

# Edmonton Flier Ft. Lt Ben Clarke City Airman Leads Attack

## Believed Killed In 'Chute Leap

LONDON, April 15.—(CP)—Ft. Lt. Ben Clarke of 7857 Jasper Ave., Edmonton, commander of one of the R.A.F.'s highest scoring fighter squadrons based in Italy, is reported missing. He was seen dead after being ejected from his crippled Spitfire over Yugoslavia.

News reaching London said Ft. Lt. Clarke was returning to his base from a troop-rafting sortie April 7 when his plane got into difficulties. He jumped but his parachute caught on the plane and when he finally shook free and plummeted down, the chute failed to open.

### SET TRAIN AFIRE

The lowering Edmonton pilot, whose logbook showed two enemy planes destroyed, had lately engaged in strafing German road and rail transport troop concentrations in Italy and Yugoslavia. On one of

his last sorties he was known to set fire to a German troop train.

Ft. Lt. Bennett W. Clarke is the son of former Mayor J. A. Clarke, R.C., and Mrs. Clarke, both recently a member of Edmonton's city council.

Ft. Lt. Clarke, well known in the city as a sports enthusiast, graduated from No. 1 Flying Training School at Camp Borden, Ont. He was born in Long Beach, Calif., and came to Edmonton with his parents at the age of two.

Prior to joining up, he was a member of the Edmonton Ski Club and took a prominent part in Y.M.C.A. activities. He attended Frederick high school and for one year was a student in engineering at the University of Alberta. He was a member of All Saints' Church.

Ft. Lt. Clarke once talked with Queen Elizabeth during a visit of the British rulers to air bases in

## To Wreck 5 Troop Trains

By C. R. CUNNINGHAM  
Exclusive to The Edmonton Bulletin  
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ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, Naples, Feb. 29.—Canadian Spitfire pilots wrecked five loaded German troop trains in a strafing run along the west coast of Yugoslavia yesterday, and chopped down hundreds of Nazi soldiers fleeing in panic from the blazing cars, it was disclosed today.

It was one of the most effective "train busting" missions yet flown by Spitfires over Yugoslavia, according to three pilots who participated in the attack—Ft. Lt. Bennett "Ben" Clarke, Edmonton, Warrant Officer William Ritchie, Montreal, and Flying Officer Frank Bremner, Tillsonburg, Ont.

"We spotted the first train when we were only two miles inland," Clarke said. "We made six individual attacks, raking the train from end to end. At least 12 of the cars were hit and one was left burning and the engine was stopped and enveloped in steam."

"At a station a few miles away another engine was destroyed. From each of these two trains troops rushed out—at least 200 from the second train. Each of us fired long bursts into the carriages.

"The third train was loaded, but minus its engine. After this third attack, Ritchie and I attacked two more trains. The first was destroyed. When we attacked the last train, Ritchie gave it such a crack that I did not even have to go down to it."

Ft. Lt. Clarke is the son of Mrs. J. A. Clarke and the late Joseph A. Clarke, many times mayor of Edmonton.



FLT.-LT. BENNETT CLARKE



FLT. LT. B. W. CLARKE

## Ft. Lt. Ben Clarke Missing Overseas

Son of the late ex-Mayor Joseph A. Clarke, and of Mrs. Clarke, former alderman, Ft. Lt. Ben Clarke is missing on operations overseas, it was learned Wednesday.

The ace fighter pilot has been in the news frequently in the past year with his exploits overseas. The airman has served as a fighter pilot in England, North Africa and Italy in Italy.

Mrs. Clarke resides at 7857 Jasper ave.

Ft. Lt. Clarke, who has been officer commanding the Spitfire squadron for some time, joined the R.C.A.F. shortly after the outbreak of war. He volunteered to Canada for about two years prior to going overseas. He was born in Long Beach, California.

Lieut. Muriel Clarke, a sister of the flier, is serving overseas. A physio-therapist, she is serving in a Canadian military hospital with the Canadian Army Medical Corps. Another sister, Gwen, is in eastern Canada.

Edson Old-Timer  
B. F. Fulmer Dies

Old timer of Edson where he was

Apr 21/44