire with a Merlin 66 engine and on the Mk.XVI with the Packard build Merlin 266.**





From the numberbook Merlin 66 : confirming the carbarator type used.

CARBURETTOR
(Sec. 4290)
ROLLS-ROYCE BENDIX TYPE 8D.44/1 **8D**

EF. No.	PART No.						DESCRIPTION	No. OFF	MATL. SPEC.
		1	2	3	4	5			
0001	-						TOP HALF ASSEMBLY	1	-
	D 25170						ELBOW, INTAKE ASSEMBLY	1	-
	D 22736						† Elbow, intake	1	Alum
	E 38082						Insert, air pipe atomizer	1	P.B.
	KB 6109						Insert, distance piece setscrew	1	M.S.
	KB 252						Stud, 2 B.A. x .875" long, fuel distributor	3	N.S.
	KB 254						Stud, 2 B.A. x 1.075" long, accelerator pump adaptor to intake elbow	8	N.S.
	KB 299						Stud, 2 B.A. x .725" long, atomizer air pipe clip	1	N.S.
							M.R.C. control	2	
	KB 354						Stud, .250" x 1.400" long, automatic boost control to intake elbow	2	N.S.
							supercharger to intake elbow	10	
	KB 355						Stud, .250" x 1.500" long, automatic boost control to intake elbow	2	N.S.

Several other D-numbers were found coming from the Merlin 66 engine. The conclusion is, that the crashed aircraft is a Mk. IX or XVI. The Mk. XIV had a Rolls Royce Griffon 65 engine and carried the 9T/40/1 triple entry carburetor.

LEADING PARTICULARS	
Type	Pressure liquid-cooled, in-line 60 deg. V.
No. of cylinders	12, arranged in two monobloc banks of six with detachable heads.
Bore and stroke	6.0in. X 6.6in.
Unit capacity	186.6 cu. in.
Total swept volume	2,239 cu. in. (36.7 litres).
Reduction gear	Direct spur gear—Ratio : 0.5102 : 1.
Rotation	Left-hand tractor.
Airscrew shaft size	No. 5 S.B.A.C. Standard.
Valve type	Poppet—exhaust valves sodium cooled.
No. of valves/cylinder	Four, quadrantly disposed.
Supercharger	Centrifugal two-speed two-stage with inter-cooler.
Carburettor	Rolls-Royce Bendix-Stromberg pressure injection type 9T/40/1 triple-entry up-draught.
Magneto	B.I.H. C.S.H. 12-125/3 duplex type with integral distributors.
Plug positions	Two/cyl. diametrically opposite and radially disposed one each to inlet and exhaust sides.
Firing order	(P = port ; S = starboard) 1S, 4P, 3S, 2P, 5S, 1P, 6S, 3P, 4S, 5P,

The aircrafts fuel indicator front face was found and was used on Mk. I, V, IX or XVI. Another proof the crashed aircraft is not the Mk.XIV from Malcolmson.



Find



Example 37 gallon fuel gauge



Example Mk.IX



Example Mk.XIV fuel gauge

Found ammunition was 20mm Hispano and 7.9mm. The year stamped on them was 1944, proving it to be a 1944 or 1945 crash. All 3 types Spitfire researched could carry this ammunition.

port wing. The first Spitfire XIVs emerged with the 'C' Type or 'universal' wing but this was soon changed to the 'E' wing with two 20 mm Hispano cannon and two 0.5 in Browning machine-guns.



Other important finds were:



A parachute buckle at the crash site. That is proof that the pilot was not able to exit the aircraft and **died on impact of the aircraft.**



Impact point still visible

Several parts carried a factory stamp, from the Vickers Armstrong factory at Castle Bromwich (VACB).



Only 1 inspection stamp found, was from another factory. It is a stamp from the Vickers South Marston factory and reads SMAF. This repair facility fixed damaged Spitfires.



The conclusion: the aircraft was built at Castle Bromwich. It had been damaged and repaired at/or with parts from South Marston at some point before it crashed.

The Mk.XIV (RM805) from Malcolmsom was a Supermarine build Spitfire, and carried the 6.S stamp as a factory inspection stamp. This stamp was not found.



	RK883	RK926	44	B981687/39	CB
096	RM615	RM656	42	Air/1877	S
	RM670	RM713	44	Air/1877	S
	RM726	RM770	45	Air/1877	S
	RM783	RM825	43	Air/1877	S
	RM839	RM887	49	Air/1877	S
097	RM901	RM943	43	Air/1877	S
	RM957	RM999	43	Air/1877	S
	RN113	RN160	48	Air/1877	S
	RN173	RN221	49	Air/1877	S
	RR181	RR213	33	B981687/39	CB
098	RR226	RR265	40	B981687/39	CB
	RT646	RT646	1	Air/2329	S

(www.allspitfires.org) The order for building the RM805 at the Supermarine factory (S)

The condition of the found parts indicates a high speed impact with a medium steep angle. Parts were found up to 100 plus yards from the impact point.



Some more outspoken finds:



Part main landing gear fairing



Emergency blowdown bottle landing gear (determination Thijs Hellings)





Upper left part of the instrument panel

Overall conclusion:

*The found parts are from a late war high speed crash, which the pilot did not survive. The found Merlin carburetor number is from a Merlin 66 or 266, that was only fitted to the Spitfire Mk.IX and Mk.XVI. Also the found fuel gauge does not match with a Mk.XIV. The inspector stamps proves the aircraft was built at the Vickers Armstrong factory in Castle Bromwich. Ft. Malcolmson flew with the Spitfire Mk.XIV registration RM 805 build by the Supermarine factory. **The crashsite is not from Lt.Malcolmson.***

Documents review

The Operational Record Book from no.2 Squadron shows the coordinates of Malcolmson's crash position.

DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCES
				Up	Down		
8.2.45.	R.M.703. R.M.807.	F/L A. BRAYONSKI. F/L G.P. THORNTON.	TAC/R	07.58	08.17	AREA ARNHEM-BORGOLO-BOGHOLT-KRANENBURG. E8375 10-15 gun flashes at 08.10 hrs. B1 ARNHEM-EDDORICH N.M.S. A0372 1 Staff Car. N.W. 2.H.D.T.-S.E. E9863 3.M.T.-S. E8882-3 possible M/De N. Area seemed very inactive in general. Flak E8563 meagre inaccurate medium. Slight flooding on S. bank R.RHINE from MILLDGEN-NIUMGEN.	35/8/2
	R.M.795. R.M.805.	F/L R.S.W. KEMP. F/L G.K. MALCOLMSON.	ARTY/R	08.39	10.15	AREA REICHSWALD FOREST. No shoots carried out. Area N. searched uneventfully. Communications excellent. Area E8465 possible postern bridge over RHINE. Area O searched uneventfully. Area M searched. Very heavy friendly shelling seen. GROSSEHN E825748 undamaged with tall church spire as possible O.P. ZEVENAAR E858713 ablaze. 1 loco with 15 empty flats in station. Flak MILLDGEN meagre inaccurate medium. No e/a. No. 2 crashed on making forced landing at HUMBESCHEN (M.R. D.680193) whilst forced landing through lack of petrol and was killed.	35/8/4
	R.M.887. R.M.892.	F/L P.M. GREEN. F/L T.S. RAYNER.	ARTY/R	09.27	10.40	AREA REICHSWALD FOREST. Communications excellent. Area searched for 50 minutes but NIL suitable targets seen due weather. No flak or e/a.	35/8/6
	R.M.1254 R.M.921.	S/L C.E. MATLAND, D.F.C. F/L W.K. DODGSON.	ARTY/R	10.08	11.16	AREA REICHSWALD FOREST. Communications average. N.M.S. in area due to cloud. No flak. Possible M.E.168 seen at E8569.	35/8/8
	R.M.872.	F/L D.A. GREVILLE-HUGHATE, DFC.	TAC/R	10.30	11.10	AREA LEEUWEN-HILVERSUM-HARDERWIK-N.APELDOORN-ARNHEM. Task abandoned due cloud. No flak.	35/8/9

Flats in station. Flak MILLDGEN meagre inaccurate medium. No e/a. No. 2 crashed on making forced landing at HUMBESCHEN (M.R. D.680193) whilst forced landing through lack of petrol and was killed.

(National Archives London)

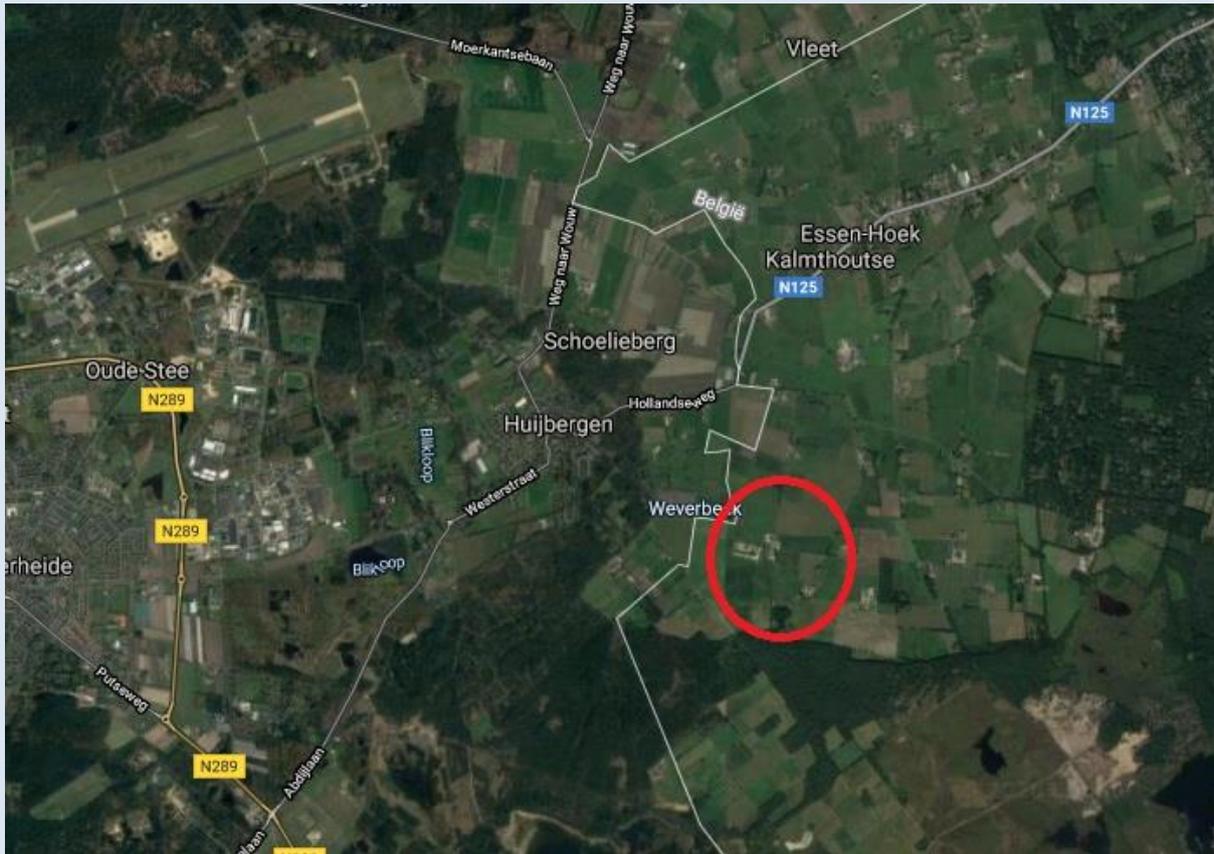
The coordinate's position (D.680193) is about 1,5 miles from the crashsite of Marnix finds. From the accident-report it seems he struck the ground with a wing trying to land in a field. **This information counterdicts with the crashsite in the woods.**

"Flight Lieutenant Malcolmson was returning from an operational sortie at approximately 10 a.m. on the 8th February, 1945, when the aircraft crashed in a field approximately 5 kilometres South-east of the aerodrome. Cloud base at the time was approximately 1,000 ft., with visibility of 2,000 yds. It seems that the pilot knew that his petrol was running low and decided to make down through the cloud to find the aerodrome and below cloud he found visibility bad and evidently decided to make a forced landing. By the shape of the point of impact, it would appear that the pilot did a turn to starboard at the last moment, struck a field with his starboard wing and slewed the machine into the ground".

(Marnix Vinke)

Archeological reseach

Next the ORB's position was searched with metal detectors. The position is just over the border in Belgium.



(Google)

Crash landings normally offer less parts to be found when compared to a normal crash. Local people living in the neighbourhood did not have any recollection of a crash. The original inhabitants, that lived there were deceased.

At the location just a few small aircraft parts without numbers were found. The finds combined with the crash landing position from the documents give it a **high probability that it is the emergency landing site from Lt.Malcolmson's Spitfire.**





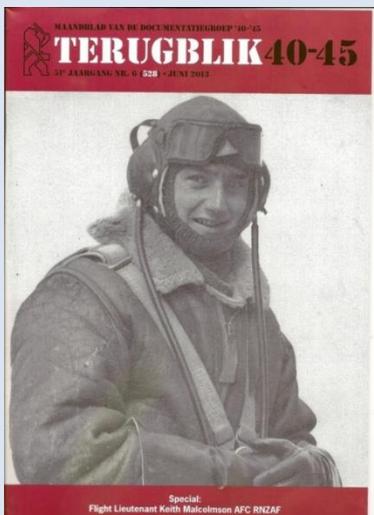
The ORB position



Actual aerial picture from March 1945



Marnix and Marco who helped out



Flt.Lt Malcolmson

Who crashed in Huijbergen?

WW2 crashfiles from Dutch Airwar Studygroup came up a few candidates. After checking against the facts only 1 remained. Marnix found a candidate on a Belgium website for the crashsite in the woods south of Huijbergen. Both Spitfires crashed somewhere in the neighbourhood of the unknown crashsite. **The exact positions for both aircraft are not known.**

1) Lt. Koes who crashed February 3, 1945.

Dutch Airwar Studygroup 1939-1945							Loss Chart on: T5189				
Day or Night of operation		Operation				Target	Nickname				
3 Feb 45		Test flight				-					
Factory	Aircraft	Mk	Serial/Wnr.	Call Sign	Unit	Air Force	TO/t	Airfield			
Supermarine	Spitfire	LF.XVI	RK865	3W-	322 Sqdn	RAF		Woensdrecht (B.79)			
Time	Cause of the Crash		Crash Location			Damage	Province				
	A/c desintegrated in the air		Crashed near Woensdrecht				Noord-Brabant				
Source			Mag / Page		Additional sources						
Verliesregister 1939-1945 SGLO			131		ORB 322 Sqdn for cause						
Function	Mil Rank	Ini	Name	Hon	Mil reg	Air Force	Cemetery	Grave	Remark		
Pilot	Res.1e Lt.VI.	J.G.C.	Koes		145139	RAF	Bergen op Zoom RCAF	6 A 5			
Data on those who were killed from:						www.CWGC.org www.Volksbund.de www.abmc.gov		Design SGLO(V.1000104)			
						© Dutch Airwar Studygroup 1939-1945 / Studiegroep Luchtoorlog 1939-1945		Last update October 2020			

The aircraft is a Mk.XVI and normally it carried 20mm Hispano and Browning 12.7mm (American armament) . It was unknown what the aircraft carried for armament so we decided to investigate Koes as a possible candidate. Below describes the possibility some of the MKXVI's were fitted with 7.9mm munition.

It is generally believed that all production examples of the Mk. XVI carried the "American" armament. This is, however, difficult to confirm with certainty. Confusingly, the designation "LF. XVIIE" first appeared in CBAF records around May-June 1945. The first low-back Mk. XVI, SM410, left CBAF for trials on 30 March 1945, so it is possible that at the time of its introduction, the "E" suffix was intended to refer to the low-back Spitfire and/or the previously mentioned changes in wing plumbing incorporated in that variant. Perhaps we'll never know.

A witness report from a Typhoon pilot. He was ready to go to his aircraft on 3 February at Woensdrecht airport and saw the crash:

Minutes later I was standing beside him when we heard the sound of a diving aircraft and caught sight of a Spitfire, plunging vertically, high against the blue. Suddenly, and with quite appalling violence it began to recover. Both wings folded upwards and broke away. The fuselage pitched nose down again and fell headlong, throttle wide open, to crash less than a mile from the airfield.

(Bart Aalberts)

The distance from the found crashsite to the WW2 airfield is about 2 miles!

“Both wings folded upwards and broke away” , implicates that the fuselage and wings would not be together at the crashsite.

The find of the gas cylinder from the 20MM Hispano MK2 at the crashsite proves that the crashsite is not from Lt/Koes either. The Hispano’s were attached in the wings.



Gas cylinder Hispano



Position in the wing



Example picture

Conclusion:

The mentioned crash location within a mile of the airfield combined with the find of a part from the Hispano cannon excludes Lt.Koes as the unknown crash.

2) Cipriani who crashed on 22-11-1944.



From website: [www. Belgiums-remember-them.eu](http://www.Belgiums-remember-them.eu)

Spitfire LF.IX serial MH474 coded 5J-X took off 21-11-1944 for a sweep from Bradwell Bay but suffered engine failure and landed at B.79 Woensdrecht, Holland. Took off from B.79 22-11-1944 and again suffered engine problems, unfortunately crashed near Antwerpen (still looking for the exact location)

P/O. CIPRIANI landed B. 79 believed electrical trouble. Took off again 22nd. Noy and crashed in in SCHELDT area and was killed.

From ORB 126 Sqn

CRASHS OUTSIDE THE BORDERS OF PROVINCE OF ANTWERP

- * CRASH SITE OF SPITFIRE PT772, FALLEN ON 2/10/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF TYPHOON JP441 FALLEN ON 21/10/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF SPITFIRE MA835 FALLEN TO CLINGE ON 3/01/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF LANCASTER LL720-EQ-R FALLEN TO PAAL (NL) ON 20/02/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF SPITFIRE MH474-5J-X FALLEN OUSIDE SCHELDE ON 22/11/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF TYPHOON MN881-R FALLEN TO AMERSFOORT (NL) ON 21/11/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF TYPHOON MN752-D FALLEN TO AMERSFOORT (NL) ON 21/11/1944
- * CRASH SITE OF TYPHOON TYPHOON MN702-TP-F FALLEN TO BEVELAND (NL) ON 5/11/1944

Intresting that it states FALLEN OUTSIDE THE SCHELDE AREA!! **That means it is not certain were it crashed, the schelde area is adjacent to the crash area.**

The pilot was killed and that fitts to the crash site.

The aircraft MH474 was build at Castle Bromwich (CBAF)

MH474	LFIXb		CBAF M66	39MU	19-8-43	405ARF
					14-9-43	132S
						22-9-43
					FAAC	13-3-44
					ros	
				84GSU	18-4-44	312S
				'DU-F'	8-6-44	126S
					3-7-44	VAO
						10-10-44
						Crashed in Scheldt

(www.allspitfirepilots.org)

39 (MU) Mantainance unit . 405 (ARF) Aircraft reception flight (FAAC) Flying accident category C, (ROS)Repair on site , 84 (GSU) Ground Support Unit (VAO) Varoius Air Operations. (scheldt is Schelde!)

The aircraft was built at the Vickers Armstrong Factory at Castle Bromwich and that is a match with the stamps found. Also had the aircraft damaged and was repaired on site (ROS) and that could explain the found SMAF stamp.

Next all known Belgium aircrash researchers were asked and none knew the exact crashsite or had any of them documentation other than we found.

Cipriani is buried at Schoonselhof cemetery Antwerp. Documentation of the initial burial site is not known by them.

(48008) WT.P.2259/2808 20.000 3/53 A.R.E.W.LTD. GP.685

Graves Registration Report Form. ORIGINAL

COUNTRY: BELGIUM.
 COMMUNE: _____ REPORT No.: _____ SCHEDULE No.: 2 MH
 PLACE OF BURIAL: SCHOONSELHOF CTY., ANTWERP.
 Land belongs to _____
 Certified complete and correct.
 The following are buried here: — Signature: *[Signature]* Date: 23 APR 1954

P.R.G.	No. and Rank	Initials, Name and Honours	Unit	Date of Death	For works use
		<u>Plot I</u> <u>Row A</u>			
✓ 12	D.19092 Spr.	G.B. WILLETT ✓	Corps of Royal Canadian Engrs.	23.11.44.	C.H.
✓ 13	D.3531 Tpr.	W. ROSS ✓	17th Duke of York's Royal Canadian Hussars	24.11.44.	C.H.
✓ 14	D.6677 S.Sgt.	J.W. HEAP (B.E.M) ✓	Royal Canadian Art.	23.11.44.	C.H.
15	154414 F/Off (Pilot)	T.M. CIPRIANI (of Trinidad) ✓	R.A.F. VR.	22.11.44.	C.H.

(Marnix Vinke)

Final conclusion

Pilot Officer Cipriani **could be** the pilot, that crashed in the woods south of Huijbergen. The found aircraft parts match his Spitfire MK.IX. There is no documentation proof that he crashed in Belgium available to us. **If he crashed in Huijbergen** it is unknown why he is buried in Schoonselhof Belgium and not in Holland. Possibly the crash position that was 500 yards from the Belgium border combined with the front line in close proximity (a few miles) was a determining factor! Also Schoonselhof had a British part called "Schoonselhof Cemetery".

Hopefully some new proof will surface in the future about this still “unknown crashsite”.

