Greater Love Hath No Man:

A record of the service men and women commemorated on Wilmslow War Memorials for the Second World War.









Wilmslow Historical Society

by David Briggs

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This paper seeks to research the background and final stories of each of the services personnel and some others listed as lost in WW2 on the War Memorials around Wilmslow. These include the largest memorial adjacent to St Bartholomews Church, the recently created memorial in Handforth and those at St John's Lindow, Wilmslow Congregational Church, (United Reformed), Wilmslow Methodist (Wesleyan) Chapel, Alderley St Philip's church, Styal, Dean Row Chapel and Wilmslow Cemetery. The reports appear in the order that individuals are remembered on each of the memorials except where names of individuals are duplicated on more than one memorial. (Indices by memorial and alphabetic at the end of this document).

THE INDIVIDUALS:

The people listed represent in microcosm the range of services and mix of fates of those lost from British towns and villages across the country. Army personnel from Wilmslow and its neighbourhood operated in virtually every field of the land war, from France and Belgium at the outbreak, through North Africa to Italy, the Far East and from D-Day to peace.

One hundred and sixteen individuals are listed. Of these, forty eight were in the Army and land forces, and another fifty four served in the Air Forces. Nineteen were in the Navy, although some of these were flyers with the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) and Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). Two women are remembered and one child. One woman was in naval service the other was a nurse and three further civilians are identified. Two merchant seamen are also included.

Eight individuals are noted on more than one memorial – but none show on more than two.

Our local airmen were lost as fighter pilots, bomber pilots, navigators and air gunners whilst Navy men, and one woman, saw action in the Mediterranean, Atlantic and in the air.

The six civilians identified and their stories are as equally poignant and tragic as those of the people who served in the Forces.. The feelings of the fathers, mothers, children and relatives of those killed who walked the streets of the Wilmslow neighbourhood can only be imagined today.

THE RESEARCH

Apart from the War Memorials themselves, the starting source to find the stories of the men and women here has been the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database which lists the names, service number, units, age and a date of death of nearly every individual as well as where their names are commemorated. In many cases the individual's next of kin are also named plus any memorial words they chose to add to headstones. These details are presented in a condensed fashion at the head of each story.

In most cases it has then been possible to call on the many regimental, squadron or ship's websites that others have spent years compiling in honour of the men and women who served. These have provided vast amounts of detail on the specific circumstances when people were recorded as lost.

For RAF personnel most dates are exact as it is possible to identify individual aircraft losses from detailed records including crew lists. For soldiers in the land forces – in infantry, artillery or tanks, the research results can be less precise as a date of death may have come days or weeks after injury or wounds received. Equally, in the army records accessible from general internet searching, "Other Ranks" (OR's) lost are often not listed by name in the on-line War Diaries – although officers are more likely to be identified.

In most cases the contemporaneous War Diaries of individual army regiments and units have not been accessed as most have not yet been digitised – (although all are available to view at the National Archives at Kew). For naval personnel, the stories of most of those lost at sea have to be assumed from the fate of individual ships which are recorded to various levels of detail. Those lost under other circumstances may have been subject to a little more informed guess work.


Alderley & Wilmslow
AND GUARDIAN Advertiser, EAST AND MID-CHESHIRE GAZETTE.
Published Weekly FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1941. 12 Pages. TWOPENCE

A further very informative source that has provided local and family detail has been the British Newspaper Archives and from there "*The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser*" and one or two other publications of the time. This has enabled individual names to be searched for by date and has provided details such as addresses and pre-war occupations that add local colour and context.

Many of the portrait images beside the names are taken from reproductions of "*The Advertiser*" pages – hence the relatively poor quality of some. Where possible the exact text from the "*Advertiser*" has been copied – and is presented in a way that reflects the printed word in the newspapers. Where pictures have not been found regimental, ship or squadron badges are shown.

A small number of the individuals listed on the memorials have proved harder to research and it is hoped that readers and others might be able to add more detail to what is here. Indeed, any further information about any of the personnel or their history would be welcomed by the Wilmslow Historical Society to even better tell the story of those who gave everything for the life that we enjoy today. It is possible that one or two of the individuals researched have been misidentified – but in most cases the various cross references that have been possible have confirmed the majority.

In most cases, the main internet sources for additional information is shown at the bottom of each record. There is a significant amount of text copied from many of these sites which must be credited to other people's detailed work and research. Any breach of copyright that arises here is entirely unintentional and any use or wider circulation of the information is meant solely for educational, research or charitable purposes.

All names are listed at Annex 1 by memorial and an alphabetical list is at Annex 2.

COMMON FACTORS:

Some common factors or trends have emerged that seem to tie some of the stories of the Wilmslow men and women together in a historical sense. Only a few records relate to losses early in the War because conscription/recruitment was not fully underway and significant campaigns in which "citizen soldiers" were engaged seldom arose before 1941. Thereafter, North Africa, Italy and then post D-Day feature heavily for the army personnel. For aircraftmen – the majority of losses relate to the activities of Bomber Command and the grinding air campaign against German industry and cities.

A further common feature is the significant number of individuals lost in training or in accidents. These sadly account for nearly a quarter of those identified. Perhaps most painfully of all, several sons were lost in the very last days of the War or even after War's end. An even greater tragedy?

One family in Alderley Edge suffered at a level that cannot be imagined with the loss of three sons all in 1943.

The full numbers of fatalities suffered by Wilmslow area families occurred as follows:

1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946/7
1	8	24	21	24	34	11	3

A small number of individuals have emerged with Wilmslow connections who do not seem to have been commemorated on any of our local memorials. There details have therefore been added at the end of the document. They include, Stoker James Grange who is mentioned in "The Advertiser" as lost, J Murray listed on the Morley Green memorial, D Snow and P Dawson lost on HMS Hood.

THE RAF

Fifty four of the names on Wilmslow area memorials are of RAF personnel and the following seeks to provide some background to this service. In several cases there is substantially more information about the circumstances of the individual being lost because detailed RAF records of aircraft, bases and individuals are more frequently available via the internet. Most RAF personnel researched here were pilots or crew of aircraft of Bomber Command under Air Vice Marshall "Bomber" Harris.

Many are identified as members of the "RAFVR" - Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve - created in 1936 to prepare the RAF for another war. This was made up of civilians recruited from neighbourhood flying schools. Recruits were usually men between 18 and 25 who were accepted for part-time training as pilots, wireless operators, or observers. Once accepted for aircrew training, recruits would take an oath of allegiance and were inducted into the RAFVR. Thus, during WW II, the RAFVR became the main way to enter the RAF as aircrew.

In 1943, a qualified Sgt pilot was paid £4.14s.6d a week or £245.14s.0d a year - including war pay, whilst an air gunner Sgt was paid £2.16s.0d a week or £145.12s.0d a year.

Those who joined Bomber Command suffered the highest casualty rate of all the services. 55,573 were killed out of a total of 125,000 aircrew, a 44.4% death rate. A further 8,403 men were wounded in action, and 9,838 became prisoners of war.

RCAF & RAAF:

There are many references in this paper to flyers from the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Each played a key role in achieving Allied victory and several of the Wilmslow fallen flew alongside them as individual aeroplane aircrews were formed and allocated.

Between 1939 and 1945, the Royal Canadian Air Force enlisted 232,000 men and 17,000 women and operated 86 squadrons, including 47 overseas in the UK and other regions. Canadians flew bomber, fighter, reconnaissance, transport, and other missions and by 1945, the R.C.A.F. had grown to be the world's fourth- largest air force. More than 17,000 Canadian airmen perished during the war.



A further 20,000 Australian personnel also flew with the RAAF alongside other Commonwealth air forces. A total of 216,900 men and women served in the RAAF, of whom 9,780 lost their lives in World War II. RAAF personnel losses were especially notable in RAF Bomber Command where RAAF personnel accounted for 23% of the total number killed in the air war.

This statistic is driven home by the fact that No. 460 Squadron RAAF, mostly flying Avro Lancasters, had an official establishment of about 200 aircrew at any one time and yet had 1,018 combat deaths. The squadron was therefore effectively wiped out five times over.

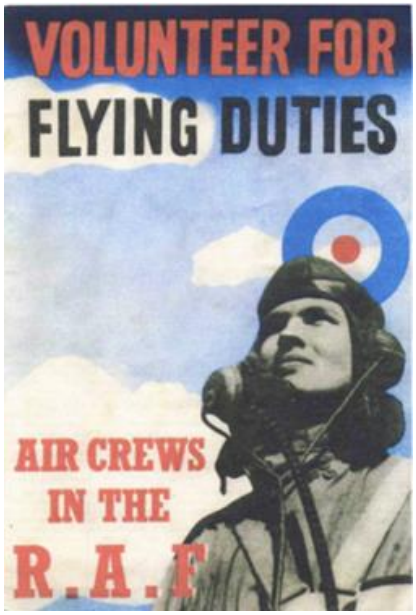
BOMBER COMMAND:

RAF Bomber Command was formed in 1936. At the time, it was argued that a strong bomber force provided a deterrent to aggression, as bombing would result in complete and inescapable destruction on both sides. The reality was very different and it was not until 1942 that Bomber Command gained a real sense of direction, with the arrival of Air Vice Marshal Arthur 'Bomber' Harris and a mandate to begin attacking German industry, much of which was located in large cities.

The objective was to destroy Germany's industrial might and create a collapse in the morale of the civilian workforce, breaking Germany's will to fight on. From 1942, Bomber Command commenced seriously damaging the Third Reich's war economy by attacking industrial, communications and fuel targets in occupied Europe and Germany. Although the strategic bombing campaign undoubtedly shortened the war, it remains controversial because it resulted in the deaths of an estimated 600,000 German civilians and over 55,000 British, Commonwealth and Allied airmen.

In Bomber command, a qualified pilot would have flown the aircraft as "Skipper" of the crew. He made the key operational decisions even if his rank was junior to others on board. The pilot was often a junior commissioned officer but he could hold any rank from Sergeant up to Group Captain.

Virtually every man of a bomber air crew was a volunteer. Following completion of training, aircrew were presented with their aircrew brevet (flying badge) and were either handed their sergeant's stripes or were commissioned as officers. So the lowest rank of any aircrew was therefore Sergeant



RAF Bomber Command had a "Group" structure each with its own responsibilities:

Each Group was responsible for ensuring all its squadrons and crews were briefed according to Bomber Command Instructions (routes to & from the targets, altitudes, numbers of aircraft & bomb load), while the airfields/stations provided all domestic support for the squadrons to which airmen belonged - supported by administration and & aircraft maintenance.

• Number/s 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 Groups were the main parts of Bomber Command at the start of the war. • Number 6 Group: A Canadian unit, was then activated and attached to Bomber Command 1943. • Number 8 Group: The Pathfinder Force, was activated in 1942 and was equipped with Mosquito bombers and used for harassing raids on Germany.	• Number/s 91, 92, 93, Group included Operational Training Units (OTUs) • 100 Group was responsible for developing and using electronic warfare, radar and countermeasures equipment. • 26 Group RAF: A group in Bomber Command in June 1944

Airmen from Wilmslow flew in many types of well known aircraft of the RAF including all British 4 engined heavy bombers, Spitfires and Hurricanes as well as many less known. The number flying with Coastal Command is an indicator of how serious the defeat of U-Boats was to the country.



An astonishing picture of a Lancaster Squadron of Bomber Command. (75 Sqdn.(New Zealand))

https://75nzsquadron.wordpress.com

HMS Hood

Two young Wilmslow men (or boys) were lost when HMS Hood was sunk by the German pocket battleship Bismarck in May 1941. They do not appear to be commemorated anywhere on Wilmslow memorials – so their memories are recorded at the end of this report.

THE ARMY, NAVY AND CONSCRIPTION

Most of our Wilmslow area soldiers and sailors were recruited through conscription, volunteering or via earlier engagement with the Territorial Army.



The Territorial Army (TA) was a volunteer force that many joined. In 1939, the TA was increased in size from 130,000 to 340,000 men in response to rising tensions with Germany. On September 1, 1939, the TA then became part of the Regular Armed Forces. The TA was a primary source of reinforcement for the Regular Army from the start of the War.

The National Service (Armed Forces) Act of 1939 required all men between the ages of 18 and 41 to register for military service. However, there were exemptions for those who were medically unfit, in key industries, or in other reserved occupations. Men from Northern Ireland were exempted from conscription to avoid civil unrest. Volunteers could often choose which service or regiment they joined particularly if they had a trade or specialism.

In December 1941, Parliament passed a further National Service Act, which made it legal to conscript women into service. The Act initially called up unmarried women and childless widows between the ages of 20 and 30. They were given the option to work in industry or farming, or join the military auxiliary services. The largest of these was the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), but women also joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF)or the Women's Royal Naval Service (The Wrens).



By mid-1943, almost 90% of single women and 80% of married women were employed in war work

The British Army's strength increased from 897,000 men at the start of the war to 1.1 million by the end of 1939, and 1.65 million by June 1940. By the end of the war, 2.9 million men had served in the British Army. The number of British men who served in the Royal Navy during World War II increased from 200,000 at the start of the war to 939,000 by the end.

The daily pay for a British soldier in WW2 varied by rank and job. A Private got 2 shillings per day on recruitment. This meant that a Private earned around £36 a year.

A Lance Corporal was paid 3s 3d to 6s 6d per day. A substantive Corporal was paid between 4s 0d to 7s 3d per day and a Sergeant 6s 0d to 8s 9d per day making his pay up to £160 a year. Daily pay for an army Lieutenant – the most junior officer rank – was 17s 6d (£320 pa). For the Royal Navy, the daily substantive pay for an able seaman was 4s 3d plus a 6d war bonus paid in 1940 (£86 pa).

In addition to their daily pay, servicemen received accommodation, food, clothing, medical care, and family allowances. The wife of a British soldier was usually given about a third of their husband's pay. A wife with no dependents would receive around 10 shillings per week, which was less than a sixth of the average female factory wage at the time.

THE MEMORIAL AT WILMSLOW:



The original Wilmslow Cenotaph for WW1 and WW2 was removed from Altrincham Road/Hawthorn Street/Little Lindow in the 1970's and the list of names was relocated to the memorial gardens on Mill Lane/Chancel Lane.

The names for WW2 are recorded on the panel at the front of the site

There is just one record that has eluded internet research - that of John Goddard who is recorded on the memorial as a civilian Flight Engineer. Subsequent research by Ray Acton suggests that he was married to Phyllis Moult, the daughter of John Wm Moult, a coal porter of 5 Church St,Wilmslow and they lived on the Lindfield estate with three daughters. As a Flight Engineer it might be assumed that he worked at Woodford – but this is not known as a fact. If any reader can help complete the record – Wilmslow Historical Society would be delighted to hear. wilmslowhistoricalsociety@gmail.com



The original Wilmslow Cenotaph.

The full list of names on the ST Bart's/Remembrance Garden memorial is as follows.

Chief Wren Phyllis BACON WRNS	Pte Eric PATERSON Black Watch
Pte Maurice Edward BADDELEY Ox & Bucks LI	FO Harold PLANT RAF
Sgt Pilot Robert Arthur BANKS RAF	Tpr Frederick Will'm George POVEY RAC
Flt Eng Harry Lewis BARNES Civil	HG George Edward POWELL Ches R
Sgt Michael BATES RAF	Sub Lt Mark Fleming RODIER RNVR
Flt Lt Cecil Ford BEDELL RAF	Tpr John Aspinall SLATER RAC
Sgt AG Stanley BOOTH RAF	Sgt Donald Arthur SMITHIES RAF
Flt Sgt Arthur Andrew BRADLEY RAF	2nd Lt Anthony Raymond STREAT ¾ County of London Y
Sgt Donald BROADHURST RAF	Cpl Eric STREET Kings Own Yorks Light I
Pte Norman BURGESS Essex R	AB Kenneth SUMNER RN
Cpl Charles CALLWOOD RAC	Pte William Arthur TAYLOR Gordon Highlanders
Flt Sgt Walter Callwood CHEETHAM RAF	Sub Lt(A) Kenneth Charles Nutt TRAVIS RNVR
Sub Lt(A) Oliver DIXON RNVR	Sgt AG Roy VERNON RAF
Dvr John Arnold FOX RASC	Sap Harold Kay WOOD RE
Flt Eng John GODDARD Civil	Pte Kenneth Francis WOODALL RAOC
Sgt Pilot Leslie Gordon COCKRAM RAF	Pte Albert George WOODHOUSE 6th Ches R
L Cpl Frederick Herbert HALL R Inniskillen Fusiliers	Sgt Pilot Colin Higson WYLDE RAF
Lt Philip Sumner HOLT 1st Airborne	Mid'n Thomas Richard WAGNER RNVR
Sgt Ronald Edward HULME Mcr R	
Sgt Kenneth JOHNSON RA	
Pte Cyril KENT Hants R	
Sig Percy NAYLOR RN	
L Cpl Peter Norbury LEECH RCS	
Sap George LINCOLN RE	
Sgt Austin Southwell MARSHALL RAF	
Sqr Ldr Colin METCALFE RAF	
Flt Sgt Edward Arthur METCALFE RAF	
FO Arthur MOORE RAF	
Gun Raymond MOTTERSHEAD RA	
Capt Roylance Lynton PARKINSON RAMC	

Some of those identified on this monument are also listed on other memorials in the Wilmslow and Alderley districts. This St Bart's list is dealt with as the "Master List" for this whole report.

Therefore reports on any individuals duplicated on other monuments or at Wilmslow Cemetery are to be found in this section. These include:

C F Bedell, W C Cheetham, R E Hulme, P N Leech, E.A Metcalf, H Plant, D A Smithies, D Broadhurst, K Johnson, P Naylor and S Booth.

Chief Wren PHYLLIS BACON

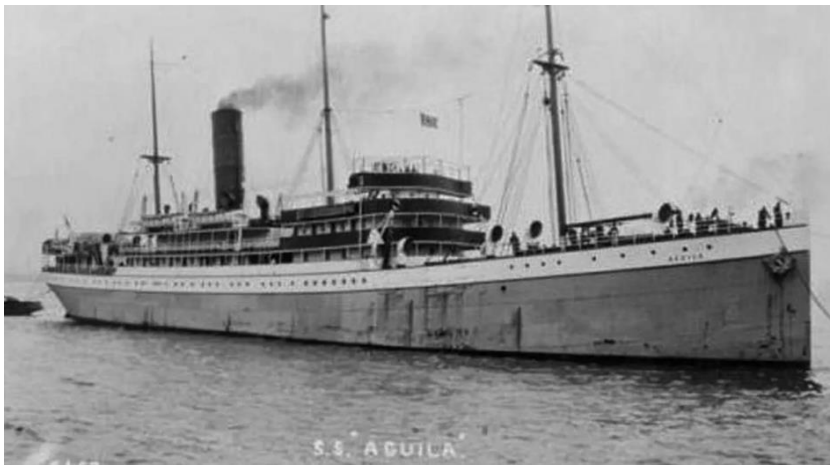


Women's Royal Naval Service
H.M.S. President II.
Died 19 August 1941 Age 21 years old
William Harold and Theresa Mary Bacon, nee Ingleby
1939 her parents Platt, Adlington Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Commemorated at PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

The “Y” service was a network of British signals intelligence collection sites operated by a range of agencies including the Army, Royal Navy and RAF among others. Many of the” “Y Service personnel were drawn from the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS or Wrens), tasked with intercepting signals and identifying where they were coming from.

When intelligence was gathered at the “Y” stations by the Wrens, anything encoded was sent straight to Bletchley Park. Everything else was analysed locally.Thus the Wrens were essential to breaking the Enigma and other codes, among many other crucial intelligence discoveries.

In August 1941, 12 of the Wrens from the Scarborough “Y” Station, including Phyllis as Chief Wren (equivalent to a Warrant Officer –(senior NCO)), volunteered for duty in Gibraltar. They travelled across the country to Liverpool docks, and along with another nine Wrens, then boarded the armed merchant vessel SS Aguila.



The Wrens knew their skills would be much needed in Gibraltar, 12 were to be employed as cypher officers and nine as wireless operators. Aguila was one of 23 merchant ships that formed Convoy OG71 (71st Outbound convoy to Gibraltar), which left Liverpool on 13 August. Aguila's Master, Arthur Firth, was at the helm.

On 17 August a German Focke-Wulf FW200 aircraft spotted the convoy and the next day it was attacked by a U-boat wolfpack. It was the first Allied convoy of the war to be attacked by a U-boat wolfpack. The group of eight U-boats from the 1st U-Boat Flotilla were operating out of their base in Brest on the northwest coast of France.

U-201 fired two torpedoes which hit the side which housed the Wrens cabins and sank the Aguila at 0310am on the 19th of August. It was certain they would have died instantly in the explosion and the subsequent sinking of the Aguila left only 16 survivors with 145 dead..

The corvette HMS Wallflower rescued ten people, including Aguila's Master - Captain Arthur Firth, and one of the surviving Royal Naval contingent, while tugboat Empire Oak picked up the remaining six survivors. Three days later she too was torpedoed – and those survivors were lost.

After the loss of so many Royal Navy personnel in one sinking, the Navy stopped using civilian ships to carry its personnel.



Phyllis's convoy would become known as the 'Nightmare Convoy' and over the course of four days the U-boat wolfpack sank ten ships (eight merchant ships and two Naval escorts) comprising a total tonnage of over 15,000 tonnes with over 400 lives lost.

Today, the twenty one women lost are immortalised on the Aguila Memorial – a giant wren on a granite obelisk – at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.



A collage to commemorate the 21 WRENs lost on the SS Aguila including the lifeboat that was purchased and named "Aguila Wren" in their memory.

https://www.gchq.gov.uk/information/aguila-wrns

Private Maurice Edward BADDELEY

Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry 7th Bn.
Died 10 May 1943 Age 24 years old
Commemorated at MEDJEZ-EL-BAB MEMORIAL
Tunisia



The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser May 1943:

KILLED IN NORTH AFRICA

Private Maurice Baddeley (24) of the\Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, has been killed in action in North Africa. Private Baddeley whose home was at Preesall, Northward Road, Wilmslow, was married and had one child. He had been in the Army for 18 months and went abroad nine months ago.

The chaplain, in a letter of sympathy said: "We are intensely proud of him here and rejoice in his memory. You will know it was only a few days before the end of the campaign in Tunisia, but it was helping to complete that victory that brought about his death. At the memorial service his name was read out and we stood in silence and prayed for you at home. I hope you will take courage for the future in the memory of his courage".

Maurice's parents lived at Haywood on Barlow Road, Wilmslow.

In May 1943, only days after Maurice's loss, the war in North Africa came to an end in Tunisia with the defeat of the Axis powers by a combined Allied force. The campaign had begun on 8 November 1942, when Commonwealth and American troops made a series of landings in Algeria and Morocco. The Germans responded immediately by sending a force from Sicily to northern Tunisia, which checked the Allied advance east in early December.

The Eighth Army "Desert Rats" including Maurice's Ox and Bucks Light Infantry were part of the 56th Division and within that, 167 Infantry Brigade. The 167 Brigade war diary (WO169/8966) identifies that the action around the 19th to the 21st April 1943 (the month before Maurice was lost) was the Eighth Army's last significant battle in North Africa, and it saw them fail to break through what was unexpectedly tough Axis resistance in the mountainous terrain around Enfidaville village.

The enemy attack on the position at Enfidaville on 19 April successfully captured it, but strong allied resistance meant no further progress was possible. Allied attacks further north met with greater success and the nearby key target, Tunis, fell on 7 May,

.



Road to Enfidaville Tunisia 1943 IWM

Bizerta fell in turn on the 8th and by 11th May the position at Enfidaville was surrounded and resistance ceased on the following day.

Maurice was killed on 10th May.

Enfidaville War Cemetery contains 1,551 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 88 of them unidentified. It holds those who died in the final battles from March to the beginning of May 1943.

The Medjez-El-Bab memorial, where Maurice is recorded, commemorates 2,525 Commonwealth forces who died in Tunisia and Algeria during World War II and have no known grave.

http://www.lightbobs.com/7th-bn-oxf--bucks-li-july-1942-ndash-june-1943.html
http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/battles_enfidaville.html
https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/56-division-at-enfidaville-may-1943.88793/

Sergeant Pilot ROBERT ARTHUR BANKS



Service Number: 1100940
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
No 9 Squadron
Date of Death: 08 September 1941 - Age 20 years old
Buried at OPSTERLAND (GORREDIJK) GENERAL CEMETERY Netherlands
Son of Arthur and Mabel Banks, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Grave Marker Commemoration: HIS BRIGHT YOUNG LIFE NOBLY GIVEN. MAY WE PROVE WORTHY OF THE SACRIFICE

Robert Banks served as a 2nd Pilot with 9 Squadron based at Honington in Suffolk. He was crew on a Wellington bomber WS Z 8845 on a mission to Berlin on the night of 7th September 1941.

Robert's plane took off with nine other aircraft of his squadron at 20.30 hours. A total of 197 aircraft took part in the operation.

Visibility was good and a message was received from his plane at 00.50 hrs, but nothing further was heard.



Wellington bombers of 9 Squadron

The aircraft was later reported to have been shot down in Holland and crashed at Terwispel, Friesland, Holland soon after midnight on the 8th September and all crew were killed. A further 14 aircraft were lost that night. Robert's service was tragically short.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 19th September 1941:

MISSING IN FIRST OPERATIONAL FLIGHT

Sergt. Pilot R.A. Banks

Seargeant Pilot Robert Arthur Banks of Wilmslow is reported missing from his first operational flight. Notification to this effect has been received by his parents Mr and Mrs Arthur Banks of Highfield estate.

Sergeant Pilot Banks has been in the RAF for just over twelve months and received part of his training in Canada where he got his wings.

Twenty years of age, Sergeant Pilot Banks won a scholarship from Wilmslow Modern School to Macclesfield Grammar School. He was successful in his examination for the Civil Service and obtained a position in Newton Street Post Office, Manchester.

HARRY LEWIS BARNES
(Civilian)



Listed on the War Memorial as a Flight Engineer
– and a "Civil" casualty

Harry lived with his wife Clarice on Grove Street Wilmslow and worked as a senior Flight Engineer at AV Roe's aircraft factory at nearby Woodford which by 1944 was largely dedicated to the assembly and testing of Lancaster bombers.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for 14th September 1944 reports on the loss of Harry's aircraft and the background of Sydney Gleave, the pilot on the day of the loss.

Syd Gleave Killed In Plane Crash
WILMSLOW MAN ALSO DEAD

Mr Sydney Gleave (39) of Macclesfield, the well-known motor engineer and the principal test pilot for the AV Roe firm and Mr Harry Lewis Barnes (41) Grove Street Wilmslow his flight engineer, were killed in the North West on Monday when the plane which Gleave was piloting, a Lancaster bomber exploded and crashed.

The plane was observed to be in difficulties. Observers saw it flying low over houses and then it passed out of sight, the sound of the engine indicated trouble and shortly afterwards they heard a crash.

It is stated that the plane nose-dived and exploded before reaching the ground. The plane was blown to bits and wreckage was strewn some distance over the country side. Gleave and his mechanic were killed instantly.

POPULAR FIGURE

Syd Gleave as he was familiarly known over a wide area, was in business in Macclesfield and for many years he was a popular figure at the motor cycle events both in England and on the continent. He won the Light Weight Tourist Trophy race in the Isle of Man in 1933 at a speed of 71.59 miles per hour. He was one of the New Imperial team and the handsome souvenir in velum presented to him by th Manx Government was one of his most cherished possessions. He has taken part in the Dutch Prix and also participated in events in Belgium, Switzerland, France, \Germany, Italy and Spain.

For some years he was a strong advocate of a municipal aerodrome for Macclesfield and endeavoured to persuade the authorities to reserve a site on the Moss for a landing ground. At the outbreak of war he volunteered for the RAF and after being attached to the Transport Command for some time he was seconded to AV Roe for whom he has done excellent work as a test pilot.

FLIGHT ENGINEER DROVE ROYALTY

Mr Barnes lived at The Chocolate Box, Grove Street, Wilmslow where his wife carried on the business. He was formerly demonstrator for Messrs Crossley's Limited Manchester and some years ago was twice the driver of the car which bore the Duke of Windsor, then Prince of Wales, when visiting English cities. One of these towns was Ipswich. He had also acted as driver to the Earl and Countess of Athlone and has stayed at Buckingham Palace and Goldborough Hall, the home of the Princess Royal.

Some years ago his wife, formerly Miss Grantham of Alderley Edge, was also in business at The Chocolate Box, London Road, Alderley Edge. He was a member of the Union Club, Alderley Edge and the Conservativve Club, Wilmslow and was a clever snooker player. In his younger days he was a keen motor cyclist. Mr Barnes was a Free Mason, belonging to the Duke of Connaught Lodge.
The inquest will be held at Wilmslow tomorrow morning.

Syd Gleave had attended Macclesfield Grammar School, apprenticed as an engineer and then set up his own business.



As a licenced pilot since the 1930's he volunteered for service in the Fleet Air Arm in 1938 and transferred to the Air Transport Auxiliary as a Captain and flew machines of every type from manufacturers to RAF units – subsequently becoming a test pilot for Lancasters at AVRO Woodford in 1942.

Gleave led a successful engineering business and a colourful life before the War. As a civilian pilot since 1932 he had crashed an AVRO Avian in 1936 as well as his successes in motor cycling. He also stood in the Macclesfield Town Council elections in 1938 as a Conservative candidate.

A number of regional newspapers –reported the following on 16th September 1944. The Liverpool Echo says:

600 M.P.H DIVE

HOW TWO DIED IN AIR CRASH

To assist in the identification of two men who lost their lives in an aeroplane crash near a Midlands town on September 11, pieces of clothing, a tie and a penknife were produced at the inquest at Wilmslow, Cheshire, to-day.

The men were identifies as Sydney Gleave, aged 39, a test pilot for Messrs. A.V.Roe ad Co. Ltd, and a former racing motor –cyclist and Harry Lewis Barnes, aged 41, a flight engineer of Wilmslow.

Charles Stewart Risely, a member of the Observer Corps, who plotted the plane, said it was flying about for half an hour, and the first indication he had of anything being abnormal was when he saw it in a power dive.

It came out of the sun, with engines running, and dived almost vertically at a speed of between 500 and 600 miles an hour.

The jury returned a verdict that the two men died in the execution of their duty and that death was due to misadventure

Aircrash records from A.V.Roe and others detail *"The loss of Mr S Gleave (Production Test Pilot) and Mr H Barnes, Avro, Woodford.*

The records detail that *"One of every ten aircraft was checked to its terminal velocity dive speed of 375mph to verify control effectiveness and ease of recovery.*

During the dive the fuel jettison pipes tore off, hit the tail-plane and stripped the (canvas) elevator skin. The aircraft dived vertically into the ground at Alderley Edge, three miles south of Woodford. This was the only fatal accident involving a Lancaster out of the 3,958 tested at Woodford. "

The crash of Lancaster III - PB579 was fully investigated to identify the detail of the accident – and as a direct result tail-planes of future Lancaster's were reinforced and later covered in metal – rather than more fragile, but lighter canvas fabric. The official record of Lancaster production at A.V.Roe Woodford includes the following photograph of the crash site at Siddington near Alderley Edge.



The report explains that *"On arrival (at the crash site) we found on top of a small hillock in open ground, a large crater complete with four holes wherein were embedded the engines."*

The following poignant photograph is titled *"A crew during the flight test of an Avro Lancaster".*

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Listed from the left are: Donald Wade, observer; **H. Barnes, flight engineer** (wearing the beret); Bill Thorn, pilot, S. Gleave, (crouched below the pilot) second pilot and Roy Chadwick, chief designer. circa 1942

Woodford Aerodrome was Avro's main assembly plant and made a massive contribution during WW2, completing the assembly of 4,101 Lancasters. At its peak during World War II, Avro employed over 3000 workers on site, including many women. The majority of the Lancasters were built at Avro's Chadderton factory, then transported to Woodford for final assembly and test flights.

NB: The story of Harry and his role in the production of Lancaster bombers at Woodford would not be complete without mention of the plane's designer Roy Chadwick who appears with Harry above.

Roy Chadwick was the chief designer for Avro and was responsible for practically all of their aeroplane designs. He is famous in particular for designing the Lancaster, its follow-up Avro Lincoln and preliminary designs of the Avro Vulcan V-bomber.

Chadwick died on 23 August 1947 in a crash during the takeoff of the prototype Avro Tudor 2 G-AGSU from Woodford Aerodrome,in the vicinity of Shirfold Farm. The accident was due to an error in an overnight servicing in which the aileron cables were inadvertently crossed.

NBB: Note that for censorship reasons Alderley is referred to as a "Midlands" or "North West" town.

https://air-britain.com/pdfs/production-lists/Avro.pdf
https://copyrighthub.org/s0/hub1/creation/maryevans/MaryEvansPictureID/10843838https://www.militaryimages.net/media/sydney-gleave.94510/
https://www.pprune.org/archive/index.php/t-226867.htmlhttp://i21.photobucket.com/albums/b270/cumpas/LANC3.jpg

Flight Engineer Sergeant MICHAEL BATES

Service Number: 570468
Royal Air Force 50 Sqdn.
Died 13 May 1943
Son and second child of James Harry Bates and Alice Elizabeth Bates (née Woolley), of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Buried at AMERSFOORT (OUD LEUSDEN) GENERAL CEMETERY, Netherlands

Michael's plane was a Lancaster Mk I of 50 Sqn RAF registration W4762. The plane crashed with the loss of all 8 crew lives at IJsselmeer 6 km NW of Nijkerk, Gelderland - Netherlands. The aeroplane took off at 2 minutes to midnight from RAF Skellingthorpe, Lincolnshire and was shot down by night fighter pilot Leutnant Robert Denzel of the 12./NJG 1, flying a Messerschmitt Bf 110 from Bergen airfield during an RAF bombing attack on Duisburg.



Here are two pictures of the crew of Michael's Lancaster taken in 1942. These are taken from the website page in memory of pilot Francis Hindmarch Huntley https://aircrewremembered.com/huntley-francis.html



It is not clear which airman in these pictures might be Michael Bates - but he does show in records as being Huntley's regular Flight Engineer in 1942 (date of the first photograph)..

Whilst arguably a military success, the raid on Duisberg came at great cost to both sides. The centre of the city and the port area just off the River Rhine suffered enormous damage. 1,598 buildings were totally destroyed, 273 people on the ground killed. 21 barges and 13 other ships were also sunk with a further 60 ships damaged.

For the RAF 38 allied aircraft were lost (including Michael's) and 214 airmen were killed with a further 32 taken as Prisoners of War.

The crew of Michael's Lancaster W4762 "Victor –November" on the night of 13th May 1943 was made up of:

- Pilot : Pilot Officer Francis Hindmarch Huntley DFM RAFVR 143453
- **Sergeant Flight Engineer :Michael Bates RAF 570468**
- Navigator : Pilot Officer Charles William Clarke RAFVR 144446 2nd Navigator : Flying Officer Geoffrey Douglas Priestley RAFVR
- Bomb Aimer : Pilot Officer Edward Hough RAFVR
- Wireless Operator : Pilot Officer Harold Moseley Ivatt RCAF J/17654
- Mid-Upper Gunner : Sergeant Alan Stott DFM RAFVR 985652
- Rear Gunner : Sergeant Frederick Charles Greening RAFVR 1317229

More details on several of the crew can be found at https://aircrewremembered.com/huntley-francis.html but there is little data on Michael other than the fact that his father James back in Wilmslow was Chief Clerk: (Raw Cotton Purchases) for the Fine Cotton Spinners and Doublers Association Ltd Manchester.

Flight Lieutenant: CECIL FORD BEDELL - DFC and Bar



Service Number: 129540
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. Navigator: 83 Sqdn.
Died 14 August 1944 Age 30 years old
Awards: Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar
Son of Spencer and Winnifred Bedell; husband of Joan Edith Bedell, of Palmer's Green, Middlesex.

Cecil was a Manchester Grammar School boy and the school records hold the citation for his second DFC award (his "bar") as:

"Acting F/Lt . Cecil Ford Bedell, Navigator, for his part in a large number of attacks against a great variety of enemy targets, including those in the most heavily defended areas. Throughout the whole period he has shown a high standard of courage and initiative"

On the date of his loss some 10 weeks after D-Day, Cecil's Lancaster took off from 83 Squadron's base at Coningsby, Lincolnshire. They were scheduled to conduct a day raid over Brest to attack naval targets there.

In 5 Group's records it shows that a high proportion of attacks on that night were directed against naval targets, especially up to six ships in Brest Harbour, including the battleship Clemenceau and the cruiser Gueydon. Commandeered by the German navy after the French surrender, these two ships were specifically identified as threatening to blockade the harbour. All were reported sunk, thus preventing the enemy from carrying out their intention of stopping Allied access to the harbour post D-Day.

The shipping in the harbour that day was the target for 130 aircraft of Cecil's Group. All crews were to bomb visually, no markers being dropped. The Master Bomber was to precede the force to the target and broadcast the direction and lie of the ships. It was reported that Cecil's plane, Avro Lancaster III, Serial Number ND854, Markings OL-F of 83 Squadron crashed into the sea off Brest during the attack.

Weather at the target was clear and later photo reconnaissance showed that after the attack a hulk was still afloat, a tanker was awash and the cruiser had disappeared. Photographs taken the next day showed an object in the former position of the cruiser, which was determined to be its wreck.

From 1942, 83 Squadron had been established as a specialist "Pathfinder Force" operating as a marker unit for the main force of Bomber Command. In April 1944, the Squadron was returned to No 5 Group at RAF Coningsby, where it became the Pathfinder unit for independent operations for attacks like that on Brest for the Group. This pathfinder specialism may therefore explain the award of the DFC and bar to Cecil as a Navigator rather than as a pilot.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser earlier on 28 January 1944 reads:

PATHFINDER NAVIGATOR'S DFC
"Courage and Initiative"

Acting Flight Lieutenant CF Bedell RAFVR who has been awarded the DFC decided in 1939 to make the Service his career. His papers came through two days after war broke out and he joined the RAF as a ranker.
Since that time he has risen to a commissioned rank and has flown several types of aircraft. Once he crashed into the sea after an attack upon a French port and both he and his colleagues were rescued. He is now with a famous Pathfinder squadron. He is the navigator of the machine.
His DFC is granted for his part in a large number of attacks against a great variety of enemy targets including those in the most heavily defended areas. Throughout the whole period he has shown a high standard of courage and initiative.
Acting Flt Lieut Bedell was born in Alderley Edge in 1914 and has spent all his home life there and at Wilmslow. He is the son of Mrs Bedell of Fairbourne Drive, Wilmslow and the late Edward S Bedell. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School.

Later the Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser of 25 August 1944 reads:

Wilmslow Airman Missing:
Flight-Lieut C F Bedell DFC

Flight Lieutenant Cecil F Bedell DFC and bar of Wilmslow, has been reported missing during operations over the continent. Flight Lieutenant Bedell was one of the keenest fliers in the RAF and has had many adventures during the war years. He has flown several types of aircraft and once had to ditch in the Channel.

Flight Lieut. Bedell made scores of flights over the continent, was there on D-Day and was a member of a crew when the Lancasters made their first day light attack and earned the thanks of the Army.
It is about eighteen months ago that Flight Lieut Bedell was awarded the DFC to be followed by a bar last Spring.

He came home a few days before he was reported missing. He is the younger son of Mrs Bedell of 2 Fairbourne Drive Wilmslow and the late Mr Spencer Bedell. Flight Lieut Bedell intended to make the RAF his career and his papers came through on the day War was declared. He has been on active service ever since. He is 30 years of age, married with one little daughter.

Sergeant STANLEY BOOTH

Service Number: 1063014
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 29 Sqdn.
Died 22 June 1941 Age 26 years old
Son of James and Alice Booth, of Wilmslow.



Stanley Booth was lost when flying with Flight Lieutenant D T Parrott, in a two seater, twin engine Beaufighter - R2240, 29 Squadron on 22 June 1941.

They took off at 23:45 hrs for a night patrol from RAF West Malling, Kent on 21/06/1941 and they crashed and cart wheeled on forced landing at Dickens Street, East Fixley, Kent following an engine failure.

One of the Squadron's pilots around this time was, Guy Gibson VC, later officer commanding 617 Squadron on the “Dambusters” raid. He said of the station at West Malling, shared with Booth and Parrott "*Of all the airfields in Great Britain ... we have the most pleasant*"

Sergeant Stanley Booth was killed just a month after the officially dated “end” of the London Blitz. By this time, Britain’s defences were just starting to get to grips with the tactics of the German night raiders and with the coming of the shorter nights, the Luftwaffe’s effort eased off.

One factor affecting this success was that Bristol Beaufighters fitted with airborne Air Interception (AI) radar such as Booth and Parrott were flying had now become established and were having a positive effect. Training and expansion continued over the summer of 1941 in readiness for the winter, when the next round of night attacks was expected and it maybe that it was on one such training mission that Booth and Parrott were lost.



Stanley Booth’s pilot and partner on the night of the fatal crash – Flight Lt Dennis Thomas Parrott.

It is interesting to note that the Beaufighter crews and their night radar seldom get mentioned for their contribution to defending London against the Blitz.



A Bristol Beaufighter fitted out as a night fighter.



Air Interception Radar as installed inside the bulbous nose of a Beaufighter c 1941.

The Wilmslow Advertise 27 June 1941 said:

RADIO GUNNER KILLED
Former Junior Footballer

Sergeant Stanley Booth, radio gunner in the RAF has been killed whilst engaged in flying duties.
Sergeant Booth was the son of Mr and Mrs James Booth of Hawthorn Street Wilmslow and before the war was a popular player in local football. He assisted in turn Alderley St Philips, Morley and Wilmslow Albion. He was a painter by trade and after serving his apprenticeship with Mr Griffiths of Alderley Edge, was employed for some time by Messrs. Broughton and Sons, Water Lane.
Sergeant Booth was a member of the Conservative Club, where the flag was hung at half-mast in his memory.
He was a product of Wilmslow Modern School and was 26 years of age.

Flight Sergeant
ARTHUR ANDREW BRADLEY



Service Number: 1623077
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 199 Sqdn
Navigator
Died 03 May 1945 Age 23 years old
Buried at KIEL WAR CEMETERY Germany
Son of Daniel and Beatrice Alice Bradley, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Grave Marker Commemoration:
"IN HEAVENLY LOVE ABIDING"

Nearly six years of war was coming to an end on the night of 2/3rd May 1945 when Bomber Command carried out its last devastating air attack on Kiel, one of the major naval bases and shipbuilding centres of the German Reich. Owing to its status as a naval port and as a production site for submarines, Kiel kept being heavily bombed by the Allies even so late in the War.

290 aircraft took part and as German defence capabilities reduced, just three failed to return – two Halifax's of 199 Squadron and a Mosquito of 169 Squadron, all from 100 Group. Their crews were actually Bomber Command's very final victims of the RAF's offensive against the Third Reich. Sadly, Wilmslow's F/Sgt Arthur Bradley, as Navigator of Halifax BIII RG375 EX-R, was amongst them.

The Halifaxes had been part of the "Mandrel" screen, part of Bomber Command's radio and electronic counter measure devices designed to jam the enemy's early warning radars. They also carried 4,500lb bombs and large quantities of "Window" (the foil strips that also jammed radar). Sadly, Halifaxes RG373 and RG375 (Arthur's plane) of 199 Sqdn, that had taken off from North Creake, North Norfolk, collided over Kiel, scattering wreckage around the village of Meimersdorf.

A contemporary report states:

After running a general Mandrel screen over the North Frisian Islands to cover the Mosquitoes of 8 Group, the 199 Squadron aircraft delivered a three-pronged Window screen as a spoof to divert attention from the real target, which was Kiel.

A number of Ju88 night fighters took off to try to intercept the bombers. They assembled near Eggebek. Oblt Fritz Brandt of Stab IV/NJG3 found and attacked Halifax RG375. The Rear Gunner, F/Sgt Hunter, and Pilot P/O Currell, were the only crew who managed to bail out. Hunter reported later that the fighter attack had damaged the flying controls and the aircraft went out of control and as a result, collided with Halifax RG 373.

This was the last Luftwaffe night fighter Report from the war, according to the Dutch Researcher Dr. Theo Boiten.'

Thirteen aircrew perished and were buried in a field alongside the wall of the local cemetery. Three of the crew survived the ordeal but not Arthur who, despite his young age, was on his 37th Op. and therefore on his second tour of duty. The rear-gunner, F/S R Hunter, was the very last Bomber Command prisoner of war, being in captivity for less than one week. Some printed sources state that

the pilot of Arthur's plane, F/L L H Currell, of the RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force), also became a PoW. However, his own account states that despite being injured, he evaded capture with the assistance of some French forced labourers and was able to reach British forces. He was repatriated on 8 May 1945 – 5 days later.

These were the last Bomber Command aircraft to be lost in the war. There were only 3 survivors. 13 airmen, 12 from the United Kingdom and one from the Irish Republic, mostly second-tour men, died. They were: Warrant Officer WF Bolton**; Flight Sergeant AA Bradley**; Flight Lieutenant WE Brooks; Sergeant FT Chambers; Flying Officer KNJ Croft; Warrant Officer KAC Gavin; Flight Sergeant D Greenwood; Flying Officer ASJ Holder, DFC; Flight Sergeant JR Lewis; Flight Sergeant J Loth; Pilot Officer WHV Mackay; Warrant Officer RHA Pool; and Flight Sergeant D Wilson.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser May 18th 1945:

Morley Man Missing from Kiel Raid

Flight Sergeant Andrew Arthur Bradley (22), son of Mr and Mrs D Bradley, of Brookside, Morley has been reported missing form operations over Kiel.

He had taken part in many operations over the continent of Europe and it was from a flight on May 2nd-3rd that he failed to return.

He passed into the RAF from the local squadron of the ATC in January 1942, won his wings is South Africa and returned hoem to join Bomber Command.

Flight sergeant Bradley attended Nursery Lane and the Modern Schools and later becae a joiner with Mr Mellor of Trafford House, Morley.

https://heroesofourtime.co.uk/f_sgt-arthur-bradley.html
https://heroesofourtime.co.uk/kenneth-norman-joseph-croft.html

Sergeant DONALD BROADHURST

Service Number: 1311690
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve: 26 Operational Training Unit (OTU)
Died 31 May 1942 Age 30 years old
Buried or commemorated at WILMSLOW CEMETERY



Lapel badges worn by RAFVR Personnel

Sergeant Donald Broadhurst of Buckingham Road Wilmslow died of injuries at RAF Hospital Ely following an operational flight over enemy territory to Cologne. Pilot, Sergeant J Scroggie (RCAF) was also injured (but survived) when their Wellington DV709 of 26 Operational Training Unit crashed on 31 May 1942.

Other crew, Sergeant J J Dixon, Sergeant D G Green and Sergeant B B Camlin were also lost.

Having taken off nineteen minutes after midnight from their base at RAF Gravely, five miles south of Huntingdon, Donald's Wellington overturned and crashed when returning at 04.35 as it attempted an emergency landing in a field near a flour mill at Soham, 13 miles NE of Cambridge.



Despite being "dangerously injured", Pilot James Scroggie survived and returned to Canada



Three further Wellingtons from 26 OTU were lost over Holland on the same air raid.

Royal Air Force Operational Training Units (OTUs) were training units that prepared aircrew for operations on a particular type or types of aircraft or roles. No. 26 Operational Training Unit RAF (26 OTU) was formed in January 1942 at RAF Wing as part of No. 7 Group RAF Bomber Command to train night bomber crews using the Vickers Wellington.

So why were training aircraft and aircrew on an operational mission?

This was because this night saw the first ever 1,000 bomber raid by the RAF to be conducted on Cologne on the night of 30/31 May 1942. Codenamed Operation Millennium, the massive raid was launched for two primary reasons.

Firstly, it was expected that the devastation from such raids might be enough to knock Germany out of the war or at least severely damage German morale. Secondly, the raids were useful propaganda for the Allies and particularly for the head of RAF Bomber Command, Arthur Harris's concept of a Strategic Bombing Offensive.

Bomber Command's poor performance in bombing accuracy during 1941 had led to calls for the force to be split up and diverted to other urgent theatres e.g. the Battle of the Atlantic. A headline-grabbing heavy raid on Germany was a way for Harris to demonstrate that given the numbers and technology, Bomber Command could make a vital contribution to victory.

At this stage of the war Bomber Command only had a regular front line strength of around 400 aircraft, and were in the process of transitioning from twin-engined medium bombers like Donald's Wellington, to newer, more effective four-engined heavy bombers such as the Stirling, Halifax and Lancaster. By using bombers and men from Operational Training Units (OTUs) and Coastal Command, Harris could more easily make up the 1,000 aircraft.

Overall, the first 1,000 bomber raid on Cologne, the third-largest city in Germany with a population of 700,000, was deemed a success. The raid destroyed 600 acres of Cologne, including over 3,000 buildings and damaging another 9,000. 469 German civilians were killed and 45,000 made homeless.

However, 41 British aircraft were lost – including Donald's Wellington and crew – even though they were deemed to still be in training.

https://aircrewremembrancesociety3.com/ARMS-Charity/Memorial-Projects/26-O.T.U.-Operational-Training-Unit-Virtual-Cenotoph/

https://www.bansteadhistory.com/Memorial/2_F.html

Private NORMAN BURGESS

Essex Regiment 1st Bn.
Died 08 April 1944 Age 28 years old
Commemorated at RANGOON MEMORIAL Face 15. Myanmar

Son of William and Elizabeth Burgess; husband of Alice Burgess, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



Research by Alan Cooper of Wilmslow Historical Society identifies the following.

Private Norman Burgess served with the 1st Essex Regiment and died on 8th April 1944 aged 22. He was the son of William (a baker) and Margaret of Finney Green and he was married to Alice. He served in North Africa and then in India and Burma.

In 1943, General Orde Wingate led a brigade of troops, later called “Chindits”, or the Long Penetration Force to operate behind the Japanese lines in Burma. This they did with great effect causing so much damage that Churchill ordered the creation of a second and larger force of ”Chindits”. They were to operate against the enemy who had now begun their final all-out push into India via Assam and Chittagong. Hence orders were given to Wingate to muster and train a much larger force to harass this dangerous Japanese advance.

Norman’s Essex battalion was part of this new larger force and in early in 1944, his group of “Chindits” were landed by gliders well behind the Japanese lines to form a redoubt, optimistically called “Blackpool”, whilst a second followed quickly afterwards.



“Chindits” with a Waco Glider of US air commandos who inserted forces such as the Essex Bn far behind enemy lines.

Norman perished early in the crucial battle of Imphal and Kohima on the Indian border (April - June 1944) where and when allied troops held back substantial Japanese forces. He is commemorated at St Bart's Church, Wilmslow and Rangoon Memorial, Burma (now Myanmar) along with 26,854 others.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 12th April 1946 states:

Presumed Killed After Two Years

Private Norman Burgess of the Essex Regt, previously reported missing, is now presumed to have been killed in Burma on April 8th 1944. His wife, Mrs Alice Burgess living at 69, Oak Lane, Wilmslow has received word to this effect. Her husband in civil life was employed by Mr Tomlinson, grocer of Water Lane, and he then went to work for ICI at Morecambe. Private Burgess spent a considerable portion of his Army Service in this country and was reported missing a few months after going abroad. He leaves a five year old son.



1st Essex "Chindits" July 1944 shortly after Norman was lost.

(A detailed account of the time the Essex Regiment and Norman Burgess spent as "Chindits" is shared by Desmond Earley – Lt. Essex Regiment here:

https://war-experience.org/lives/desmond-earley-lt-essex-regiment/)
https://www.ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/1st-bn-essex-regiment-burma-44th-56th-columns.53412/page-5#post-770549
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/battalion.php?pid=987
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/regiment.php?pagenum=3&pid=23

Corporal CHARLES CALLWOOD



Royal Armoured Corps
144th (8th Bn. The East Lancashire Regt.) Regt.
Died 12 August 1944 Age 31 years old
Buried at BRETTEVILLE-SUR-LAIZE CANADIAN WAR CEMETERY, France
Son of Henry and Annie Elizebeth Callwood; husband of Amy Callwood, of Wilmslow, Cheshire, England.
IN MEMORY'S GARDEN WE MEET EVERY DAY.
LOVING WIFE AND DAUGHTER JOAN

Born in Chelford, “Charlie” lived at 92 Bourne Street, Wilmslow. He worked for grocers Seymour Mead’s in Alderley Edge and then Downe’s the grocers on Water Lane before joining up. He was remembered in the Wilmslow Advertiser by various members of his family for a number of years after his loss

The 144th Regiment Royal Armoured Corps (144 RAC) was an armoured regiment of the British Army. Originally raised in World War II as a battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment it was later transferred to the Royal Armoured Corps and tanks. It fought in the campaign across North-West Europe, from D-Day in June 1944 to May 1945.

Part of the British 33rd Armoured Brigade, the regiment fielded three tank Squadrons A, B and C. The Regimental strength was 59 standard Sherman Tanks with 12 “Firefly” Sherman tanks armed with a larger 17-pounder “Tiger Tank” killing guns.



A Sherman “Firefly” “Tank Killer”

The 144 RAC's tanks disembarked on Gold Beach during the Normandy landings on June 14, 1944 – 8 days after D-Day on June 6th. Delayed in going ashore, the regiment's tanks had been sorely missed by the infantry - and consequently the men of the 144th soon found themselves in action.

A month later around the time that Charles was killed, the main plan for the British tanks and forces was to protect the American’s eastern flank near Caen as they headed for the port of Cherbourg.

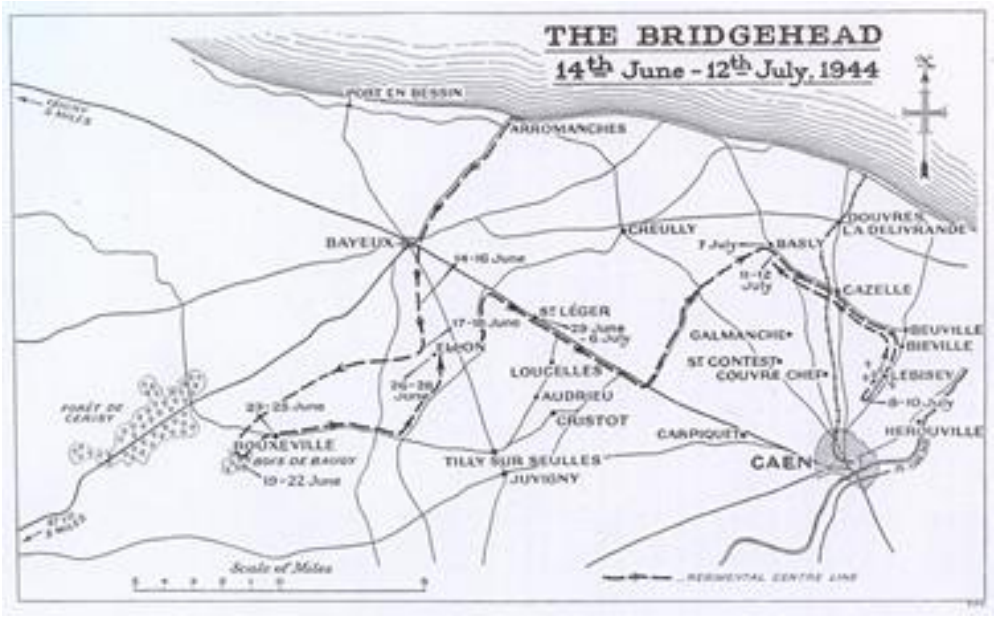
It was important to get another port operational so more troops and supplies could be landed and General Montgomery needed a reserve of tanks that he could use in case of a German counter attack. The 144th RAC regiment was part of that armoured reserve.

In August, over three days of fighting, 144 RAC tanks lost 13 officers and other ranks killed, 9 missing, and 61 wounded. In addition to the tanks disabled by mines, it had five tanks 'brewed up', (fuel set alight), one written off and 11 damaged or ditched, as well as a scout car and a half-track lost.

It is likely that Charlie was one of the casualties incurred during these three days.

Charlie had already taken part in several important actions immediately before. These included an operation to capture the town of Noyers-Bocage (July 1944) and Operation Totalize, an innovative night attack which was one of the final steps to breaking out of the Caen bridgehead (7/8 August 1944) and the siege and capture of Le Havre.

The family memories in the Wilmslow Advertiser say Charlie was killed in Belgium but this does not seem to tie in with the military records found.



A Contemporary map of the Normandy territory shortly after D-Day when Charlie's Regt landed.

A Sherman tank of the 144 RAC in Normandy 1944



https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/the-144-rac-tank-losses-during-the-night-advance-to-cramesnil-on-early-8-august-1944.77337/

Flight Sergeant WALTER CALLWOOD CHEETHAM

Service Number: 658945
Royal Air Force 180 Sqdn.
Died 26 November 1943 Age 24 years old
Commemorated at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL

Son of Arnold Guy and Lizzie Cheetham, of Wilmslow, Cheshire

North American Mitchell II Serial Number FL205 with squadron marking EV took off from RAF Dunsfold to bomb what were recorded as “construction works” at Martinvas in Holland and was shot down by flak near the site.

As part of the mission, 2 Group dispatched seven squadrons in the morning for Martinvast but these were recalled only to be dispatched again in the afternoon for the same target.
98**,** 180 and 320 Sqdn, all flying Mitchells, attacked first with Walter’s 180 Sqdn. leading.

The heavy flak encountered over the target area brought down three of 180 Sqdn. Mitchells (FV912, FL205,(Walter’s) and FL707) and one of 320 Sqdn. Mitchell (FR146). The crews of all four perished except Sgt. R. Overwijn who evaded capture and Cpl. D. J. Konig who became PoW - both men were of 320 Sqdn. in Mitchell II (FR146).

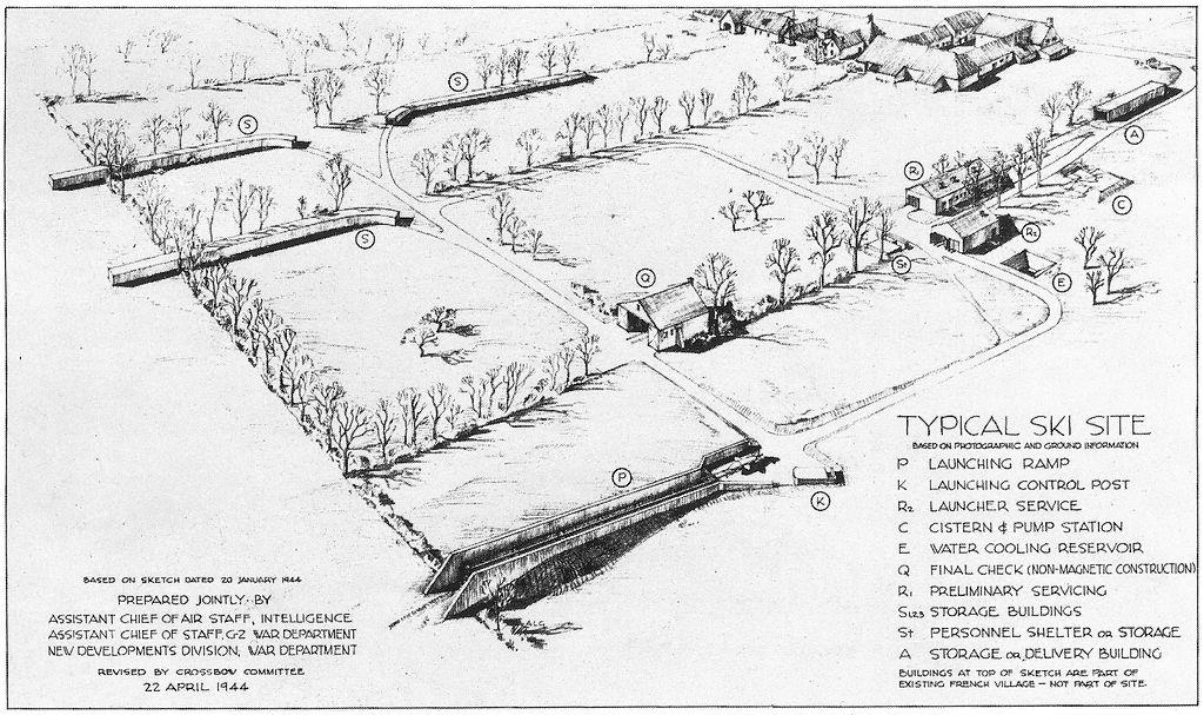


A Mitchell II Bomber of 180 Squadron

The raid on which Walter flew was part of “Operation Crossbow” – the bombing of V-1 launching “Ski sites” . These were so called by the Allies because from the air the long, straight, angled concrete launch tracks had a curve to the side at one end for rockets to be prepared for launching without being in direct line with the jet blast of an earlier firing. Like a ski on its side.

“Crossbow” was the code name in World War II for Anglo-American operations against the German long range reprisal weapons (V-weapons) programme that had started three weeks earlier on the 5th of November. The primary V-weapons were the V-1 flying bomb and V-2 rocket, which were launched against Britain from 1944 to 1945 and used against continental European targets as well.

The Crossbow attacks were not very successful, and every raid carried out against a V-1 or V-2 launch site was one fewer raid against other targets in the Third Reich. The diversion of Allied resources from other targets thereby represented a major success for Hitler



A contemporary illustration of a V1 “Ski-site”

https://ww2aircraft.net/forum/threads/operation-crossbow.7977/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-1_flying_bomb_facilities#/media/File:V-1_1944_-_Typical_Ski_Site.jpg

https://losses.internationalbcc.co.uk/loss/310437

Sergeant LESLIE GORDON COCKRAM



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 15 OTU
Trade Pilot
Died 17th October 1941
Son of Charles and Winefred Olive Cockram, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Leslie flew and was lost in another Vickers Wellington IC Serial Number N2808 of "B" Flight which was on a local training flight. It was seen flying low at 1600 hrs and crashed after hitting a tree near the old canal at Kingston Common Farm, Kingston Lyle, near Wantage.

All the crew were killed. These were Sgt L.A.H.Saul (1257669) Sgt P.J.Masini (1376762) Sgt. L.G.Cockram (1066470) Sgt R.F.Whittington (125899) and Sgt S.E.Sales (520346).

15 OTU was formed in August 1940 as part of No. 6 Group RAF Bomber Command at RAF Harwell to train night bomber crews on the Vickers Wellington. In 1942, it carried out seven operational missions after Leslie's death – including the 1,000 Bomber raid on which Donald Broadhurst was lost.

RAF OTU squadrons were the last stage of training for aircrew before being assigned to an operational unit in NW Europe or other theatres of war. By this stage, individuals had undertaken all their preparatory and qualification training, (starting at places like RAF Wilmslow) and shortly after arrival at the OTU, if they were operating a crewed aircraft, they would be 'crewed up' with the other men with whom they would go to war. This was done on an almost random basis by men picking each other out in a crowded hangar until they hadthe necessary mix of 'musterings' (Pilot, Navigator, Wireless Operator / Air Gunner depending on the aircraft) Ccrews would then normally remain together until separated by promotion, new aircraft, death, injury, illness or re-posting.

Loss rates in training were high due to inexperience, crowded airspace, poor weather, and even enemy aircraft operating over the United Kingdom. October 1941 was a bad month at 15 OTU with 9 airmen being interred at Harwell cemetery – including Leslie. He was one of more than 8,000 men who were killed in training accidents or other non-operational flying during the Second World War.



The RAF Cemetery at Harwell where the body of Leslie Gordon Cockram lies.

https://lancasterbombersinfo.ipage.com/Data/Form-78s/Wellington/N2808-N2879/mobile/index.html

Sub-Lieutenant (Acting)
OLIVER DIXON



Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve H.M.S. Grebe.
815 Naval Air Squadron
Died 23 July 1942 Age N/K
Commemorated at LEE-ON-SOLENT MEMORIAL
Son of Hamilton and Florence Mary Dixon, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



815 squadron was formed from the remnants of 811 and 822 squadrons that had survived the disastrous sinking of their aircraft carrier HMS Courageous in September 1939. (In which Eric England commemorated on the Handforth memorial was lost).

Once qualified, Oliver was assigned, as a Sub Ltnt, to 815 Naval Air Squadron which in earlier in 1941 had been instrumental in the successful attack on the Italian fleet at Taranto

Oliver trained as a pilot at Netheravon near Amesbury in Wiltshire and other bases.

(Here he is shown on the far left with fellow Tiger Moth trainees).

Training included deck landing on aircraft carriers - a potentially frightening prospect for a young trainee pilot.



A 3 man Fairey Swordfish of 815 Squadron. (This one fitted with an early air to sea radar system).

HMS Grebe was not a ship but the Royal Navy designation for the pre-war Alexandria airport in Egypt, known as Dekheila. During World War II it was a land base for aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) to be received from aircraft carriers. Loaned by the Royal Egyptian Air Force to the Air Arm from 16 September 1940 the field had capacity for 72 aircraft.

When Churchill made General Alexander Commander in Chief, Middle East Forces and put General Montgomery in charge of the Eighth Army, 815 Swordfish Squadron moved to HMS Grebe alongside 821 & 826 flying Albecores (another type of torpedo bomber).

All three squadrons were employed to support ground forces in the North African campaign for three months before and during the battle for El Alamein (23rd October 1942) as well as providing marine patrols in search of submarines threatening allied shipping in the Mediterranean.



Best known for its employment in naval battles using torpedoes, the Swordfish was also brought in to use as a tank killer in North Africa. The Swordfish was also used on occasion in missions inserting and extracting agents from occupied territory.

Here Oliver is pictured fixing his Swordfish on an occasion when he had to force-land in the desert.

On 23rd July 1942 whilst on a U-Boat sweep between Alexandria and Mersa Matruh, Egypt and piloting Swordfish V 4365 "F" for Freddie, he and his crew (Harold G Newbold (Observer) and William E Way (Telegraphist /Air Gunner)) attacked a U-Boat they had spotted on the surface.

However, during the attack, they were hit by fire from the deck gun and Oliver and his two crew were all killed. It is believed that this was the first occasion when an allied aircraft was shot down by an enemy submarine.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertise reported on August 14th 1942:



MISSING IN AIR OPERATIONS
Sub-Lieut. O Dixon

Sub Lieut. Oliver Dixon, of the Fleet Air Arm, has been reported missing from operations in the Middle East. Sub-Lieut. Dixon who is 21 years of age, is the eldest son of Mr and Mrs Dixon of Grove Avenue.

With thanks to Jerry Dixon and the Dixon family for the information and photographs shared with Wilmslow Historical Society.

Driver JOHN ARNOLD FOX

Royal Army Service Corps
Died 20 June 1942 Age 25 years old
Commemorated at ALAMEIN MEMORIAL, Column 74. Egypt
Son of Arnold and Lillie Fox, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



The Wilmslow Advertiser reprinted an article remembering Driver Fox - 25 years after his loss:

> **Generals Praise for Gallantry:**
>
> Mr and Mrs Arnold Fox of Copperleigh, Strawberry Lane, Wilmslow have received a notification from General Alexander, CiC in the Middle East, praising the conduct of their son Driver John Arnold Fox of the RAMC who was killed on June 20 last by a sniper while in charge of an ambulance.
>
> The notification says about Driver Fox: "Your name has been brought to my notice for gallantry in action. I thank you for your devotion to duty and for the high example you have set".

Up until the beginning of 1942, the North African campaign had been characterised by swift advances by both sides, followed by equally swift withdrawals. In May of that year the Allied forces were based in a static series of 'Boxes' on the Gazala line awaiting an anticipated attack. Rommel was determined that this time his forces would capture Tobruk and continue to Cairo, Alexandria and the Suez Canal

Despite strong resistance at the end of May, Rommel's Afrika Korps overran the 150 Brigade Box which had blocked his supply route. His attention was then focused on the Free French forces at Bir Hacheim, the southern-most Box. Forces in the remaining Boxes were ordered to withdraw as the Armoured Corps could no longer offer any hope of protection. Amidst scenes of confusion the troops fell back towards Tobruk, but it was captured 21 June, with Rommel taking over 30,000 prisoners as well as vehicles and valuable supplies. John was lost the day before.

The Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) was the corps of the British Army responsible for land, coastal and lake transport, air despatch, barracks administration, the Army Fire Service, staffing headquarters' units, supply of food, water, fuel and domestic materials such as clothing, furniture and stationery and the supply of technical and military equipment. The exceptions were weaponry and ammunition, which were supplied by the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. (now named The Royal Logistics Corps). Being the unit responsible for supplying all the British Army with provisions they were largely designated as non-combatants yet performed an essential role.

https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/152092/

Lance Corporal
FREDERICK HERBERT HALL



Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers 6th Bn.
Died 24 April 1943 Age 26 years old
Commemorated at
OUED ZARGA WAR CEMETERY, Tunisia
Son of Frederick Herbert and Elizabeth Hall; husband of May Theresa Hall, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
AT REST

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for May 14th 1943 reported:

> **WILMSLOW SOLDIER DIES OF WOUNDS**
>
> L/Crpl. Frederick Herbert Hall of the Inniskillen Fusiliers, whose home is at 36 Lacey Green has died of wounds received during the fighting in North Africa. He landed there last November and had been in the Army for three years.
>
> L/Crpl Hall was born at Alderley Edge, 26 years ago; was educated there under the headmastership of Mr Kennedy; belonged to St Philip's Sunday School and to the Boy Scouts. He was employed by Stockport Corporation, Waterworks Department at Wilmslow. He is survived by his wife and two young children.

The Irish Brigade spent the first few days of April 1943 preparing for their part in a coordinated 78th Division assault on German positions in the mountains north of the Beja to Medjez-el-Bab road, Tunisia. This would be the first time that the division had gone into action as a complete formation.

The brigade's specific objective was the 1,400 foot Djebel Mahdi.The attack was timed for the early morning of 7th April and the start of the action was heralded by the firing of 150 guns.

6 Innisksillings "The Skins" led the attack but in the course of providing close personal support to C Company, who had come under heavy fire, the battalion's CO, Lt-Col Allen, was killed. Despite signs of a German counter attack, the "Skins" secured a foothold on the Djebel. 1st Royal Irish Rifles , led by their C and D Companies, then passed through 6 Innisks' forward positions and, by nightfall, were able to fully consolidate the Irish Brigade's positions on Djebel Mahdi. On the brigade's right hand side, both 11 Brigade and 36 Brigade were also successful in their assaults.

Three days later, the brigade was ordered to advance a further five miles to take Djebel Guernat (Guerinat), and with the support of tanks from the North Irish Horse quickly secured their aims. The Oued Zarga to Medjez-el-Bab road was now completely clear of German forces.

The next task for the Irish Brigade was to move eastwards to launch attacks on the mountains north of Medjez-el-Bab including Tanngoucha and Djebel Ang, where 11 Brigade was battling to withstand sustained German counter attacks. 2 LIR re-joined the brigade and were immediately positioned

behind Djebel Bettiour. For their impending task the brigade was provided with further temporary support from 5 Buffs, and 56 Recce.

6 Innisks, now commanded by Lt-Col Neville Grazebrook, attacked Tanngoucha on the evening of 15th April, getting half way up the hill, but were forced to withdraw after receiving withering defensive fire from flank positions. At the same time, st1 Royal Irish Rifles (RIrF) attacked Djebel Ang and Kef el Tiour just beyond it, and were heard to utter their war cry "Faugh a Ballagh" as they overwhelmed German resistance on these peaks, before mist prevented further onward progress towards pt 622. After prolonged enemy counter attacks throughout the night, the "Faughs" were eventually able to consolidate their advanced positions. Meanwhile, the "Buffs"' (Royal East Kent Regt.) assault on the village of Heidous was driven back, and a further assault by the "Skins" on Tanngoucha, although initially successful, was followed by a withdrawal, which was forced upon them, before dawn.

New plans were now set for a brigade wide assault, with 6 Innisks to target Tanngoucha again, 1 RIrF to take pt 622 and Butler's Hill, and 2 LIR to move against the village of Heidous. This new series of attacks was set for the evening of 22nd April.

During that night and the following day (Good Friday) the "Skins" were able to get half way up Tanngoucha, but although the Faughs got close to their objective, they were forced to withdraw. At the same time, the Irish Rifles failed to capture Heidous. It is likely that it was during this action that Frederick was injured.

Without any hope of being reinforced by other infantry units, two days later, the Irish Brigade made a further effort against their three major objectives and, on the afternoon of Easter Sunday, the Faughs, with the support of three Churchill tanks from the North Irish Horse, successfully reached the peak of pt 622, the Skins surmounted Tanngoucha, and that night the LIR captured Heidous, which had by then been evacuated. The next day, news also came that 78th Division's other attacks in the area had been successful, and that the battle of Longstop had been won.

Over the next few days, although the three battalions of the Irish Brigade were now a much depleted force, they continued to pursue the enemy through the mountains before being relieved by French forces in early May.

During April 1943, the Irish Brigade had seen 130 men killed, with hundreds more wounded or captured. Fred was one of those wounded and then died at some point in this time.

https://www.irishbrigade.co.uk/month-by-month-campaign-narrative/tunisian-campaign-month-by-month/april-1943/

Lieutenant PHILIP SUMNER HOLT

Service Number: 295834
Border Regiment/1st (Airborne) Bn. 1st Airlanding Brigade 1st Airborne Battalion
OC 21 Platoon D Company
Date of Death
Died 21 September 1944 Age 19 years old

Buried or commemorated at
ARNHEM OOSTERBEEK WAR CEMETERY
Netherlands
Son of Harold (d 1941) and Dorothy Holt, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER HIM



From his home in Grove Street, Philip first enlisted in1940 when he must have been only 16 or 17. In October 1943 he was an “emergency commission” (ie an officers commission other than via Sandhurst College) into the Royal Armoured Corps. By January 1944 he had volunteered into the 1st Airborne Battalion The Border Regiment and was appointed as Officer Commanding, 21 Platoon (D Company) still at just 19 years old.

In the early part of the War, before Philip’s service, The Border Regiment formed part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) that fought in France and returned via Dunkirk to the UK. By 1941 the brigade, and its constituent battalions, was selected to be re-rolled to undertake airborne assault by Glider as the 1st Air Landing Brigade with the battalion becoming 1st (Airborne) Battalion The Border Regiment.

Following action in Sicily in 1943 when the Battalion lost many men in the first ever British glider attack, the force regrouped back in the UK and was then prepared for the 1944 airborne attack on Arnhem Holland, Operation Market Garden – later to be known as “A Bridge Too Far”.

Lieutenant Holt successfully completed Glider training with the 1st Battalion. and was posted to his 21 Platoon – in command of up to 30 men. (NB A battalion is a regimental sub-unit of infantry amounting to between 500 and 1,000 soldiers. It normally consists of three or more companies made up of several platoons.)

On the 19th of September, at the start of the Arnhem campaign, 21 platoon landed by glider, moved to Oorsprong House in Oosterbeek and put a 6 pound anti-tank cannon in position. But Oorsprong House quickly became part of the frontline and from that night on the platoon had to defend their position whilst also providing protection to 12 adults and 4 children hiding in an adjacent shelter. On the morning of the 21st of September the shooting seemed to ease down and the platoon and family started to make dinner in the house but just after the food was brought to the shelter, German grenade fire started again and around noon the house at Oorsprong was ablaze.

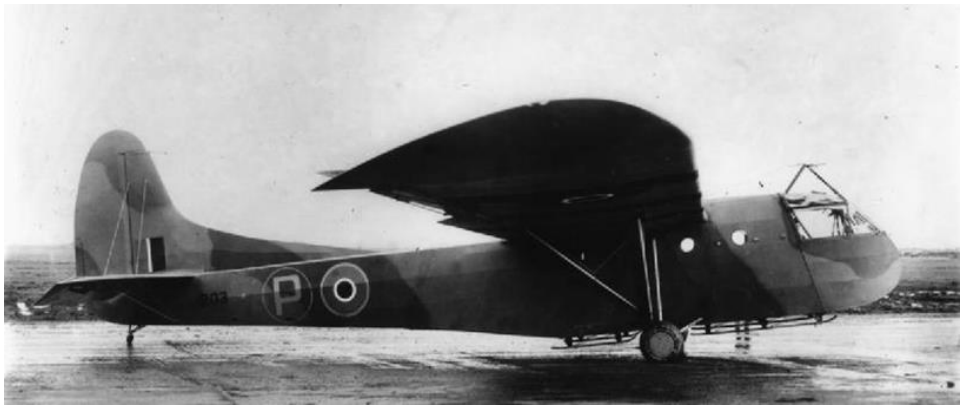
From the entrance of their shelter the civilian owners of the house could see their house burning.

Around this time on 21st September, Lt Holt was mortally wounded by shrapnel and he was buried in the garden of the house. His remains were later reinterred in the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery on 27 May 1946 where he is commemorated as well as on the Wilmslow cenotaph.

Much of the 1st Airborne Battalion was lost- killed, wounded or captured during the ill-fated Arnhem campaign with only 9 officers and 241 other ranks ultimately returned to the UK at Roughton Moor Camp. Those lost included D Company's second in command –Lt Holts boss, Acting Major 2nd Lt William Kitching Hodgson, -"Bill" who died four days after Lt Holt of wounds received.



Oorsprong House before 21st September 1944.



A WACO "Hadrian" glider in British markings as used by 1st Airborne Battalion The Border Regiment.

1st Airborne Battalion Border Regiment Glider troops manning a 6 pound anti tank gun during action at Arnhem.

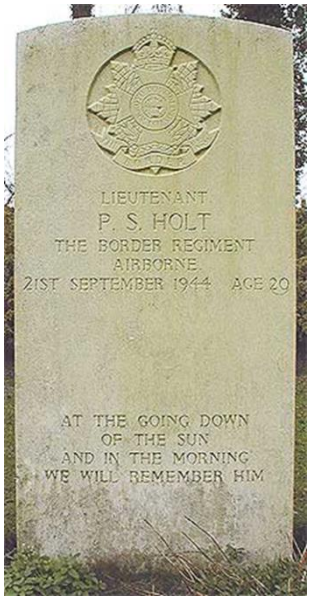


On the nights before leaving for Arnhem, Philip's Battalion was bivouacked at Burford Priory, West Oxfordshire. A plaque in the Lenthall Chapel at the Priory has the following words:

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN GRATEFUL AND ABIDING MEMORY OF THE OFFICERS AND MEN/ OF THE 1ST BATTALION OF THE BORDER REGIMENT AIRBORNE DIVISION WHO LEFT THIS HOUSE AT DAWN ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH 1944/TO WIN UNDYING FAME AT ARNHEM IN HOLLAND AND IN THAT HEROIC ENTERPRISE LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES

AND SO THEY PASSED OVER AND ALL THE TRUMPETS SOUNDED FOR THEM ON THE OTHER SIDE.

- Brown, G E T
- Coulston, R H
- Gibson
- Hodgson, W K
- **Holt, P S**
- Montgomery, T E
- Tate, J
- Wellbelove, J A



Grave of Lt Philip Holt in Holland

Sergeant
RONALD EDWARD HULME



Manchester Regiment 5th Bn.
Died 22 April 1944 Age 28 years old

Also commemorated at
LINDOW (ST. JOHN) CHURCHYARD
South of chancel.
Son of Alexander William and Sarah Jane Hulme, of Wilmslow; husband of Bessie Hulme, of Wilmslow.
GOD'S WILL BE DONE R.I.P.

On 29 March 1939 the government ordered a doubling in strength of the Territorial Army and on 31 July the 5th battalion of the Manchester (Territorial) Regiment was divided in two, the second half forming a new 6th Battalion. The 5th Battalion mobilised on 1 September 1939 with all men under 19 or of low medical category being transferred to the newly formed 6th Battalion. Training was carried out locally and in Wigan. Then, at the end of March 1939 the 5th battalion of the fit men moved to Haydon Bridge, Northumberland and in January 1940 to Marlborough, Wiltshire.

The battalion embarked for France with the BEF on 24 April 1940 as part of 127 (Manchester) Brigade 42 (East Lancashire) Division equipped with 18/25-pounder guns and arrived in Halluin on the French/Belgium border. Following the German invasion of Belgium on 10 May the battalion moved to the area of Douai to guard river crossings at Lessines and Ath. After less than 24 hours, they were ordered to withdraw and march back to France and then to Dunkirk. They were engaged in close combat to the west of Bergues and were evacuated to the UK on 1/2 June from Dunkirk.



An 18/25 pounder gun in action - as used by the Manchester regiment.

Further records suggest that the 5th Battalion Manchester Regiment never went abroad again for the duration of the War – being stationed at various British bases – including Balmoral and Sandringham on Royal Protection duties.

This suggests that four years after the action in France, Ronald either died in hospital from injuries received when in action before Dunkirk – or suffered an accident or illness when on service in this country. Research to date has not given an answer.

Sergeant
KENNETH JOHNSON



Royal Artillery
207 Bty., 110 Field Regt.
Died 21 May 1940
Age 26 years old
Buried WILMSLOW CEMETERY Sec. H. Grave 88.
Son of Joseph and Louisa Johnson, of Wilmslow; husband of Zena Johnson, of Wilmslow.

110 (Manchester) Field Regiment Royal Artillery (Territorial Army) was formed in May 1939 at Gorton, Manchester with two batteries and as a duplicate of 52 Field Regiment. In January 1941 a third battery was formed.

On Friday May 31st 1940 The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser explains exactly how Kenneth lost his life so early in the War and before his regiment was posted to any overseas service. The timing may suggest that the Battery was part of coastal defences against the threat of invasion on the South Coast.

WILMSLOW SERGEANT ACCIDENTALLY KILLED

Collision With Motor Lorry

The death has been announced of Sergeant Kenneth Johnson of the Royal Artillery who lived with his wife and two young children in Water Lane Wilmslow. Aged 26, Sergeant Johnson belonged to the Territorials before the outbreak of war. It was while leaving duty in the South of England that he was killed. He was riding a motorcycle and collided with a military lorry, receiving fatal injuries. A verdict of accidental death was recorded at the inquest. Sergeant Johnson was a native of Wilmslow and followed the occupation of chauffeur/gardener. When the funeral took place at Wilmslow Cemetery on Saturday, the coffin was covered with the Union Jack. The service was conducted by the Rev JH Brunskill MA. Along with family and neighbours the funeral was attended by a Major Currie and various Officers and men from 207th Battery.



Motorcyclists of 207th Battery the Manchester Regiment: - parading at an unnamed South Coast town.

Private CYRIL KENT

Hampshire Regiment 2/4th Bn.
Died 16 September 1943
Age 31 years old

Buried SALERNO WAR CEMETERY III.
Italy
Son of Richard and Mary E. Kent, of Wilmslow, Cheshire; husband of Florence Kent, of Wilmslow.



The Allies' Italian Campaign began on 10th July 1943 and the Hampshire Regiment participated in the invasion of Sicily as part of "Operation Husky".

Four Hampshire battalions took part in the Salerno, Sicily landings – the 2nd, 1/4th, 5th and two companies of the 2/4th - (Cyril's). The 2/4th Hampshire had been withdrawn from 128th Brigade in May with two companies assigned to the newly-formed 20 Beach Group and 21 Beach Group which were tasked with moving supplies from beachheads until a harbour could be captured. These units underwent special training, 20 Beach Group for the Sicily landings and 21 Beach Group for the Salerno operation.

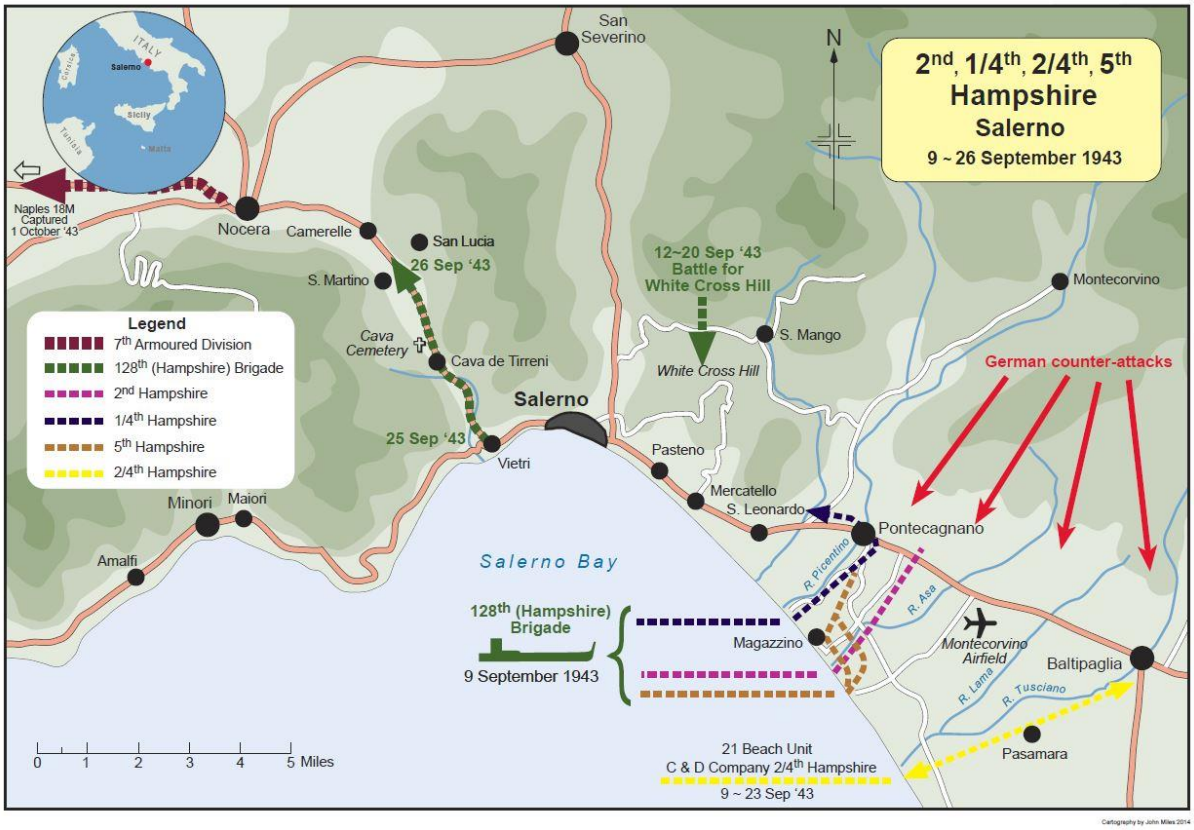
By 9th September 1943 the 21st Beach Group ("C" and "D" companies) were part of the Salerno action. The assault went in at dawn against stiff opposition and although the beaches were heavily wired and mined and some units landed in the wrong sector - a firm defensive line was quickly established. Then unexpectedly, rather than take its allotted role, the half-battalion was moved straight into the line.

However, there was little action until 13 September when the half-battalion was attacked by armoured half-tracks. This happened again on 15 September when 'D' company was overrun by troops of the crack Hermann Goering and Panzer Division. However, the enemy half-tracks didn't assault 'D' company as such but ran over the slit trenches until picked off by 6pdr anti-tank guns.

The next day the Germans attacked with a full battalion but the 2/4th held firm and drove them off and on 17 September the half-battalion was moved back into Reserve, and by 23 September they were back on the beaches unloading cargo.

It was during this battle that Cyril was recorded as having been killed as the two Companies grimly hung on to their positions and as 2nd Battalion suffered 304 casualties. Lieutenant GF Heald won the Military Cross for gallantry and Sergeant AR Hopgood was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for commanding his platoon in the absence of his officer with conspicuous gallantry and success.

After 38 days of fighting, the U.S. and Great Britain forces successfully drove German and Italian troops from Sicily and prepared to assault the Italian mainland.



The 2/4th Battalion positions at Salerno, September 1943

https://www.royalhampshireregiment.org/about-the-museum/timeline/salerno-landings-9th-september-1943/

https://www.royalhampshireregiment.org/about-the-museum/timeline/sicily-july-august-1943/

Signalman PETER NORBURY LEECH



Royal Corps of Signals
Died 29 February 1944 Age 29 years old

Buried at
CHRISTIANSBORG WAR CEMETERY Ghana

Son of Enoch and Ethel Leech; husband of Winifred Mary Leech, of Lacey Green, Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Wilmslow Advertiser: 10th March 1944.

Dispatch Rider's Death in West Africa

Mrs Peter Leech of 21 Roseland Avenue, lacy Green Wilmslow, has been informed that her husband Lance-Corporal Peter (Pat) Leech aged 29 years, has died of typhoid fever in West Africa.

Lance-Corporal Leech was a dispatch rider in the Royal Corps of Signals. Before the war he worked for I Massey and Sons. He attended the Fulshaw Memorial School. He leaves a wife and two children – a girl and boy.

Peter's posting was one of the more unusual of those on the Wilmslow War memorial. As a signalman in the Royal Corps of Signals his role would have been to set up and operate wireless communication for the West Africa HQ in Accra, Ghana, on the Gulf of Guinea, on the African Atlantic coast.

H.Q. Military Forces West Africa was formed on 7 July 1940 with the arrival of Lieutenant General GIFFARD and one staff officer. The headquarters were established on 15 July near Accra. The task was the defence of all West African territories, and the coordination of all Military resources in these colonies.

Early in the War the main threat to the British colonies in West Africa came from the French after they agreed an armistice with Germany in June 1940. The French colony of West Africa then aligned itself with the Vichy Government and threatened operations in the areas of Nigeria, the Gold Coast Area, Sierra Leone and Gambia. The challenge did not materialise although tension increased after the British action against the French fleet at Dakar, Senegal. The work of the command was also as a significant recruiting ground for allied servicemen and recruited some 200,000 soldiers to West African Divisions, many of whom served in India and Burma.

Typhus, to which Peter succumbed is transmitted by the body louse but in 1940 no chemotherapeutic agents had been found to treat it once contracted. It was a disease closely associated with close human contact, poor sanitation and personal hygiene and was the reason for the regular "de-lousing" that soldiers in the field were often required to experience.

Sapper GEORGE LINCOLN

Royal Engineers
2 Bomb Disposal Coy.

Died 11 February 1941

Buried at CROYDON (MITCHAM ROAD) CEMETERY



In the midst of the London Blitz, on 5th February 1941, 2 Bomb Disposal Company were tasked with uncovering an unexploded bomb dropped at Purley Oaks School, Bynes Road, Croydon.

It was reported that Lance Sgt.Brinton left the site to check on progress of another bomb in a garden nearby. The section of seven was left digging towards the bomb under the playground.

Brinton had only got a street away when the bomb exploded. On returning to the site he found the school and several houses were damaged and all had been killed except the section driver, who had seen a Warden approaching inside the cordoned danger area and escorted him back to the safety barriers when the bomb exploded. (Details extracted from Bomb Disposal British Casualties of WWII)

The six men killed were Lance Corporal William O'Shea and Sappers Edward Rolls, Thomas Perkins, George Lincoln, Fred Hickford, John Cook and George Lincoln . Sadly, the remains of four of the six men had to be buried together in just two graves at Mitcham Road Cemetery.

The further remains of 26-year-old Thomas Perkins and 20-year-old Fred Hickford were buried in Leicester and Salford respectively, close to each victim's home. In total, 1,380 bombs dropped on Croydon during The Blitz

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser February 21st 1941:

Wilmslow Soldier Killed: Sapper G Lincoln

We regret to announce the death through enemy action of Sapper G Lincoln of the R.E.'s (Royal Engineers)

Sapper Lincoln who was 24 years of age, was the son of Mr and Mrs John Lincoln of Oak Lane, Wilmslow, and volunteered for army service in 1940. Both Mr and Mrs Lincoln belong to Derbyshire families and came to live in Wilmslow six years ago. Up to the time of joining the service Sapper Lincoln assisted his father as a draining contractor.

Sapper Lincoln was given a military funeral on Saturday at a southern town. Among those present were his father, Mr John Lincoln and his sister Miss Mary Alice Lincoln.

https://www.royalengineersbombdisposal-eod.org.uk/individual/lincoln-g/

Sergeant AUSTIN SOUTHWELL MARSHALL

Service Number: 978403
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
221 Sqdn. Coastal Command (based Northern Ireland)
Died 22 June 1941 Age 21 years old
Commemorated at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL
Son of Harry Marshall, J.P., and Mary Louise Marshall, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



Austin Southwell Marshall was born on 9th Dec 1919 in Chorlton cum Hardy, Manchester. He was named Austin after Austin Reed, men's outfitter, with whom his father had served an apprenticeship in London. He was the third child (of four) and only son of Harry Marshall (later Magistrate, Councillor, CBE) and Mary Louisa (nee Heap).

Austin was educated at Hulme Hall Grammar School and in 1936, aged 16, he went on a school trip to the Berlin Olympics. On leaving school, like his father, he went to London to learn the menswear trade with Austin Reed, later returning to work with his father at his own menswear shops in Manchester, becoming a men's outfitting manager by 1939.

In 1938 the family moved from Chorlton cum Hardy to "Omster", 12 Stanneylands Road, Manchester. (The house being named after one of Harry Marshall's shops, Ohm & Webster).

Austin enlisted in the RAF Volunteer Reserves on 19 Feb 1940 and on entry he was listed as an Aircraft Hand/Wireless Operator. After initial training at Padgate near Warrington and by March he was recommended for a commission as an Intelligence Officer but he presumably preferred to volunteer as aircrew and on 31 Dec 1940 he was promoted to Sergeant with 221 Squadron

This was only a month after 221 Squadron had been reformed to be part of Coastal Command in November 1940. It was equipped with Vickers Wellingtons for reconnaissance and anti-submarine patrols in the Atlantic, first out of England, then Northern Ireland and later Iceland.



On 22nd June 1941, the crew of Wellington Ic W5659 was skippered by Pilot Officer A O Johnson who had just won his commission after time with 608 Squadron as a Sergeant Pilot. The remainder of the crew were, Sergeant K W Morgan, Flight Sergeant K S Willis, Flight Sergeant W E Cass, Sergeant S A Smith and Wilmslow's Sergeant Austin Southwell Marshall.

Sadly, all were recorded as missing believed killed when their aircraft failed to return from an operational flight patrol from Limavady, a small town on the coast of County Londonderry. It was reported in official records that it was possible that their aircraft was intercepted by an enemy Focke-Wulf "Kurrier".

The “Kurrier” was an armed, long range reconnaissance aircraft used to spot shipping for the U-boats. it is believed Austin’s aircraft went into the sea in the area of St Kilda and although several searches were carried out later that day, no sign of the aircraft or its crew was found.

Despite the loss of Austin’s aircraft, 221 Squadron had won a good name for itself in Coastal Command, having sighted and attacked 16 U-Boats and having earned a special commendation for the amount of flying hours and the low accident rate achieved before the loss of Austin’s aircraft.

Austin had served in the RAF for 1 year and 124 days. He had been due home on leave the day after he went missing.

A Costal Command Wellington fitted with early Anti Submarine (ASV) radar as fitted to 221 Squadron aircraft.



http://www.mckechnies.net/family/cattley/peter/221-history.htm

With thanks to Isobel Wilson and Marshall family for the information and photographs shared with Wilmslow Historical Society.

Squadron Leader COLIN METCALF

Service Number: 78148
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
194 Squadron RAF - Delhi-Palam, India
Died 27 August 1943: Age 31 years old
Buried at DELHI WAR CEMETERY, India
Son of Frederick Thomas Metcalf and Jessie Metcalf;
husband of Henrietta Margaret Metcalf, of Bramhall, Cheshire.

Grave Marker Commemoration: GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

Colin was a passenger in a Hudson VI aircraft, FK 584 when the aircraft was on the landing approach to Delhi-Palum station when it stalled during a flat turn at 80 feet. The aircraft crashed at the Badrauli aerodrome, Allahabad, India, killing 10 of twelve crew and passengers aboard.

The pilot of FK 584 was Pilot Officer W C Walsh (RCAF) and other passengers included Squadron Leader L R C Cartwright (RAFVR)(Can), Pilot Officer K Brookman (RAFVR), **Squadron Leader C Metcalf (RAFVR)**, Flight Sergeant L Yealland (RAFVR), Major-General T G G Heywood (Army), Brigadier H P Radley (Army) and US Civilian R Rand. All were recorded as killed in action.



Of the remaining four passengers aboard, two later died of their injuries and two were severely injured survivors. (These four not identified above.)



Based at Lahore and later Palam (New Delhi) and equipped with Hudson Aircraft, 194 Squadron converted later to Dakota Aircraft. The Squadron carried out air communications work within India and Ceylon preserving the vital links in the Far East chain of command essential to the war effort.

Hudson VI aircraft of 194 Sqdn

After converting to Dakota aircraft Colin's 194 Squadron became famous as the supply dropping squadron to Wingate's "Chindit" columns and the 14th Army fighting the Japanese in Burma, gaining a distinctive and distinguished record whilst facing great hardships.

Many of the Squadron's sorties included landing supplies 200 miles behind the Japanese lines and evacuating wounded allied forces and Japanese prisoners of war from hazardous jungle clearings.

The 194 badge displayed on the nose of a Lockheed Hudson depicted a flying elephant.

The Squadron adopted the motto 'The Friendly Firm' and although their entire fleet of aircraft carried this crest throughout the Burma campaign, Royal Charter never officially recognized it.



Other passengers included Maj Gen Thomas George Gordon Heywood, husband of Joan Heywood (nee Bromley Davenport), of Barnes, Surrey (part of the notable Bromley Davenport family of Capesthorne, Macclesfield etc.)

Heywood served during the 1914-19 War in France, Gallipoli and the Balkans but his WW2 engagements included:



- Army representative, British Military Mission to Russia August 1939
- Officer in Charge Military Mission to Holland (SOE) 1940
- Officer in Charge Military Mission to Greece (SOE) 1940-41
- awarded CB 1940
- Commander Presidency and Assam District,India 1941-42
- GOC 26th Indian Division 1942-43

Heywood (shown here) was actually retired in 1943 at the time of the crash and had then taken up a post under the Supply Department at New Delhi, India

It is notable that several of Heywood's earlier WW2 appointments include his association with the SOE – Special Operations Executive (Churchill's "Secret Army") but the detail of his service is not yet clear.

https://www.specialforcesroh.com/index.php?threads/heywood-thomas-george-gordon.4321/

Flight Sergeant EDWARD ARTHUR METCALFE

Service Number: 1515747
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 103 Sqdn.
Died 04 May 1944 Age 22 years old
Buried at CHALONS-EN-CHAMPAGNE
EAST COMMUNAL CEMETERY France
Son of Edward Rowland and Mildred Metcalfe, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN
AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER
THEM



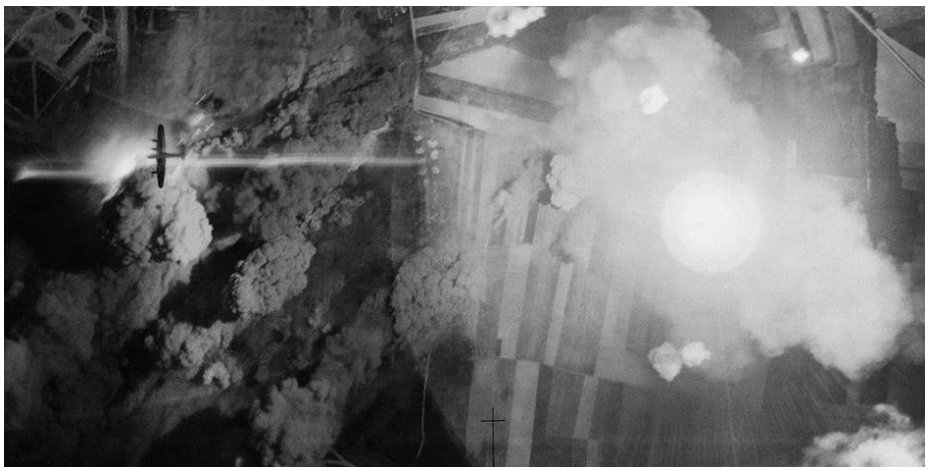
Avro Lancaster I ME673 PM-I took off for a mission to Mailly-le-Camp on the 4th of May 1944 at 21:48 from Elsham Wolds to bomb a major military camp with Edward as the air bomber.

The Bombardment of Mailly-le-Camp was an RAF raid against a German panzer training centre located in northern France undertaken during the night of 3/4 May 1944. The mission was a part of the "softening up" campaign Bomber Command conducted prior to the D-Day invasion.

Estimated a lightly defended target, confusion in the mission plan and communication problems led to the force being held up at the assembly point, where German night fighters slipped in among the bombers. Though the bombers succeeded in destroying the training camp, the victory was achieved at a heavy price.

42 Lancasters and their crews were lost including Edward's which was reported as crashing while awaiting bombing instructions and coming down in the centre of the town, not far from the local jail. This was later confirmed by German documents which describe the bomber as being near the jail –

that was infamously operated by the Gestapo at the time. Another Lancaster on the raid was written off upon returning to base.

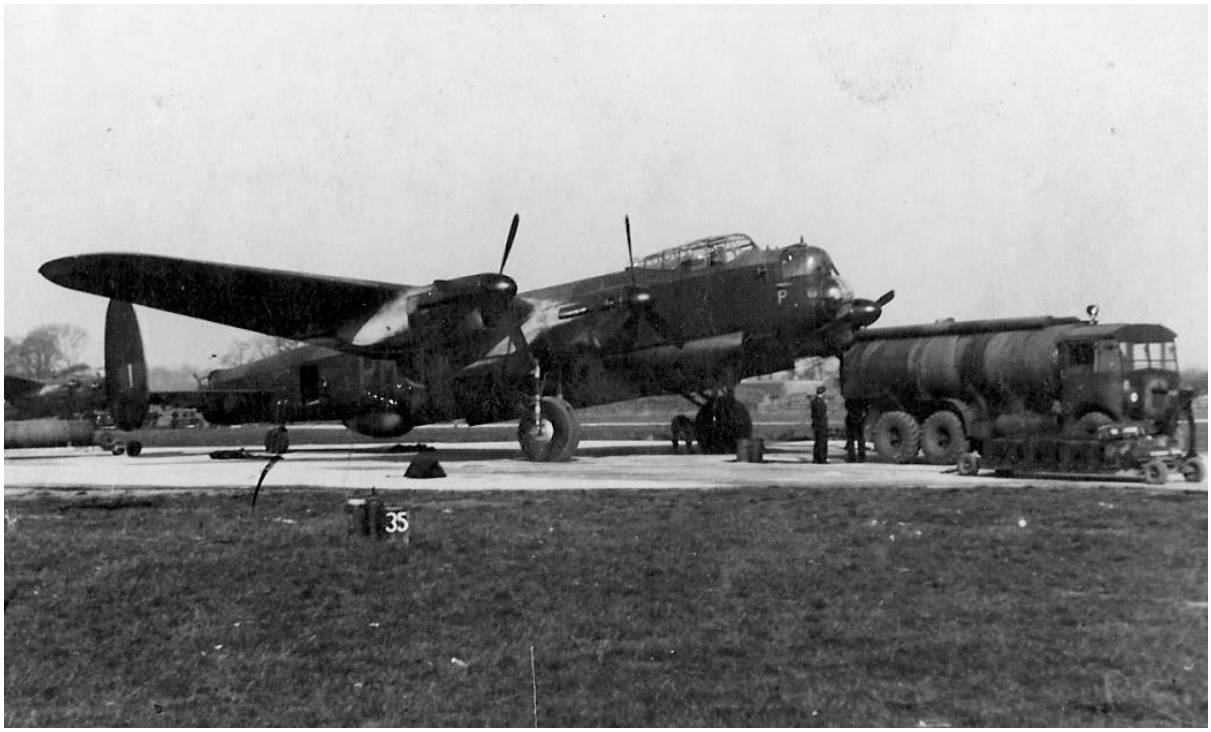


A low flying Lancaster is seen through the glare of a burning Mailly-le-Camp

The crew on the night with Edward were :



- Pilot P/O Sydney Lawrence Rowe RAAF,
- Sgt Jack Henry Sallis RAFVR – Flight Engineer,
- F/S Ernest George Housden RAFVR – Navigator ,
- Sgt Philip Arthur Staniland RAFVR – Air Gunner,
- Sgt Kenneth Robert James Warren RAFVR – Wireless Operator,
- Sgt Dennis John Coldicott RAFVR (pictured) – Air Gunner.



A Lancaster of 103 Squadron re-fuelling.

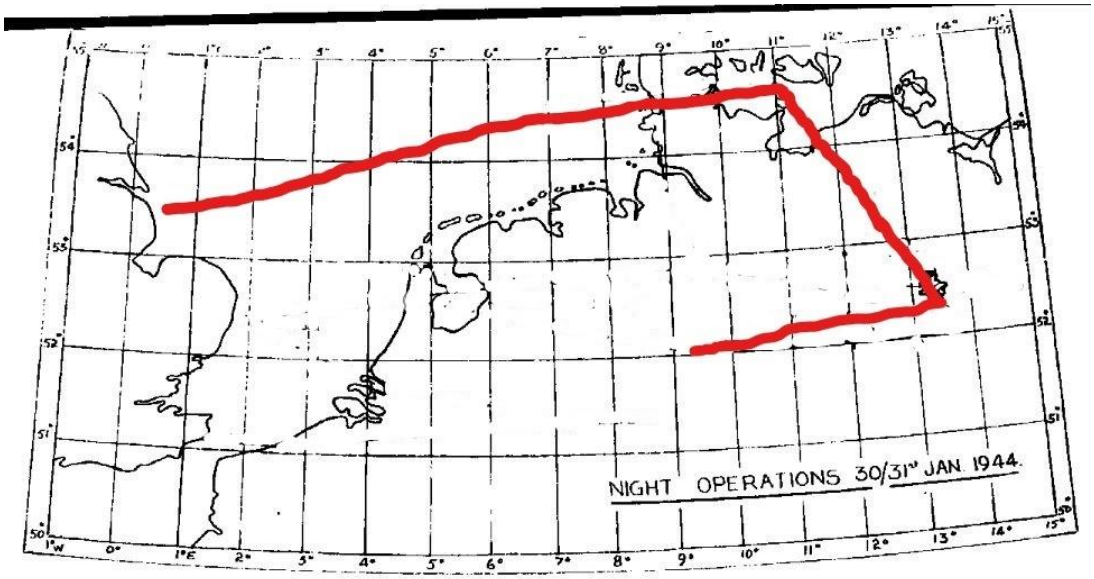
Flying Officer ARTHUR MOORE

Service Number: 155794
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 207 Sqdn.
Died 30 January 1944 Age 29 years old
BERLIN 1939-1945 WAR CEMETERY Germany (Spandau)
Son of Jethro and Rose Moore, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



Lancaster I ED758 “H-How” took off at 1720 on 30 Jan 1944 from RAF Spilsby, Lincolnshire. The pilot was Pilot P/O Arthur Moore. Two different reports identify the aircraft either crashing in the Baltic or North east of the Reich sports Field near Schiebplatz, Ruhleben, Berlin. The sports ground was located pretty much in the centre of Berlin.

Arthur’s aircraft was one of 440 Lancasters, 82 Halifaxes and 12 Mosquitos (534 aircraft).



A contemporary map shows the general route taken by the “Bomber Stream” on the night. The intended time over target was between 20.15 and 20.37 – a force of 534 aircraft passing through the target area in just 22 minutes – an average of 24 aircraft per minute!

The following extract from the raid report of 550 Squadron Lancaster pilot Flying Officer Godfrey Morrison in Lancaster DV305 – one of the aircraft that shared the 22 minute experience of Arthur and his fellow airmen gives a telling impression of their shared experience. Morrison crash landed at RAF Woodbridge, Suffolk, England on January 31, 1944.

"At approximately 22 miles North West of Berlin 20.07hrs, 21,500 ft Rear Gunner Sgt (John) McKenzie reported confidently that a Lancaster was sighted behind (distance unknown). Approximately one minute later, without further warning, four shells described as rocket shells (by reason of large areas of damage, although no comet (tai)l phenomena seen), cannon shell and machine gun fire hit "O" (code name of this aircraft). No indications were received on Boozer (on-board air to air radar), which was serviceable.

As soon as the attack began the pilot took a sharp diving turn to port, losing 2000 ft then climbing to port recovering 1000 ft. The bomb load was jettisoned. At 20.10, continuous machine gun and cannon fire was fired at "O" during these manoeuvres the navigator (F/O Bennet and F/E (Sgt Wise were on their knees which was fortunate for them as they saw a stream of tracer (bullets) passing above their heads along the fuselage, the F/E suffering a slight glancing wound on his shoulder. "O" then become more or less out of control and dived 5000 ft. The pilot managed to control it a t 14,000 ft and found that the E/A (Enemy Attack) or possibly more than one E/A had been evaded. In this attack both the Rear Gunner and Mid Upper Gunner (Sgt (Jack Marshall) Cantor) received fatal injuries.



Damage to Lancaster DV305 or 550 Sqdrn – in which Sgt John McKenzie received fatal injuries aged 21

A second report from the same raid gives a further perspective on the experience of being attacked by night-fighters. The raid described was later defined as the last raid of the concentrated January bombing period against Berlin.

405 RCAF Sqdn F/O BE Biden piloted his Lancaster at 18,500 feet when his aircraft was damaged by flak at 21.46 hrs. and(Flight Engineer) F/E Sgt Wilkinson was slightly wounded in right arm. Port wing was also damaged. Aircraft was attacked three times by an ME110 (Messerschmitt 110 – twin engine night-fighter) on the way back from target. The enemy aircraft was first sighted at four hundred yards, heading astern below. Immediately after, hit by flak causing fire in aircraft, thus no evasive action was taken.

Enemy aircraft closed to 150 yds, before breaking to port quarter, down. The rear gunner fired 100 rounds. The port outer engine was hit causing the rear turret to be (useless) u/s. The second attack came from port quarter up. Evasive action taken was corkscrew to port. The mid upper gunner fired at 150 yards, approximately 150 rounds. The enemy aircraft fires a three second burst causing the hydraulic system in the mid-upper turret to be u/s.

The third attack came from the starboard quarter up. Evasive action (was) taken to corkscrew to starboard. Enemy aircraft fired a three second burst. Gunners unable to fire as hydraulic system shot away. Both air gunners saw tracers enter the enemy aircraft. Extensive damage done to our(own) aircraft. Navigator and wireless operator were slightly injured. Members of this crew injured were F/O Farb, W/O Weaver and Sgt Wilkinson. Remainder of the crew were uninjured. Aircraft landed with wheels up at Coltishall owing to undercarriage being u/s owing to enemy action.

By the end of the night 33 bombers were lost – making up 6.2 per cent of the attacking force – including Arthur Moore's Lancaster.



William Tranmer RCAF – lost as one of Arthur Moore's crew.

The full crew of Lancaster ED758 were:

NB The famous BBC recording of a similar raid on Berlin, with commentary by Wynford Vaughan-Thomas, was made on 3rd September 1943 on board Flt Lt Ken Letford's crew in EM-F for Freddie of Arthur Moore's 207 Sqdrn.

This can be heard accompanied by an outstanding 3d Virtual Artificial Intelligence (AI) film at the Avro Museum at Woodford.

- Flying Officer Arthur MOORE (155794) Pilot
- Flying Officer William Thomas TRANMER (J/22429)
- Sergeant John WILSON (1553317)
- Sergeant Denis WOOD (995101
- Sergeant Albert John Owen ARCHER (1211168)
- Sergeant Roy BURRELL (1583288)
- Flying Officer Ervin Leroy KEELER (J/25842)
- Sergeant William Ronald KELMAN (1568466)

The Wilmslow Advertiser for February 1944 says:

Wilmslow Pilot Reported Missing

Pilot Officer Arthur Moore, second son of Mr and Mrs Jethro Moore of Moor Lane, Wilmslow, is reported missing from operations over Berlin. Pilot Officer Moore was an experienced pilot having been over the continent on sixteen occasions. He joined the Services four years ago, at first with the Royal Corps of Signals and later volunteered for the RAF. He won his wings in Canada and received his commission three months ago.

Pilot Officer Moore attended Nursery Lane school as a boy and won the Whitworth scholarship which enabled him to attend Stockport Secondary school. He afterwards joined the staff in the treasurers department of Manchester Corporation, where he remained until he left to serve his country. He was 28.

Pilot Officer Moore played cricket for Lindow and billiards for the British Legion Club.

https://www.jcproctor.co.uk/ww2-raf-bomber-command-30th-january-1944-berlin-last-raid-of-january-bombing-period

Gunner RAYMOND HAROLD MOTTERSHEAD

Royal Artillery 208 Field Regt.
Died 10 December 1945 Age 21 years old

Buried at KIRKEE WAR CEMETERY India

Son of Frederick Harold Mottershead, and of Charlotte Mottershead, of Morley, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
THE LORD GAVE AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY



St Bart's also remembers Gunner Raymond Harold Mottershead (14814301) of the 208th Field Regiment Royal Artillery, who died at the age of 21, after the hostilities ceased on 10th December 1945.

His parents were Frederick and Charlotte of "Briarfield", Morley. He is interred at Kirkee War Cemetery near Poona (now Pune), India along with 1,667 of his comrades.

To date there has been no further information found about Raymond by this research.

Ordinary Signalman PERCY NAYLOR



Royal Navy: H.M.S. President III (S.S. Clan Campbell)
Died 23 March 1942 Age 21 years old

Commemorated at
PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Percy and Harriet Naylor, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

HMS President III was a naval base at Bristol that trained men allocated to service on Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships (DEMS). After his training in Bristol Percy was assigned to the SS Clan Campbell a modern seven and a half thousand ton modern merchantman built in 1937.

As a signalman, Percy's role was to transmit, receive, and distribute messages using visual and other communication systems, flag semaphore, visual Morse code, and flaghoist signalling – a vital function on convoy duty.

A variety of armaments were fitted to such merchant vessels, typically a 4" deck gun at the stern, and sometimes a 12 pounder (3 inch shell) at the bow either for use against surfaced U-boats, surface raiders and other weapons for anti-aircraft use.



The Clan Campbell was such a "DEM" ship and took part in a number of convoys and operated in the Mediterranean as part of the supply campaign to Malta.

Malta was at the crossroads between Europe and Africa, and the only British harbour between Gibraltar and Alexandria, Egypt. Convoys were therefore almost continuously subject to the heaviest of air and sea attack from nearby Sicily.

In February 1942, in one air attack, the ship was damaged by bombs and forced to seek shelter at Tobruk rather than continue to Malta. The next month, repaired and captained by J. F. Vooght, she formed part of the four ship convoy MW-10 which left Alexandria for Malta on 20 March 1942.

Protection for the four ships was provided by a force of cruisers and destroyers under command of Rear Admiral Sir Philip Vian.

The weather was initially thick and stormy, which helped hide the ships from enemy reconnaissance, but it cleared while the ships were still off Cyrenaica and they were sighted by enemy aircraft.

Four Italian cruisers were despatched to intercept the convoy, but were driven off in a short engagement on 22 March. That afternoon the Italian battleship Littorio arrived, escorted by two cruisers. The British again attacked with torpedoes despite heavy odds, forcing the Italians to break off and retire. On 23 March the convoy came under further air attack.

This time, the Clan Campbell was hit by bombs and also torpedoed, and had to be abandoned. Six of the crew, including Capt James Foster Vooght, were killed and one was wounded.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for Friday 17th April 1942 reported:

WAR'S TOLL IN WILMSLOW

No Hope for Two Naval Men

Confirmation has been received by relatives in Wilmslow that there is no hope of two Wilmslow naval men being alive. The communication from the Admiralty says the men are missing and presumed killed, adding that there is no hope of them being alive.

The news concerning Signalman Percy Naylor has been received by his parents, Mr and Mrs Percy Naylor of 10 South Oak Lane. Signalman Naylor, who was 21 years old, was educated at Nursery Lane and the Modern Schools, after which he assisted his father with his business as a butcher. In this way he became known to many people. He was fond of country walks and boating. He joined the Navy in March last year and had been at sea for several months.

(The second seaman mentioned in this article was James Grange from Water Lane – a former bricklayer) See elsewhere.



JF Vooght, Cyril's ship's Captain also lost with the SS Clan Campbell.

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Captain ROYLANCE LYNTON PARKINSON



Royal Army Medical Corps
Died 14 February 1942 Age 30
Buried at KRANJI WAR CEMETERY, Singapore
Son of Thomas Michael and Edith Annie Parkinson; husband of Sheila Yvonne Parkinson (nee Kershaw),m July 1941 of Clapham Common, London. L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.
Personal Inscription
"I SOLEMNLY PLEDGE MYSELF TO CONSECRATE MY LIFE TO THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY"

The story of “Lance” Parkinson MD is both disturbing and illustrative of one of the greatest military disasters and failures for the British Army. Roy was clearly connected locally and is remembered in the records of Wilmslow Rugby Club on their website. His home address was very close on King’s Road.

Just ten days before his death Captain Parkinson of the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) and known as “Lance” arrived in Singapore to serve at the Alexandra Military Hospital that had been set up in 1940 to as the main military hospital to meet the needs of the British garrison defending Singapore.

Following fighting and bombing lasting from 8 to 15 February 1942 Japanese Empire forces captured the British stronghold of Singapore . Singapore was the foremost British military base and economic port in South–East Asia and was of great importance to British interwar defence strategy. The capture of Singapore resulted in the largest British surrender in its history.

Japanese troops rapidly advanced with approximately 30,000 men down the Malayan Peninsula through jungle terrain that the British erroneously considered impassable. At the time the British commanded 85,000 Allied troops at Singapore, although many units were under-strength and most units lacked experience or were very recently arrived –such as Lance Parkinson.

Within four days of his arrival Capt Parkinson was active treating the wounded in the hospital. On the 14th of February – Japanese troops attacked and entered the hospital and undertook a brutal massacre of medical staff and patients. Parkinson was acting as anaesthetist in the operating theatre when Japanese soldiers entered and bayoneted him along with two nursing orderlies and the patient. Roy had lived on Kings Road, Wilmslow.

https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wilmslow/a/club-history-19930.html?page=2
https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/60/a8515460.shtml

Private ERIC PATERSON

Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) 5th Bn.
Died 11 July 1944 Age 20 years old
Buried BAYEUX WAR CEMETERY France
Son of Basil Kay Paterson and Annie Winifred Paterson, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



Eric Paterson was killed during Operation "Stack", a little known and scarcely documented attack to try and demolish the chimney observation points at the Colombelles steelworks two miles North East of Caen -5 weeks after D-Day.

On July 9, 1944, after the cessation of Operation Charnwood (a massive air bombing raid on Caen , followed by land forces attacking to the north), the Germans reinforced their positions and in particular Colombelles. General Montgomery ordered the destruction of the chimneys of the Metallurgical Society of Normandy steel factory, that were being used by German artillery observers.

On the night of July 10-11, the 153rd Infantry Brigade, consisting of the 5th Battalion The Black Watch (Eric's Battalion), 1st Battalion The Gordon Highlanders and 5/7th Battalion The Gordon Highlanders, launched an attack on the enemy supported by the Sherman and Firefly tanks of the 148th Royal Armored Corps (RAC). The British soldiers were quickly pinned down by violent bombardments of mortars and rockets.

Things started to go badly wrong as dawn began to break at 0400. At this point, the Black Watch were then subjected to intense artillery fire; 63 shells landed near the HQ in three minutes.

By 0630, they were being attacked by five enemy tanks and an 88mm anti-tank gun from their rear. At this point, the 'CO gave orders for the Shermans to engage Boche tanks *"which they did right nobly but their shells failed to make any impression on the Boche"* but within no time at all, 9 out of 10 of the Shermans had been knocked out.

Three other armoured vehicles were put out of action and the Germans captured two Shermans. The British Infantry then retreated, abandoning the hope of achieving the goals of Operation Stack.

It became clear that the British had been unaware of the presence of the superior armed Tiger II tanks in front of them and lost a total of 14 Sherman tanks during this engagement. Operation Stack was therefore a failure and showed the superiority of German tanks compared to their allied counterparts.

It was not until July 18 that the steel smelter and its chimneys finally fell into the hands of the Allies and the chimneys were destroyed when Canadian forces attacked again.



The casualties for the 5th Black Watch during the attack were 128 killed and wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Thomson, CO 5 Black Watch, was sacked two weeks later on 26 July as was his Divisional Commanding Officer, Bullen-Smith. The decision to mount the raid was regarded as an egregious lack of military judgement and that the mission was unfeasible. Operation STACK was a hasty, even hurried, operation based on inadequate intelligence, not only of the enemy, but of the ground itself.

German troops moving towards the steelworks at Colembelles showing the various chimneys used by German artillery observers that the Black Watch were to capture and have destroyed.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for January 12th 1945 (over 6 months after the above events) reports:

Wilmslow Man's Death From Wounds

Private Eric Paterson (20) of Oakwood, Nursey Lane, Wilmslow, reported missing in July, is now presumed to have died of wounds received in North West Europe. He is the second son of Lt –Quartermaster and Mrs B K Paterson, and was educated at the Fulshaw and Modern Schools.

Private Paterson joined up at eighteen years of age. He was employed at the Bramhall branch of John Williams and Sons, grocers. He belonged to the Black Watch, with which his elder brother Harold is also serving. His father is serving in the European theatre of the war. Harold has been wounded twice, once in the Middle East.

As an employee of the Grovers in bramhall, Eric was a colleague of Fred Povey who is also commemorated on the Wilmslow memorial (page 64).

https://www.dday-overlord.com/en/battle-of-normandy/allied-operations/stack

Flying Officer HAROLD PLANT



Service Number: 49653
Royal Air Force 410 Sqdrn (R.C.A.F.)
Died 19 August 1943 Age 24 years old
Buried at REICHSWALD FOREST WAR CEMETERY Germany
Son of Edwin and Mary Isabel Plant; husband of Clara May Plant, of Torquay, Devon.
Personal Inscription
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Harold Plant is recorded as being the Navigator/Wireless Operator on Mosquito FBVI HJ825 piloted by 30 year old Flying Officer Gordon Bruce Maclean (RCAF) on the 19th of August 1943. They took off from RAF Coleby Grange, Lincolnshire at 23.00 hrs a for night intruder "Ranger" mission to Papenburg railway line in Germany near the Dutch border.

First flown in 1942, the "Wooden Wonder" Mosquito FB Mk.VI fighter-bomber was intended for 'intruder' strike missions, and became the most numerous and widely-used Mosquito variant. Based on the F Mk.II day fighter version without air- Interception radar, it retained the formidable armament of four Browning .303 inch machine-guns in the nose and four Hispano 20 mm canon in the belly. But it was also given a bomb-bay behind the cannon, which enabled it to carry two 500 lb bombs internally plus another two under the wings.



F/O Gordon Bruce Maclean (RCAF)

"Ranger" missions were day and night patrols over occupied Europe aimed at hitting the transport network, especially freight trains.

Other Sqdrn 410 actions included "Mahmoud" missions which saw the Mosquitoes pretending to be heavy bombers by their flying pattern in the hope that German night fighters would attempt to intercept them.

Two 410 Squadron aircrew, (colleagues of Harold and Gordon) having returned with their de Havilland Mosquito at Coleby Grange, 27 September 1943. The aircraft had been damaged in combat over the Netherlands the previous night.



The laminated wood of the Mosquito's construction can be seen beneath the damage

The Wilmslow Advertiser for 27 August 1943 says:

Flying Officer Missing

Flying Officer Harold Plant (25) whose home is in Clifton Street, Alderley Edge is reported missing during operations over the Continent.

Flying Officer Plant joined the RAF when he was 18 years of age and shortly after the outbreak of war volunteered as a sergeant air gunner. He received his commission in May 1942. He was a Wilmslow boy and was educated at the Modern School. Before receiving his commission he went through a navigator's course.

He is married and has one little boy.

Trooper
FREDERICK WILLIAM GEORGE POVEY

Royal Armoured Corps 7th Queen's Own Hussars
Died 13 September 1944 Age 29 years old
Buried GRADARA WAR CEMETERY Italy
Son of William and Lillie Povey, of Offerton, Cheshire.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for 29th September 1944 reports that:

> **Handforth Trooper Killed in Italy**
>
> Official news has been received by Mr and Mrs William Povey of Beaumont, Church Road, Handforth that their eldest son Trooper Fred Povey of the RAC has been killed in action in Italy
>
> He joined the forces in April 1940 and went overseas in January 1941. He served with his unit in Egypt, Libya, Burma India Iraq and Italy. He is 29 years of age and prior to joining the forces was a member of staff of John Willams Limited, grocers, Bramhall. He had many friends in the Wilmslow district and his cheerful personality will be remembered by them all.

After time in Egypt and then Burma in Crusader tanks (which they were forced to destroy in retreat), and then time in the Middle East, the 7th Queen's Own Hussars returned to Egypt and were re-equipped with Sherman tanks.



7th Hussar Crusader Tanks in North Africa 1941



A 7th Hussar Sherman Tank in Italy 1944

In 1944 they crossed the Mediterranean to join the advance up Italy attached to the 2nd Polish Corps. They took part in the battles for Ancona in June 1944 and the piercing of the Gothic Line. On the 11th of August, the Cesano River was crossed, and the 2nd Polish Corps seized a series of towns, Gabrielle, Mondolfo, Poggio, and Orciano. Ten days later, the 7th Hussars along with the 2nd Polish Corps, crossed the Metauro River and reached the Gothic Line. The Polish Army granted the regiment the privilege of wearing the "Maid of Warsaw" sleeve badge for their *"Magnificent work – fine examples of heroism and successful action"*

The Allies now reorganised their forces before the assault on the Gothic Line. The 2nd Polish Corps was on the extreme right flank at the Adriatic coast with the 1st Canadian Corps on its left. Operation OLIVE, the breakthrough in the Adriatic sector, began on the night of the 25th of August. The 2nd Polish Corps opened the offensive, capturing the high ground north of the resort of Pesaro again with the 7th Hussars beside them and leading the armoured spearhead thrusts against the German defences throughout September.

On September 13th when Fred was killed there was a night attack by the 2nd Polish Corps, 1st Canadian Corps, and the 5th British Corps and they caught the Germans “flat footed” and pierced the eastern flank of the Gothic Line.

A Sherman tank of 7th Queen's Own Hussars advancing with 2nd Polish Corps infantry in Italy 1944





The Maid of Warsaw badge.

Private
GEORGE EDWARD POWELL



Home Guard
10th Cheshire (Wilmslow) Bn.
Died 09 August 1944 Age 17 years old

Buried ALDERLEY EDGE CEMETERY
Son of Edward and Alice May Powell of Mottram St. Andrew.

The following words from the Wilmslow Advertiser August 18th 1944 tell the story for George:

Died While Serving Country
Tributes to Young Home Guard

"This man has, in my view, met his death while serving his country, just the same as if he had been at the front, carrying despatches in a battle area." Said Mr JAK Ferns, the East Cheshire Coroner, at Alderley Edge on Thursday evening, when returning a misadventure verdict on George Edward Powell (17) a despatch rider in the 10th Cheshire Home Guard, who met his death the previous night as the result of injuries received when he fell from a motorcycle whilst on duty.

Evidence of identification was given by Edward Powell of Woodside Cottage, Smith Lane, Mottram St Andrew, who said that his sin, an apprentice motor mechanic, employed at Wilmslow, had been riding motor cycles since his 16th birthday, He was a despatch rider in the Home Guard and left home on Wednesday, at 7.40 on his motor cycle to go on duty at battalion headquarters.

Alice Regan, 63, Hawthorn Street and Cynthia Seagrave, Fulshaw Cross who were cycling from Wilmslow to Alderley Edge shortly before 9 o'clock, told how a motor cyclist in military uniform overtook them near the college houses, and when about 20 yards ahead his machine appeared to wobble to the left and then fell over, throwing the rider on to the road.

One said his speed was moderate and the other estimated it at 3 (sic) mph and said the footrest appeared to hit the road. When they got to the man he was unconscious and bleeding from nose and mouth. They left a soldier with him and went to Harden House school to telephone for a doctor.

In reply to Mr CS Wood representing the Home Guard, Miss Seagrave said there was no other traffic on the road and the deceased did not appear to have his attention drawn by anything after passing her.

Pte William Boderick, attached to headquarter staff of the 10th Batt. Cheshire Home Guard, who signed Powell's "transport work ticket" on Wednesday night, said that he left headquarters between 8-30 and 9 pm on despatch duties for the unit.

Douglas Bilsborough, ambulance driver, said he received a call at 9.05 and at Harden Park found an injured man in Home Guard uniform. He got him to hospital at 9.20pm.

Sister Suffield said deceased was unconscious when admitted. His condition was critical and he was seen by Dr Mackessack. He died a few minutes later.

MACHINE IN "ROAD WORTHY CONDITION"

A police mechanic from patrol headquarters, who examined and tested the machine, said it was in good mechanical condition, brakes were in order and it was perfectly road worthy. It behaved in a normal manner when tested at speeds up to 45 mph. A nut which secured the exhaust clip was missing and it was possible that it might have caused the driver's attention to have been distracted.

PC Brett said there were tyre and scratch marks for 102 feet from the motor cycle in the direction of Wilmslow.

Dr JW Chadwick said there were abrasions on the right elbow, knee and hand, on the left hand and elbow and also on the chin, cheek and nose. A post-mortem revealed a fracture of the left parietal bone of the skull and was due to violence.

Reviewing the evidence the Coroner said deceased was apparently proceeding in a normal manner and had the machine under proper control, there was not other vehicle or obstruction which could have caused the cycle to overturn, and the machine was in road-worthy condition. He found the death was brought about by misadventure. He expressed sympathy with the parents. Its was very sad that a youth should have lost his life in that manner

C.O's TRIBUTE

Lt-Col RB Knott MC commanding the 10th Battalion Cheshire Home Guard, said Powell had served as junior Home Guard, and in June, when he reached the age of 17 he attained full Home Guard status, and officers under whom he served said that he was " very well regarded indeed" and that he was a very nice, quiet and well behaved young man. He would like to tender to his parents and sister, very sincere sympathy, not only of himself but of officers and other ranks in the battalion – particularly from fellow despatch riders, by whom he was held in the greatest respect.

Supt. Pleavin, replying for the police, said he always considered Powell to be a very promising young man, and he joined in the expressions of sympathy with the relatives.

GREAT SYMPATHY AT FUNERAL

The funeral took place on Saturday with the interment at Alderley Edge cemetery, following a service at St Philip's Church conducted by the Vicar, The Rev WJ Gravell. Mr Powell was the grandson of CSM Powell of the 7th Cheshire Regiment, who was killed on August 10th 1915 at Suvla Bay (Gallipoli).....He was employed by Moores and Newton motor engineers of Wilmslow. As a boy he belonged to the 1st Troop of Alderley Edge Scouts and later joined the Home Guard.

A long list of over 100 people are then named as attending the funeral

Sub-Lieutenant MARK FLEMING RODIER



Royal Navy: H.M.M.L. 177.
Died 28 March 1942 Age 25 years old
Commemorated at
PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Mentioned in Despatches
Son of James Harold and Winifred Agnes Rodier,
of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

With a home at Wilmslow on Macclesfield Road, Mark was educated at Shrewsbury School alongside his older brother Harold who by the end of the War reached the rank of Major in the Royal Horse Artillery.

Mark and Harold's father James Rodier occurs regularly in Wartime copies of the Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser as a prominent local councillor on Wilmslow Urban District Council.

Having joined the Navy and being promoted and commissioned as an officer, , Mark was posted to HMS Dolphin (submarine depot, Gosport) from February 1941 to work on motor launches. By June 1941 he was at HMS Midge (Coastal Forces base, Great Yarmouth) and then HMS Britannia III (Coastal Forces base, Dartmouth) (for small craft) where Mark was placed in command of one of His Majesty's Motor Launches – Number 177 – a Fairmile "B" all in preparation for the very special action in which he was to play a vital part.



All of Mark and his crew's training up to March 1942 was to prepare for one of WW2's most famous joint forces actions – the raid on St Nazaire.

In summary, The St Nazaire raid, also known as Operation Chariot, was a British attack on the "Normandie" dry dock in St Nazaire, France on March 28, 1942:The raid's purpose was to disable the dry dock so that large German warships, like the Tirpitz, would be forced to return to home waters. The Royal Navy and British Commandos were to use a destroyer packed with explosives to ram the dock gates. The destroyer, HMS Campbeltown, was accompanied by 18 smaller craft of which Mark's ML177 was one.

Commandos were also to be landed to destroy other structures and one key purpose of the motor launches was to lift the commandos from the shore once the attack was completed.

Known as “The Greatest Raid of All” the raid did what it was designed to do, disabling the dry dock at St Nazaire, and at huge cost. 169 of the 612 British commandos died. 360 German forces were also killed, most when the Campbeltown, rammed into the lock gates the night before, exploded as intended though several hours late.

Mark died just short of his 25th birthday as he piloted one of the wooden launches intended to take the commandos back out to safety. Almost all of them were blown out of the water in the intense German fire that greeted the attackers once it was realised that the disguised Campbeltown was not a German ship. 12 motor launches were lost in the action out of 16 deployed.

Alongside Mark and recorded as killed on ML177 were Able Seaman John Brown, Ordinary Seaman John Gilbert Hextall and Leading Seaman Kenneth Kean Sleeman Pitt.



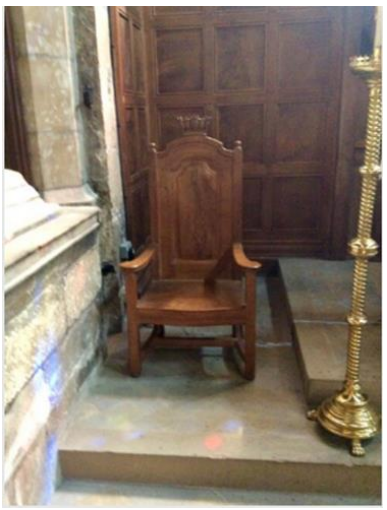
Another view of a Motor Launch similar to ML 117.

ML 177 was built at Wallasea Bay Yacht Yard, Rochford, Essex. In January 1940 the Admiralty placed a massive order for a second batch of Fairmile Bs - 120 vessels in total. These were numbered ML 125 to ML 244. Of these, 37 were delivered by the end of 1940 and the other 83 during the first half of 1941.

The motor launches (often abbreviated to 'ML’s') were produced in kit form from British boat builder Fairmile Marine and then assembled and fitted out by other boatyards to meet the Royal Navy's coastal operation requirements.

In Mark’s memory, Councillor Rodier and his wife commissioned a “Bishops Chair” inscribed in his memory for St Bartholomew’s Church in Wilmslow. It is described as:

A Bishop's Chair with heavy carving and the back topped with a Naval Crown. The inscription on the edge of the seat records:
MARK FLEMING RODIER, LIEUTENANT, WHO FELL IN THE GALLANT RAID ON ST NAZAIRE, 1942.



The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for November 27th 1942 says:

WILMSLOW OFFICER'S COURAGE

Posthumous Mention for Temp Lieut. M F Rodier

Temporary Lieutenant, Mark Fleming Rodier RNVR who lost his life during the combined attack upon the German |naval base of St Nazaire has been mentioned in dispatches.

His parents, Councillor and Mrs JH Rodier of Hunterhill, Macclesfield Road, Wilmslow received word of his distinction this week from the Admiralty, "awarded for good service in the action in which he lost hos life. This officer handles and fought his ship with outstanding skill and courage" The Admiralty also expressed deep regret that Mark had not lived to receive the award.

Captain HB Rodier, another son, arrived home on Tuesday from the Middle East, having been wounded in the arm.

Sub –Lieutenant M.F Rodier RNVR, younger son of Councillor and Mrs JH Rodier of Huntershill, Macclesfield Road, Wilmslow has been reported missing on active service after the attack on St Nazarre (sic). Sub lieutenant Rodier who is 25 years of age joined the Navy as an ordinary rating

Five Victoria Crosses were awarded for actions during the St Nazaire raid.



Sub-Lieutenant Mark Fleming Rodier

https://www.unithistories.com/officers/RN_officersR3.html

Trooper
JOHN ASPINAL SLATER



Royal Armoured Corps H.Q. Sqn. 12th Royal Lancers
Died 28 April 1945 Age 32 years old
Buried or commemorated at
PADUA WAR CEMETERY
Son of John and Annie Slater; husband of Jane Slater, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
IN A FOREIGN GRAVE YOU LIE BUT OUR MEMORIES OF YOU, DEAR WILL NEVER DIE

John's home address was 22 Lacey Avenue Wilmslow.

The Spring 1945 offensive in Italy, codenamed Operation Grapeshot, was the final Allied attack during the Italian Campaign in the final stages of the Second World War. The attack in the Lombard Plain by the 15th Allied Army Group started on 6 April 1945 and ended on 2 May with the surrender of all Axis forces in Italy.

The War Diary of the 12th Lancers for April 1945 has the troop moving North in Italy.

B Sqn continued the advance on the same axis but were halted by a series of blown brs (barriers?) and demolition in area 0811. However, by a detour of 16 miles through C Sqn area they were able to get back on to their original axis. 4 Troop closely supported by 2 Troop seized the bridge at TORRE (1428) and were the first into ESTE beating C Sqn by a short head. Orders were then given to go NORTH, but shortly after deploying PADUA was given as the objective. At this stage General FREYBERG was up with the leading elements in his scout car and giving OC B Sqn orders direct.

***The CO was on his way to B Sqn HQ in area MONSELICE when his driver Trooper Slater was shot dead by an enemy sniper**. B3 pushed on through BATAGLIA to 2736 despite meeting continuous though not heavy opposition. As last light failed 9 NZ BDE reached the leading tps and took over to continue the advance through the night to PADUA.*

The Commanding Officer at the time was Lt.Col Kenneth Edward Savill, DSO. He commanded the Regiment from 1.12.43 to 31.7.45 and explains why John is shown as working with the HQ Squadron of the 12th Royal Lancers.

Hitler committed suicide just two days after John was killed and VE day was announced only 11 days later on the 8th of May.

With thanks to Angela Tarnowski – Curator at the Royal Lancer's Museum, Derby for providing War diary details.

https://theroyallancers.org/history/12th-lancers-history/

Sergeant DONALD ARTHUR SMITHIES





Service Number: 754932
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 77 Sqdn.
Died 13 March 1941
Commemorated on a family memorial at Wilmslow Cemetery, Cheshire and on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL
Son of Arthur and Edith Mary Smithies, of Wilmslow, Cheshire

On Thursday, 13 March 1941, a selection of aircraft of 77 squadron (RAF), took off from their airfield at RAF Topcliffe, North Yorkshire and joined another 180 aircraft to bomb Hamburg in Germany. Taking off at 19:37 and piloted by Sergeant DW Arkwright, the Armstrong Whitworth Whitley type V, with serial N1493 was crewed by N F Johnson (Sgt), S W Snoddon (Sgt), D P Williams (Sgt) and Wilmslow man, Sergeant DONALD ARTHUR SMITHIES.

At the start of the war, 4 Group, which included 77 Squadron, had about 75 Whitley bombers that specialized in night bombing. The Whitley was typically flown by a crew of five. The Whitley was a sturdy airplane with few vices although somewhat underpowered and extremely drafty. As one former pilot recalled: *"When one flew through rain, one got wet*". The aircraft could attain a ceiling of 18,000 feet but at this height its handling characteristics were poor and with the limited heating provided, the temperature in the cabin was unacceptably low. Many crew members got frostbite during the European winter.



An AW38 Whitley showing its characteristic nose-down attitude in flight.

Sadly, on the night of the raid, Whitley N1493 disappeared without trace after a radio call for assistance at 23.53 four and a half hours into its flight. Because all crew were lost without their location being known they are all recorded at the RAF memorial at Runnymede

https://www.baesystems.com/en-uk/heritage/armstrong-whitworth-aw38-whitleyhttps://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wilmslow/a/club-history-19930.html?page=2

Second Lieutenant ANTHONY RAYMOND STREAT



Royal Armoured Corps
3rd County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters)
Died 22 September 1944 Age 19 years old
Buried or commemorated at STOCKPORT CREMATORIUM
Son of Sir Edward Raymond Streat, C.B.E. and of Lady Streat (nee Davies), of Wilmslow.

Second Lieutenant “Tony” Streat died at Leicester Royal Infirmary of wounds received on active service in Belgium. Tony was the son of Sir E. Raymond Streat, KBE and Lady Doris Streat.

Tony’s father, E. Raymond Streat (pictured) beat 600 applicants to become assistant secretary to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce when only 22 years old. He was made secretary soon after, in January 1920.



It was a bold appointment for such a young man, as he became the highest-ranking permanent paid official of the richest, the largest, and probably the most influential chamber of commerce in the country.

Sir Raymond received his knighthood in 1940 and became effectively the “voice of cotton” for the country up to his retirement well after the War .

Tony’s chosen regiment, the 3rd County of London Yeomanry “Sharpshooters”, (3CLY) won their nick-name as a unit in the Boer war but by WW2 had become a tank regiment and was mobilised on September 1, 1939. The 4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) was raised in the same year.

After time served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy and then returning home, both 3CLY and 4CLY spent the first half of 1944 preparing for the D-Day invasion and both were among the first armoured regiments landing on D plus 1 (the second day of the invasion). 3CLY, with 4th Armoured Brigade, were, for the early stages of the invasion, the armoured reserve for 1st British Corps.

They had been equipped with Sherman and Firefly tanks (Fireflys were Shermans fitted with a larger British 17 pounder gun). After an early attack on the radar station at Douvres, 3CLY remained in reserve against a possible major German counter-attack. Their first important battle was in operation 'Epsom', the assault on the River Odon, west of Caen.

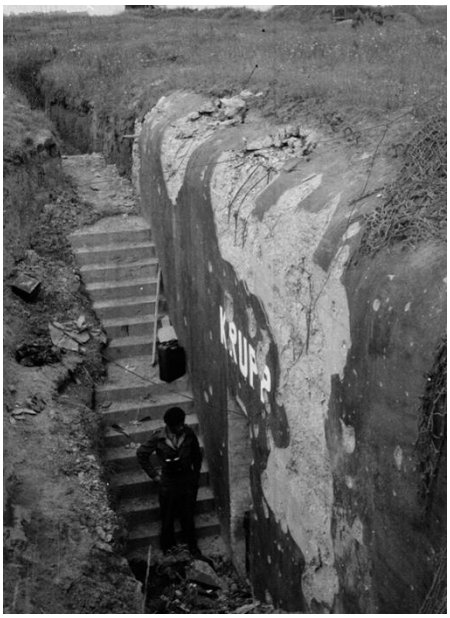
They were then involved in the Defence of Rauray, against a powerful counterattack by several German Panzer Divisions. They remained on the defensive in the Rauray area until they met up with

4th CLY at Carpiquet airport near Caen on July 30th where they were amalgamated as a single unit, the 3rd/4th CLY in order to create a larger fighting group – and mitigate for losses.

Within three days of the amalgamation, the 3rd/4th CLY were in action again for the breakout from Normandy and the race through Belgium into Holland. There then followed a long hard winter on the Maas and in the Reichswald

The Sharpshooters received 42 battle honours for World War II, a total exceeded by only one other Cavalry or Yeomanry regiment. Individually Sharpshooters received one George Medal, 9 DSOs, 42 MCs, 8 DCMs and 71 MMs. The regimental roll of honour records 381 names.

Over 3CLY's time in Normandy, Major W H J Sale – took over 620 photographs of the regiment in the field. These are held by the regimental museum and some specifically identify Tony Streat.



In this image" Lieutenant Streat of the 3rd County of London Yeomanry, is examining one of the fortified defensive walls which are part of a German radar station at Douvres in Normandy, which had been captured on 17 June 1944".



"Tony Streat, examining the defences of a Radar Station', Normandy, 1944"

Due to losses, and a shortage of replacement personnel and equipment, the regiments were amalgamated in August 1944 as the 3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) and the regiment went on to serve throughout the North-West Europe Campaign, ending the war in Germany.

The regiment were then moved on to take part in "Operation Market Garden" for Arnhem and now remembered as "A Bridge Too Far" during which they earned the battle honour "The Nederrijn" between 17 – 27 September.



Bobbie Bramall, Pim Mantell, Jimmie Manners, Olly Woods, Pat Brodie, Ted Dunn**, Tony Streat**, (in the middle drinking?), Chris Woollacott and David Lloyd sampling such joys as captured enemy Vodka and other welcome drinks at Bacquepuis, France, August 1944

The regiment continued to operate an officers' mess throughout the war, improvising with whatever facilities they had to hand. Here the officers of the regiment are pictured at the French village of Baquepuis, before the regiment pushed on towards the Somme at the end of August 1944.

'Capt. Derek Hawkins, MC, MM, 2/Lt Pim Mantell, Capt. Jimmie Manners, 2/Lt Michael Smethurst, Lt Pat Brodie, Major Oliver Woods, MC, Capt Douglas Jackson, Sunday Morning "A" Squadron', 1944



The War Diary for the regiment for 13th September states that the regiment moved into the GHEEL bridgehead and took over from the Sherwood Rangers. “A” Sqn in support of 46 Bde to the East of GHEEL,” “B Sqn in support of 227 Bde West of GHEEL and South of MOLL and “C” Sqn in support of 44 Bde to the North.

“B” Sqn carried a company of infantry on their tanks and having deposited them in the area of the ESCAUT Canal North of MOLL, supported them in an attempt to cross. The bridge was found to be blown and there was heavy opposition from the far bank.

The infantry dug in and at last light the tanks withdrew.”A” & “C” Sqns supported the infantry forward to the South bank of the canal against little opposition and withdrew at last light.

Some prisoners (number unknown) Casualties:- 1 officer wounded. 14th September. No contact with the enemy, day spent in maintenance. Casualties:- 1 OR killed, 1 officer wounded (mine).

Given that the photographs shown were taken in August 1944 and that there are only two references to wounded officers in August and September for the regiment – it seems likely that Tony Streat was one of these. He would have been evacuated home – possibly by aeroplane given the timing and then to Leicester Royal Infirmary where he sadly died a few days later.

http://www.desertrats.org.uk/WarDiaries/3rd_CLY/3rdCLY1944.htm
https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0003853/19440929/006/0006
https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?q=searchType%3Dsimple%26simpleText%3DYeomanry%26themeID%3D%26resultsDisplay%3Dlist%26page%3D27&pos=539&total=576&acc=1975-03-63-18-51

Corporal ERIC STREET

King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
9th (The Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons) Bn.
Died 05 October 1944 Age 30 years old
Buried at ANCONA WAR CEMETERY Italy
Son of Norman and Beatrice Street, of Wilmslow, Cheshire; husband of Ivy Street, of Fareham, Hampshire.
Personal Inscription
HE WANDERS BACK TO US THROUGH A MIST OF BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES. IVY AND ANN



Eric had lived at 32 Highfield Estate, Wilmslow.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for October 27th 1944 reads:

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

STREET:- In October 1944, killed on active service in Italy, the result of an accident. Cpl ERIC STREET aged 30 years. K.O.Y.L.I Yorkshire Dragoons. Dearly beloved husbnd of Ivy Street and darling daddy of Ann.

We loved you too dearly to ever forget. His broken-hearted Wife and little Ann

The 9th Battalion (formerly the Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons) was motorised infantry assigned to the 18th Infantry Brigade and attached to the 1st Armoured Division.[29] The battalion served in the Italian Campaign. They fought in some particularly severe battles such as that during the Battle of Anzio in early 1944 until, due to a severe shortage of manpower in the Italian theatre, it was disbanded later in the year.

By 1944 and after a period of training, the regiment moved up to Florence, reverting to the command of 1st Armoured Division for the attack on the Gothic Line. The original men of the Yorkshire Dragoons, who had served four plus years abroad (less 6 officers), were sent home at the end of August, prior to the attack.

The first attack on Coriano Ridge secured a precarious foothold, but failed to achieve its objective. The regiment, which was in reserve, stabilised the position and three days later carried out an attack of their own that took San Savino, where 600 prisoners were taken. Two days later they successfully carried a further ridge. However, such was the shortage of infantry replacements in the British Army at the time, as all were being sent to 21st Army Group in the North West Europe Campaign, (D-Day etc) that 18th Infantry Brigade was broken up and the personnel were used to reinforce other units.

The regiment was thus placed in ‘suspended animation’ and the majority of the officers and men were posted to the 2/4th Battalion, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry serving in the 138th Infantry Brigade of the 46th Infantry Division.

The nature of the accident that befell Eric has not been discovered in this research.

Wireman
KENNETH WHITELEY SUMNER



Royal Navy H.M.L.C.T. 427.
Died 09 June 1944 Age 22 years old
Buried or commemorated at
HASLAR ROYAL NAVAL CEMETERY UK
Son of Robert and Hilda Alice Sumner, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
DEARLY LOVED SON OF HILDA ALICE & ROBERT SUMNER AND BROTHER OF MARIANNE

One of the new types of entry to the Navy in WW2 was the Rating Wireman. This was the application of the skills of a civilian electrician who was not an electrical engineer as such, but had experience in wiring out buildings and/or motor vehicles etc. Whilst obviously having no experience of HM Ships their electrical knowledge was put to good use on mainly small ships such as landing craft, minesweepers etc. This was particularly true for Kenneth given his civilian employment. (see below).

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser: 16th June 1944

Killed in the Normandy Landing

WIREMAN K W SUMNER

The sad news has been received of the death during the Normandy Landing of Wireman Kenneth Whitely Sumner (22) only son of Mr and Mrs Robert Sumner of Mona, Gravel Lane , Wilmslow. His birthday was on June 3rd.

Wireman Sumner was on a tank landing craft and had been in the Royal Navy for sometime. He served his apprenticeship with Messrs Ferrranti Ltd at Holinwood after receiving his education in Wilmslow. He had passed through the Hawthorn Street Methodist Sunday School and was interested in the work of the Church. The interment took place at Clayhill RM Cemetery, Gosport with naval honours on Wednesday.

Wireman Sumner's father, Mr Robert Sumner holds a responsible position with the Electricity Board, his mother supervises the Nursing Division Cadets and his only sister is in the Wrens.

Kenneth himself was the embodiment of chivalry and adventurous youth. He chafed and fretted at the restrictions his work placed upon him for his ambition was to hurtle an aeroplane at hundreds of miles an hour through the sky. Circumstances led him to the navy and as such he freed himself from civilian duty. Always unruffled, cool and calm he was fitted for adventure, a good friend steady and sure.

He was of the third generation of his Methodist family connected with Hawthorn Street Church. His father was badly wounded in the last war, which left him with a disability.

HM landing craft tank (LCT) 427 sank at 03:03 on 7th June 1944 at Spitbank Gate as she approached her home port. LCT 427 was returning to Portsmouth after delivering a cargo of Sherman duplex drive (DD) tanks to Gold Beach on D-Day as a part of the British lead assault under Operation Neptune.

As she approached Portsmouth in the early hours of 7th June 1944 as part of a flotilla of tank landing craft, she was in collision with the battleship HMS Rodney. The LCT was sliced in two amidships as she collided with the bow of HMS Rodney. All thirteen crew of LCT 427 were lost in the tragedy. The incident was not officially recorded for some months during which time the LCT and her crew were reported as missing.

Kenneth Sumner was recovered from the sea but subsequently died and was buried at the Haslar RN Cemetery.

In 2011 A memorial service was held for the servicemen who died when Kenneth's landing craft sank in the Solent during World War II.

The Southsea Sub-Aqua Club discovered the wreck in August 2011. Only Kenneth's body was ever recovered, the other 12 were lost with the craft. Among relatives and others attending 70 years later was Kenneth's former fiancé Margaret from Wilmslow.





Landing Ships (Tank) of the type of H.M.L.C.T. 427.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-15769818

http://www.southseasubaqua.org.uk/news/18-diving/diving-projects/hm-lct-427

https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0003853/19440616/006/0006

Private
WILLIAM TAYLOR

Gordon Highlanders 2nd Bn.
Died 07 May 1943 Age 27 years old
Buried at TURRIFF CEMETERY-Aberdeenshire



Son of George and Charlotte Taylor, of Turriff.
His brother, Robert Brander Taylor, also died on service.
Personal Inscription
HIS BROTHER ROBERT AGE 32 2ND GORDONS,
DIED AS A P.O.W. IN THAILAND 22-10-1943.
EVER REMEMBERED

Europe & North Africa

The Second World War began badly for Britain. For The Gordon Highlanders, two Battalions of the Regiment, the 1st and the 5th, were forced to surrender at St Valery in France in June 1940, along with most of the 51st Highland Division.

Yet both Battalions, together with their Division, were quickly reformed and fought with distinction in North Africa and Sicily. They returned to North West Europe on D-Day, 6th June 1944, and fought their way, along with a reformed 2nd Battalion (see below), from Normandy, through France, Belgium and the Netherlands to victory in Germany in May 1945.

Far East

2nd Battalion The Gordon Highlanders was captured after the Japanese took Singapore in February 1942. Despite this loss, the Gordons were well represented as British forces fought back against the Japanese in Burma. Two Battalions, the 8th and the 9th, saw action, but not as infantry. The 8th was converted to an Artillery Regiment, while the 9th became an Armoured Regiment.

Regimental HQ for the Gordon Highlanders was Aberdeen - so given his burial site in Scotland – maybe William was on HQ staff and died in accident and/or on training or from illness.

To date this research has not identified why William is remembered on the Wilmslow War Memorial.

Sub-Lieutenant (A) KENNETH CHARLES NUTT TRAVIS



Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
H.M.S. Urley.
Died 08 October 1945 Age 20 years old
Buried or commemorated at
LEE-ON-SOLENT MEMORIAL
United Kingdom
Son of Charles Harold and Grace Ethel Travis, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser: October 19th 1945

Missing RNVR Officer

Sub Lieutenant Kenneth C N Travis RNVR (20) of Castana, Holly Road, Wilmslow who is reported missing in a night flying accident off the Isle of Man was imbued with a strong sense of duty and it was with this rather than the desire to fly which caused him to volunteer for the premier and most exacting service in the Fleet Air Arm.

At the first call for national service at MGS early in the war he volunteered for work with the Altrincham Voluntary Land Club and he would leave Wilmslow each Sunday at 8 am cycling to Altrincham for the dispersal of working parties at 8.45. There he soon became a gang leader. These weekly journeys he did in hail, rain or snow sometimes cycling as much as 40 miles in a day as well as putting in a full day's manual work.

With the extension of the movement he, at the tender age of 15, formed the Wilmslow Voluntary Land Club and acted as its secretary and organiser. He fixed prices with the farmers for the Club's services and put in the fullest possible number of working hours. This he did until he went up to Magdalen College, Oxford in April 1943, for a law degree as a background to his ultimate profession as a chartered accountant. Sub-Lieutenant Travis was an old boy of Manchester Grammar School.

HMS Urley was the Fleet air Arm's base on the Isle of Man and is now Ronaldsway Airport.

A memorial bench to 22 young airmen who died during training exercises off the Manx coast during the last two years of World War Two was unveiled at Port Soderick, IoM in September 2024. The wooden memorial structure is in the shape of the Fairey Barracuda Torpedo Bombers that all those lost were flying when they were killed. The idea for the commemoration came about after it was pointed out there was no memorial for the airmen who died in "Barracuda Bay",

A roll call of names and ages of the airmen, who died between November 1944 and October 1945, was read out along with the post and home towns of each, including Kenneth's crew of three:

DAYES, George A, Ty/Act/Sub Lieutenant (A), RNVR, MPK
TRAVIS, Kenneth C N, Ty/Sub Lieutenant (A), RNVR, MPK
WILLIAMS, Robert F, Ty/Act/Petty Officer Airman, L/FX 114047, MPK



A Fairey Barracuda, torpedo bomber and naval reconnaissance – as flown by 710 Naval Air Squadron

It was thought that most of the deaths recorded in Barracuda's were caused by either structural failures or errors made by the airmen learning how to fly the aircraft.

During the earlier part of its service life the Barracuda suffered a fairly high rate of unexplained fatal crashes, often involving experienced pilots.

Experienced test pilot Baker-Falkner was therefor brought in to address the issues and boost morale amongst operational squadrons. During 1945 the cause was traced to small leaks developing in the hydraulic system.

The most common point for such a leak to happen was at the point of entry to the pilot's pressure gauge and was situated such that the resulting spray was directed straight into the pilot's face

The chosen hydraulic fluid contained ether and, as the aircraft were only rarely equipped with oxygen masks and few aircrew wore them below 10,000 ft/3,000 m anyway, the pilot quickly became unconscious during such a leak, inevitably leading to a crash.

It is not known if this was the fate of Kenneth and his crew.

It should be noted that sadly Kenneth was lost five months after the end of hostilities.

The Barracuda was very largely built at the Fairey Aviation factory at Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

Sergeant ROY VERNON

Service Number: 641582
Royal Air Force 148 Sqdn.
Died 31 July 1942 Age 24 years old
Commemorated at ALAMEIN MEMORIAL Egypt
Son of Thomas and Amy Vernon, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



The deep water Port of Tobruk in Libya was a key position in North Africa for both the Allied and Axis forces for the transport of vital oil and petroleum supplies from the oil fields through the Suez Canal.

According to the Squadron Operations Record Book (ORB) for the night of July 31 1942 twelve or thirteen Wellington aircraft from 148 Squadron were detailed for a night bombing operation on the shipping and harbour installations at Tobruk. Of those that took part in the attack, 10 completed the sortie and returned to base safely, two aircraft abandoned the mission due to engine trouble and one, piloted by Flying Officer W D Bohl RAAF failed to return.

The crews that returned reported that the weather over the target was clear with slight haze. Bombs were dropped on several ships moored at the jetties with bursts and fires seen. Due to the heavy anti-aircraft fire it was necessary to drop from 12000 to 7000 feet to avoid the flak. Further observations of the results of the bombing could not be made due to the need to take evasive action and the appearance of night fighters.

From the loss report submitted by their Commanding Officer on 2 August 1942, F/O Bohl and crew took off from Kabrit at 21.33 hours with a bomb load of 10 x 250lb general purpose bombs and 750lb of petrol in good weather conditions. No further news was received of the aircraft or crew.

The crew were made up of: Pilot Officer W D Bohl (RAAF), Pilot Officer R E Vaupel (RCAF), Sergeant J W Southgate, Sergeant R G Holton (RAAF), **Sergeant Vernon (RAF).**

Records relating to Sgt, Vaupel include a letter from the RCAF Casualties Office, that it had been told by the International Red Cross Committee, Geneva, quoting Italian information, that P/O Vaupel and one other member of the crew was killed - but no burial place was given - nor had one ever been located. This officer was therefore officially recorded as having lost his life without a known grave.

In another letter from the RAAF Overseas Headquarters in England to the Air Board in Australia in 1948 it is also stated that the other member of the crew reported by the Italians to have been killed was Sgt.W Southgate.

It may therefore be that Sgt Roy Vernon's Wellington was either hit by flak or attacked by a night fighter and came down in the sea. Did the Italian military find the bodies of Vaupel and Southgate floating in the sea whilst the record of their burial or disposal was lost in the "fog of war"?

The Wilmslow Advertiser for 28 August 1942 highlights that this was Roy's first operational flight:

MISSING FROM FIRST OPERATIONAL FLIGHT

Sergt. Air gunner Roy Vernon, son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Vernon of Barlow Road Lacey Green, is missing from his first operational flight in the Middle East. This occurred within a week of his arrival there.
Sergeant Vernon, who is 24, joined the RAF three years ago. Before that he was a joiner employed by Mr A Philip, builder of Lacey Green. He ws educated at Dean Row and the Modern School.





W D Bohl (Pilot)RAAF aged 20 and P/O R E Vaupel RCAF – crew members lost with Roy Vernon.

https://aircrewremembered.com/bohl-william-dennis.html

Midshipman (A) THOMAS RICHARD WETZEL WAGNER

H.M.S. Raven. Fleet Air Arm 759 Sqdn.
Died 25 February 1940 Age 19 years old
Buried at HASLAR ROYAL NAVAL CEMETERY
Son of Thomas Richard and Edna Wagner, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
"THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD"

759 Naval Air Squadron (759 NAS) was a Naval Air Squadron of the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. It was created on November 1, 1939 as a Fighter School and Pool Squadron at Royal Naval Air Station Eastleigh (HMS Raven). located in Southampton, Hampshire. On 1 December 1939, the squadron absorbed 769 Naval Air Squadron and became the Fleet Fighter School.

It was initially equipped with nine Blackburn Skua carrier-based dive bomber / fighter aircraft, five Blackburn Roc carrier-based fighter aircraft and four Gloster Sea Gladiator biplane fighter aircraft.

Records now show that on 25th February 1940 Tommy was flying solo in a Blackburn Roc Serial No L3070 on a training exercise and crashed two miles west of Botley near the Pear Tree Inn, Boorley Green, Hants.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser March 8th 1940:

HONOURED IN DEATH
FUNERAL OF WILMSLOW MIDSHIPMAN
Admiral, Officers and Men Mourn

Full naval honours were accorded at the funeral of Midhipman Thomas R Wagner of the Fleet Air Arm, whose parents live at East Bank, Hawthorn Street, Wilmslow.

In a snowy blizzard, in the wild weather he loved so well on trek by moor or fell (*), the mortal remians of Tommy Wagner, after instantaneous death in a solo flight, so recently at home in the first flush of happy manhood, were borne on a gun carriage with slow march through the beautiful lanes of Haslar on the way to the Naval Cemetery, to the accompaniament of the triumphant, yet soothing strains of Elgar's music, which seemed to symbolise the release of an ardent, fearless, dauntless soul from a world of woe to a finer world above.

Among the many who followed were his sorrowing parents and relations, the Rear Admiral of the fleet and the staff of the Squadron, the Squadron Commander, the Midshipmen of the Volunteer Reserve of the Fleet Air Arm, his friends and colleagues of 12 months standing, the Ships company HMS ------, the lads of the Training Ship ------.

Pomp and ceremony! But a ritual befitting the – as yet – undimmed and undisillusioned youthful idealism which conceived his chosen as being a man's job, and whose spirit in the resounding notes of the Reveille and Last Post, surely soared aloft to complete his fuller life beyond.

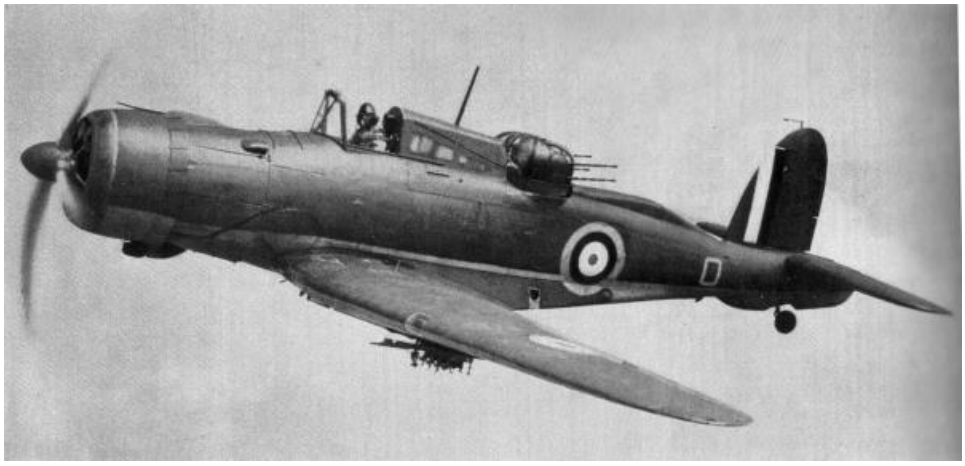
Among many tokens of regard and esteem were those from his former Masters at the Manchester Grammar School, at whose table he had the proud privelege of sitting only a week before: the Old Mancunians Association; the Headmaster and Staff and Scholars of the Wilmslow Modern School; the Rugby Association and others of the YMCA; his many friends in the Universities and parents and friends working in the outposts of the empire and "Women's Group" of the Wilmslow Guild.

HEART IN DANGEROUS SERVICE

The Congregational Church magazine, which church the deceased had attended for the last three years, contains the following: *"All who had the joy of knowing Tommy Wagner cannot doubt that "per adua ad astra" has had more that an enarthly significance for him. His whole heart was in the dangerous service he had chosen, with an included idealism, to give to his country. His mind and spirit alike were intent iupon high and lofty things. Sudden, in a moment, on Sunday, February 25th, he soared onwards beyond our vision to follow him, leaving his many friends saddened by their loss and his parents griref stricken, yet glad and proud in their every remembrance of him. Our profound sympathy goes out to them. Yet somehow despite everything, the word tragic hasts upon the pen; for in its finest meanings, the glorious is to be discerned as well."*

It is noticeable that this report is only 5 months into the War and was published at great length – (and in a rather florid style perhaps) It may also be that the Wagner family were deemed to be one of the "better" families in Wilmslow and the newspaper felt bound to report fully. The "self-censorship" of place names and ships is also interesting to note at this early stage.

The Blackburn Roc and Skua aircraft were normally multi- crewed by three airmen and yet "Tommy" is reported as being on a solo flight – perhaps because he was in training. The Roc differed from the Skua by having a rear facing gun turret – as shown below. It was too slow a platform to make a good fighter, and a bad concept with its turret gun - so the final verdict was that the Roc was certainly one of the worst fighter's ever and certainly the worst naval fighter of the Fleet Air Arm.



(*) An Account by Tommy Wagner of a 1936 camping trip with fellow MGS pupils can be found here:
https://www.mgs-life.co.uk/files/articlefile/316
http://www.epibreren.com/ww2/raf/759_squadron.html

Sergeant COLIN WILDE



Service Number: 1004224
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 49 Sqdn.
Died 15 June 1943 Age 21 years old
Buried at REICHSWALD FOREST WAR CEMETERY Germany
Son of Albert and Maude Wilde, of Gwynfryn, Denbighshire.
ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE LOST CAN TELL THE PAIN OF LOSING A LOVED ONE, WITHOUT FAREWELL

On Monday, 14 June 1943, 12 aircraft of 49 squadron (RCAF), took off in their Lancasters between 22.16hrs and 22.32hrs from their base at RAF Fiskerton, east of Lincoln for a bombing mission to Oberhausen in Germany



Sgt 'Nicky' Nixon running up ED453 G-George at dispersal on 22 Apr 1943

That evening, Sergeant Colin Wilde was the Flight Engineer on board ED453 G-George piloted by skipper Sgt “Nicky” Nixon.

Wilde and Nixon’s aircraft was one of a specialist Squadron whose machines were fitted with the 'Mandrel' electronic countermeasures system, the aerial for which is clearly visible protruding from the “chin” of G-George to the left.

“Mandrel” fitted aircraft carried a crew of eight with at least one of the crew who spoke German to countermand orders from the Beacon operators directing night-fighters onto Allied aircraft. Mandrel also worked as a jamming radar against German Wurzburg radar stations.

So, one of G-George’s crew with Sgt O N. Nixon in the pilot’s seat would have been the German speaker – probably Sgt E Dangerfield who is identified as an “Extra” Wireless Operator and Air Gunner.

- Sgt C. Wilde F/E
- F/S S.D. Bird RCAF Nav
- Sgt R.T. Moore W/AG
- Sgt R.K.B. Muir A/G
- Sgt N.W. Fyfe B/A
- Sgt F.R. Fowler A/G
- Sgt E. Dangerfield Extra W/AG

The 12 selected aircraft of 49 Squadron were part of an all Lancaster force of 197, guided by 6 “Oboe” Mosquitoes (fitted with an electronic target navigation system) and made a successful attack on Oberhausen. The primary target was the Ruhrchemie AG Synthetic Oil Plant (“Oberhausen-Holten” or “Sterkrade/Holten”) as part of the Oil Target Bombing Campaign which pitted the RAF & the USAAF against key facilities that supplied the Nazi Germany war machine with petrol, oil, and lubrication products



Oil Refinery 1943 Oberhausen. RAF Reconnaissance photograph

Despite the target being cloud-covered, accurate sky-marking enabled the bombers to do considerable damage but the crews found themselves engaged in a savage battle with both flak and fighters which resulted in a loss of 17 aircraft.

W/O Norman Nixon (ED453), whose brother happened to be the Medical Officer at Fiskerton, was killed along with Colin Wilde and the rest of the crew as a result of their Lancaster crashing near Lembeck. The crew are buried together in the Reichwald Forest Cemetery.

Sapper HAROLD KAY WOOD

Royal Engineers 81 Assault Sqn.
Died 11 June 1944 Age 22 years old
Buried or commemorated at

TILLY-SUR-SEULLES WAR CEMETERY France



Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser August 31st 1945:

> **Captured by Germans, Then Shot**
>
> Mr and Mrs John Wood of Beech Lane, Wilmslow have received information from the War Office that their elder son, Sapper Harold Kay Wood (22) was shot by the Germans after capture. The letter contains this tragic intimation with the promise of details later.
>
> Sapper Wood who went to the continent with an assault group of the Royal Engineers, was posted as missing on June 11th 1944, a few days after D-Day, and nothing was heard about him until the recent War Office letter.
>
> He went to the Modern School and then as an apprentice of Messrs Avery, scale repairers of Stockport. When he joined the Forces in 1944 he went straight into the Royal Engineers.

This shocking report was based on the testimony of Lance Sergeant Alfred J McK Delf whose tank was one of the 81st Assault Squadron that landed on Gold Beach in the first wave on D Day.

Five days later Alfred was captured at Tilly sur Seulles on June 11th and later reported that the rest of his six man crew were summarily shot by the Germans.

They are named as: Sapper Ervin DARWENT, Lance Corporal Thomas FLANAGAN, **Sapper Harold Kay WOOD**. Sapper Jack HOLLAND and Sapper William Ballantyne McCUTCHEON.

The tanks of Harold's squadron were not ordinary tanks – but special assault variations developed for D-Day that were referred to collectively as "Hobart's Funnies" – having been developed under the guidance of military engineer Major-General Sir Percy Hobart.

81st Squadron was equipped with AVRE's (Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers). The AVRE was a turretless Churchill tank with a 290 mm mortar that could destroy obstacles and provide close support to infantry.





Two views of AVRE's as operated by 81st Squadron.

The War Diary of 11th June 1944 tells what was happening:

1905: The 4 AVRE with 7 Armd Div under comd 7 [sic, should be 2] Glosters attacked TILLY-SUR-SEULLES. One AVRE had trouble with gear box and became out of action. Remaining three got into TILLY. Capt Davis on right had his vehicle put out of action by enemy atk weaponat X-rds in centre of TILLY. Lieut Boulter on the left with two AVRE. One AVRE proceeding towards church in ST PIERRE east of TILLY was hit by enemy action and burned out. Crew all missing. 2100: Lt Boulter withdrew with infantry withdrawal and took with him the crew of Capt Davis AVRE.

The missing crew must be Harold and his comrades.

The fighting around Tilly was lengthy and fierce up to the 11th of June. The day before, the 1st Battalion of the German Panzer Lehr Regiment 901 attacked Tilly in the direction of Saint-Pierre and succeeded in seizing the village, repelling the English.

On June 11, the British sought to break through the front by launching a new offensive in the vicinity of Tilly-sur-Seulles starting at 5.30 pm. They encountered the strong defences of the German forces at the access points of the village.

Over the next few days and from June 19 to 26, Tilly was conquered and lost 23 times by the English. When the front finally stabilised and the British definitely held the village, it was completely destroyed and the wrecks of tanks haunted the ruins. Today, 986 British soldiers, 232 Germans, 2 New Zealanders, 1 Canadian and 1 Australian lie in the Tilly-sur-Seulles military cemetery. They include the body of murdered Sapper Harry Kay Wood of Wilmslow.

Private KENNETH FRANCIS WOODALL

Royal Army Ordnance Corps
Died 20 October 1943 Age 27 years old

Buried or commemorated at
THANBYUZAYAT WAR CEMETERY, Myanmar

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser - 27th August 1943

PTE K WOODALL JAPANESE PRISONER

Until this week nothing was heard from Private Kenneth Woodall, of the Highfield Estate, Wilmslow since he sent a cable early in 1942 that he had reached the journey's end safely. The end of journey was Singapore, and when the town fell Private Woodall was reported as missing.

This week his wife received the welcome news that he is safe and well and a prisoner of war with the Japanese. He is being well treated and tells his people not to worry. He sailed 12 months after his marriage to Miss M Bacchus.

Before joining the RAOC Private Woodall assisted his father with the bakery and confectionery business in Church Street.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser - Friday 5th April 1946:

HUSBANDS DEATH CONFIRMED

Official news was received this week by Mrs Mary Woodall of 10, Highfield Estate Wilmslow, that her husband Pte. Kenneth Francis Woodall RAOC died whilst a prisioner of war in Japanese hands in Thailand on October 20th 1943

The Royal Army Ordnance Corps was the body charged with supplying weapons, ammunition and equipment to the British Army. The RAOC was also responsible for a major element of the repair of Army equipment before 1942 at which point the latter function was transferred to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME). During the Second World War the RAOC expanded rapidly from a few hundred officers and a few thousand men to 8,000 officers and 130,000 men in the space of four years.

Within three months of Japan joining the War - the British Commander, Lieutenant-General Percival, was surrendering Singapore in February 1942. About 80,000 British, Indian, Australian and local troops became prisoners of war, joining a further 50,000 taken in the wider Malayan campaign.

A fellow RAOC man at the time said

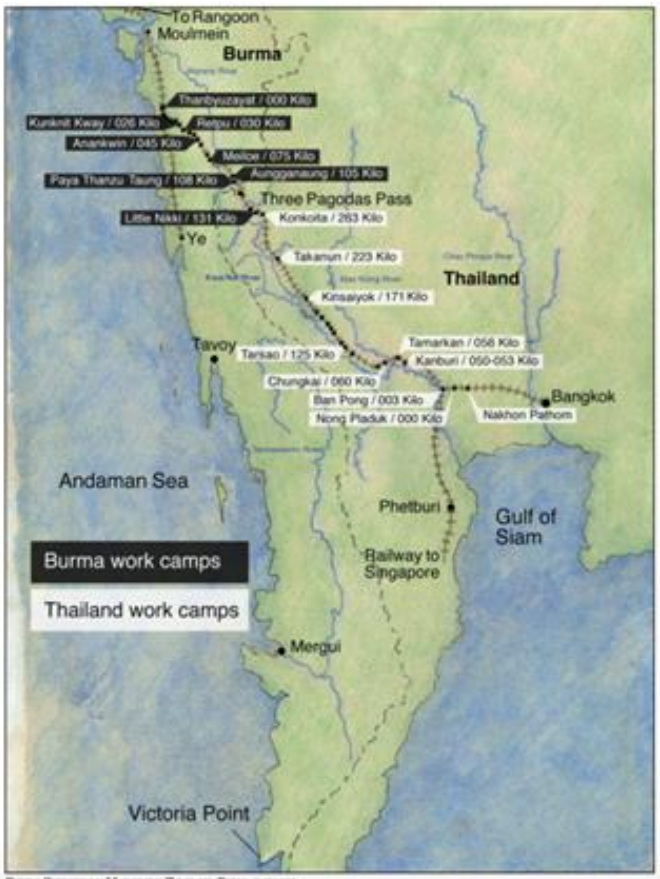
:"We were taken prisoner of war and were taken up to Changi district," "The area was barb-wired off and we lived there from February to October. In October they started moving us from Singapore up into Thailand with a promise of better camps.

"The trip from Singapore up into Thailand was made in cattle trucks without any sanitation and one meal a day. It lasted four days and four nights and it was a horrendous trip."

The first Prisoners of War arrived at Thanbyuzayat (where Kenneth is interred), via Moulmein in September 1942 and established a POW base camp. There was also the base for a large hospital camp. It was here at Thanbyuzayat that the northern section of the pre-war rail line was connected to the newly laid rail line the prisoners constructed through Thailand. The southern end of the line was connected to the existing line at Nong Pladuk, west of Bangkok.

Prisoners who died in the camps in the north of Thailand - from Nikke going north to Moulmein in Burma - were initially buried in small cemeteries located close to the camps in which they had died, but after the war the Army Graves Service located most of the deceased from the camps between Nikke and Moulmein and they were moved to the War Cemetery at Thanbyuzayat that is almost exclusively a Death Railway related PoW graveyard. It was the location of the terminus of the dreaded railway which was constructed by forced labour in 14 months from October 1942 to December 1943.

The total number of graves in Thanbyuzayat is 3,771, of which 1,588 were British including 27 unknown graves. 1,335 were Australian and 621 were Dutch and numerous others. The grave of Private Kenneth Francis Woodall (10558863) of the RAOC (Royal Army Ordnance Corps) can be found at Thanbyuzayt War Cemetery, Burma alongside 3,615 others. He died aged 27 on 20th October 1943.. It is estimated that approximately 13,000 PoWs died in the course of this horrific project.



Map: https://www.pacificatrocities.org/blog/the-building-of-thailand-burma-railroad-aka-death-railroad

Private
ALBERT GEORGE WOODHOUSE



Cheshire Regiment 6th Bn.

Died 11 March 1945 Age 34 years old

Buried or commemorated at
FORLI WAR CEMETERY Italy
Son of Walter William and Hannah Sophia Woodhouse, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
THE LOSS WAS HARD THE BLOW SEVERE TO PART WITH A SON WE LOVED SO DEAR

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for March 23rd 1945:

SOLDIER DIES OF WOUNDS

News has been received by Mr and Mrs W Woodhouse of 25 Church Street, Wilmslow, of the death of their son Albert from wounds received in Italy. He was known in Wilmslow as a pigeon racer and was employed by Mr D Jessop the decorator. He had been overseas for nearly three years, going all through the African Campaign.

Having served and seen action in North Africa in 1942/43 , "Bud", as he was affectionately known to his family, sailed with his battalion from Tripoli, North Africa and landed at Salerno on September 9th, 1943. From September 10th to 20th the battalion helped hold the Salerno bridgehead against attack and then advanced to the Volturno River. They then fought and advanced through October, November and December towards the River Garigliano and crossed that on January 17th, 1944. Here they held a bridgehead for nearly a month through to the night of the 12th/13th of February. The division was then moved into the Anzio bridgehead and gave support from February 14th until relieved on March 13th and retired to Egypt in April to rest and refit after nine months of largely hard, un broken fighting and advancing.

Three months later, the battalion returned to Italy and to Assisi in preparation for the assault on the so called "Gothic Line" which commenced on September 1st. From the 10th of September the battalion gave support in the Gothic Line and was involved in many actions crossing rivers and taking towns as the Allied forces gradually pushed North.

Operations slowed during the winter of 1944 with Bud's battalion providing defensive support from November 1944 until March 1945. A period of static warfare largely existed from January 12th to March 15th, 1945 but clearly there was action – as this is the period in which Bud received his injuries from which he passed away on the 11th of March. Yet again he was one of those who was lost within just days of the end of hostilities

The fighting in North Italy was as hard and as brutal as any that happened after D-Day in France. The Gothic Line was a 10 mile deep belt of German fortifications extending from the West coast through the Apennine mountains to the Adriatic Sea in the east. The defences included numerous concrete-reinforced gun pits and trenches and 2,376 machine-gun nests with interlocking fire, 479 anti-tank, mortar and assault gun positions, 120,000 metres (130,000 yd) of barbed wire and many miles of anti-tank ditches.

Bud's Battalion of the 6th CHESHIRES provided Vickers Medium Machine Gun and 4.2 inch mortar support to the Division's three Infantry Brigades throughout the Italian campaign..



Cheshire Regiment machine Gunners 1944



Leading Aircraftman
COLIN HIGSON WYLDE

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 23 May 1941 Age 25 years old



Buried MEDICINE HAT (HILLSIDE) CEMETERY
Canada
Son of Albert N. H. Wylde and Lillie M. Wylde, of Wilmslow, Cheshire, England.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser May 30th 1941:

> **Wilmslow Airman in Fatal Accident**
>
> Mr and Mrs ANH Wylde of Graylake, Stockton Road, Wilmslow have received a cable notifying them of the death in a flying accident in Canada of their eldest boy, Colin Higson Wylde
>
> The young man, who was educated at Farnworth Grammar School, had been keenly interested in aviation for some years. He spent all his spare time making aeroplane models and it became natural for him when he came of age to take to flying. He regarded it as his vocation and twelve months before war was declared he joined the Civil Air Guard and learned to fly. He left for Canada in February. While in civil life he worked with his father, a Manchester cloth merchant. He was 25 years of age.

The Civil Air Guard (C.A.G.) was a UK government organization that offered subsidised pilot training to members of civilian flying clubs in exchange for a commitment to serve in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in an emergency. The C.A.G. was established in July 1938 as the threat of another war loomed.

Air crash records show that Harvard - 2643 crashed while conducting night flying exercises. Pilot Officer R.E. Sears and Leading Aircraftman C.H. Wylde were killed in the crash.

Colin undertook his training with 34 SFTS (34 Service Flying Training School) Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. Graduates of the EFTS "learn-to-fly" program went on a Service Flying Training School (SFTS) for 16 weeks. For the first 8 weeks the trainee was part of an intermediate training squadron; for the next 6 weeks an advanced training squadron and for the final 2 weeks training was conducted at a Bombing & Gunnery School. The Service schools were military establishments run by the RCAF or the RAF.

There were two different types of Service Flying Training Schools. Trainees in the fighter pilot stream went to an SFTS like No. 14 Aylmer, where they trained in the North American Harvard or North American Yale. Trainees in the bomber, coastal or transport pilot stream went to an SFTS like No. 5 Brantford where they learned multi-engine technique in an Airspeed Oxford, Avro Anson or Cessna Crane.



North American Harvard Mk II trainers as flown by Colin over Medicine Hat airbase.

Styal War Memorial



A close inspection of the Styal War Memorial reveals that there are only two names recorded as lost from the village between 1939 and 1945. Both share the same surname – Halliday.

These were cousins Philip James Halliday and John Lawrie Halliday both of the RAF Volunteer Reserve. Both lived at Holmlands, Styal, with Philip's accountant father, Donald Dunn Halliday, mother Elizabeth and their two daughters Joan and Barbara - John having joined the family in his late teens in the late 1930's after the death of both his parents.

The two men are the author's uncle and his cousin.

The memorial is located at the Hollin Lane/Station Road junction in Styal.

Pilot Officer PHILIP JAMES HALLIDAY

RAFVR 612 Sqdrn (Coastal Command)

Res\6tresA\Date of Death 1941-12-25 Age : 21 years.
Commemorated Runnymede Memorial and Styal, Cheshire

SON OF DONALD DUNN HALLIDAY AND ELIZABETH HALLIDAY, OF WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE.



1

Philip was born in 1920 – and spent his childhood in Wilmslow and attending Boothams School in York. By 1939 he was at Cambridge University – but chose to interrupt his studies to volunteer for the RAF. After training in Lancashire until late 1941, Philip was posted to 612 Squadron, Coastal Command operating from Wick in Northern Scotland.

612 Squadron at the time was equipped with Armstrong Whitley twin engine bombers newly equipped with air to sea radar to spot and identify U-boats threatening Atlantic convoys. By 1941, the Whitley was already dated and was largely withdrawn from any bombing duties – being underpowered, slow and with a tendency for wing icing and engine failure. It was therefore largely used for transport duties and Coastal Command.



Armstrong Whitley "D" Delta – Wick 1941. Note anti submarine radar antennae on top.

In December 1941, 612 Squadron was scheduled to relocate to Rejkavik, Iceland – following that country's "friendly annexation" by British forces – a strategy partly driven by the need to improve Atlantic convoy protection by increasing the range of air cover for the ships.

As part of the transfer operation - on Christmas Day 1941 - two aircraft, “A” – Archie and “O” – Oscar were slated to fly to Iceland. Unlike most other Whitley’s in the Squadron – “A” Archie was not fitted with radar – but seems to have been operated as the Squadron “bus” – to transport equipment and personnel – rather than undertake anti-submarine operations. For this reason there were more people on board “A” for Archie than was usual for crew alone.

The official record as written from the Reykjavik base and the Squadron Operations Book for Christmas Day 1941 reads:

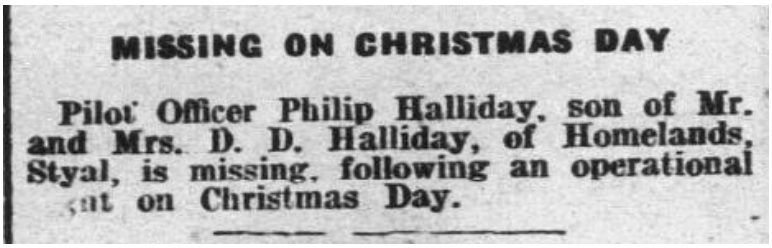
Weather fair at first becoming cloudy towards dawn and continuous snow setting in at mid-day. Wind north easterly veering east, light, becoming moderate gusty. Visibility good becoming very poor in snow and cloud on surface. Temperature 18 degrees F. during night and below freezing all day.

There was no operational flying by the detachment today.(ie no anti- submarine patrols) Two aircraft “A” and “O”, P/o (Pilot Officer) Catchpole and Sgt Ralph set out from Wick in the morning in an attempt to get to Reykjavik but due to bad weather here suddenly arising at noon, were both told to return to Wick.

“O” safely returned but “A” who had been out of W/T contact since leaving Wick, failed to return. F/O (Flying Officer) Fiddes, Medical Officer, F/O Scholefield, Intelligence Officer and F/Lt. Spikins, Torpedo Officer were passengers. Second Pilot was P/O Halliday who had only recently joined the Squadron.

It was P/O Catchpoles first trip as an officer, and the loss of the aircraft and those aboard was keenly felt by the Squadron.

Philip’s family in Styal received the “missing” telegram – on Boxing Day.



MISSING ON CHRISTMAS DAY

Pilot Officer Philip Halliday, son of Mr. and Mrs. D. D. Halliday, of Homelands, Styal, is missing, following an operational sortie on Christmas Day.

Wilmslow Advertiser January 2nd 1942

Flying Officer John Lawry Halliday



RAFVR 226 Squadron
Date of Death 19th November 1944: Age 30:
Burial at Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Netherlands

SON OF JAMES THEODORE HALLIDAY AND OF MARY WINIFRED HALLIDAY (NEE LAWRY);

HUSBAND OF NORA HALLIDAY (NEE KITCHIN), OF NOTTING HILL, LONDON. B.A., A.R.I.B.A.

Mitchell FW146 was reported missing during an operational mission on 19th November 1944 with 226 Squadron. Immediately after bombing, the starboard wing was seen to receive a direct hit from flak just outboard of the engine. The aircraft broke away from the formation, turned upside down and was last seen going down in an uncontrollable dive from a height of about 6000 feet. Five of the crew were killed and WO Cote returned safe to the UK.

Crew:
RAF Sqn Ldr Campbell,G DFC and Bar Captain (Pilot)
RAF FO Farquhar D G, DFC (Navigator)
RAF FO Halliday J L (Navigator)
RAF FO Hodson, (Wireless Air Gunner)
RAAF 421929 PO Osmond, W E (Wireless Air Gunner)
RAF WO J F Cote, (Air Gunner)
Record of WO JF Cote RCAF:

The bridge between Venlo and Blerick over the River Maas was a key route for German troops to bring troops and equipment to the area west of the river in North and Central Limburg, Holland. The Allies bombed the area in an effort to destroy the bridge and stop the threat to the liberated area in the east of North Brabant

On Nov. 19, 1944, while approaching the bridge at 15,000 feet, John's aircraft took a direct hit which killed three comrades and cut the fuselage in two. The after portion, with turret and Warrant Officer JF Coté – rear gunner - plunged several thousand feet before it ceased spinning and settled into a prolonged flutter, rather like a leaf. The tail landed in an orchard and he staggered out, wounded, but alive. He ended up a prisoner of war.

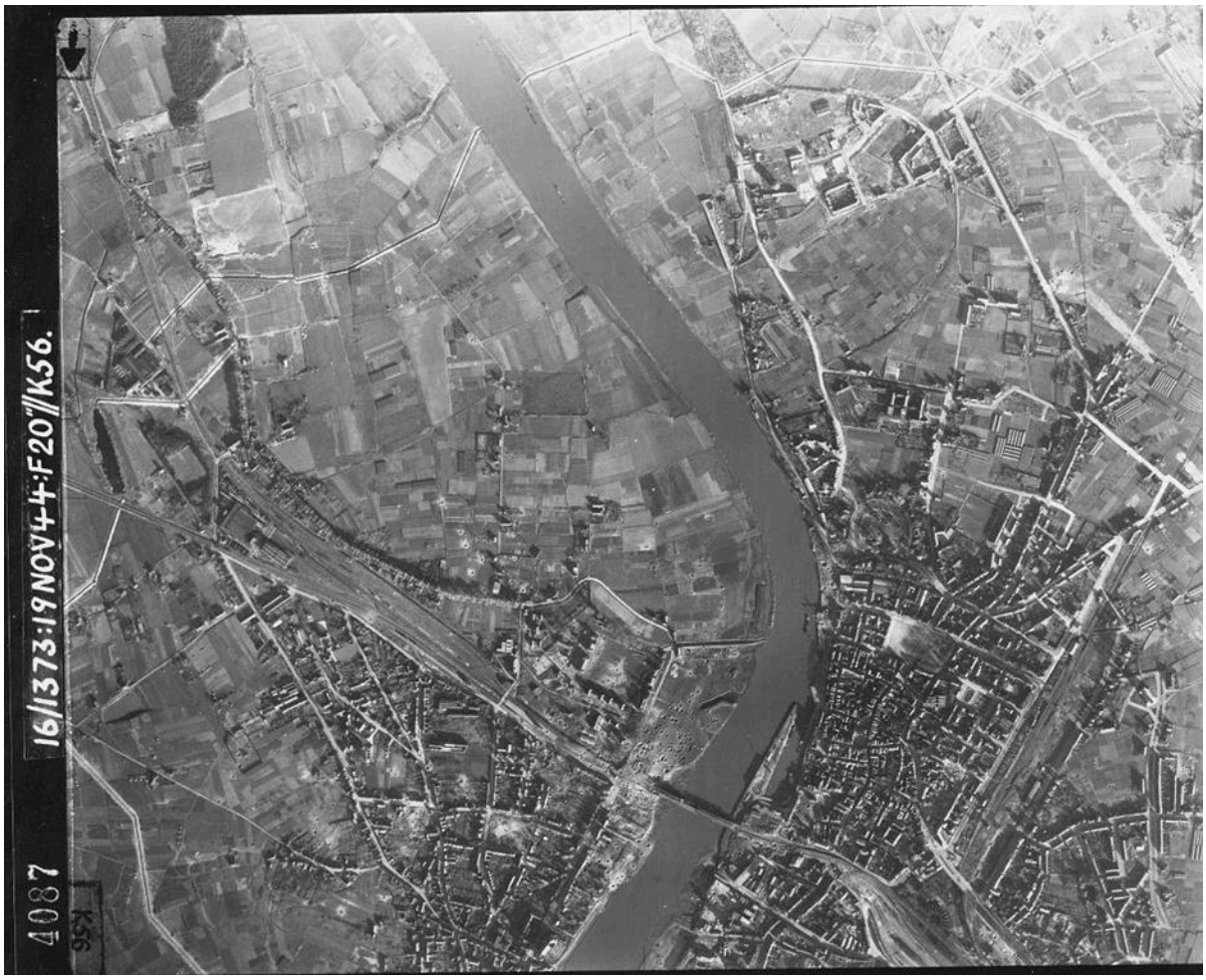
Map of crash the site: http://www.backtonormandy.org/the-history/air-force-operations/airplanes-allies-and-axis-lost/b-25-mitchell/Mitchell12708.html?tmpl=component&mapinfo=1

Why would a Mitchell have a crew of six on this occasion ? This was the leader of the formation, hence the crew of 6. Squadron Leader L CAMPBELL frequently performed this duty in late 1944. One navigator would be responsible for the specific aircraft – the other for the Squadron as a whole.

226 provided 6 Mitchells for this raid, led by S/L Campbell. They took off at 14:35 hours. They bombed at 15:30 hrs, when FW146 was hit by Flak, over the target, "between the port engine

nacelle and the wingtip. The wing folded up and the aircraft went down. No parachute were seen." Quote of the ORB form 541. 4 other planes were hit / damaged.

In 226 Squadron, aircraft FW146 had P – Peter as its individual identifying letter.



Aerial photo of Velno bridge taken on the day of the attack. Note bomb craters to West of the bridge. The bridge was not destroyed until 25th November – six days after John's attack.

Further pics of Sqdn 226 Operations here (scroll down web page)
http://aircrewremembered.com/smith-thomas-vivian.html

Just a month before John's aircraft was lost and he was killed, his pilot and Squadron Leander Campbell (also killed in action) was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross as detailed below:



226 SquadronMitchell Bombers in Flight

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE, 24 OCTOBER, 1944:

Distinguished Flying Cross: 17th September 1941
Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Gilbert CAMPBELL, D.F.C. (46638), R.A.F., 226 Sqn.

Squadron Leader Campbell has completed many sorties against a variety of targets by day and night. . In August, 1944, he was detailed for an operation against a ferry at Duclair. Despite heavy anti-aircraft fire the attack was pressed home with good results. Shortly after the bombs had fallen the aircraft was struck. It immediately became almost uncontrollable and height was lost ' rapidly. Petrol poured from the pierced tanks and the starboard engine caught fire. The situation seemed hopeless. Coolly and skilfully, however, Squadron Leader Campbell effected a crash-landing. As the aircraft touched down, it burst into flames. All the: crew, with the exception of the top gunner had got clear. Without hesitation, Squadron Leader Campbell entered the wreckage in order to release -his comrade. Unfortunately he had succumbed. This brave pilot displayed conduct in keeping with the best traditions of the Royal- Air Force.

HANDFORTH WAR MEMORIAL





The Handforth Wr Memorial is on Wilmslow Road, Handforth

The Memorial, also known as the Handforth Obelisk, was created through a combination of fundraising, planning permission, and construction much more recently than the other memorials researched here.

The Handforth Community War Memorial Foundation raised over £30,000 through voluntary donations, as well as grants from the Handforth Parish Council and Wilmslow Town Council.

Planning permission was granted in June 2015 and the memorial was constructed by Mather and Ellis of Stretford constructed the obelisk, while Carillon Construction Services laid the foundations and York paving stones for free.

The names recorded on the memorial for WW2 are repeated from those that are listed in St Chads and St Mary's churches in Handforth. They Are:

A Bradshaw, H Bridge, E J England, K G Gresty, M A F Lichtensteiger,	R S Metcalf, S P Mitchell, W D Stopford, W H Seed, C J Ward

Sergeant ARTHUR BRADSHAW



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 06 September 1942 Age 32 years old
Buried STOKE-UPON-TERN (ST. PETER) CHURCH CEMETERY
Son of James and Lucy Bradshaw; husband of Joyce Catherine Bradshaw, of Handforth, Cheshire.
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

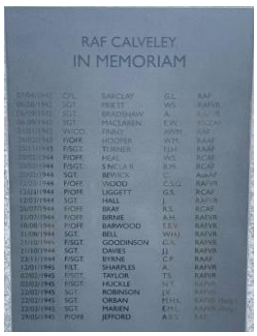
Sgt Arthur Bradshaw was co-piloting a Miles Master III W8795 two seater trainer of No. 5 Advanced Flying Unit. 21 Group - that took off from RAF Calveley (a satellite airfield for RAF Tern Hill in Shropshire) for a night training exercise just after midnight on Sunday 6th of September 1942. He was accompanied by 20 year old Sergeant Ewan William McLaren of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF). Before the War Arthur was a keen player at Wilmslow Rugby Club and is commemorated there and on their website.

Bradley and McLaren were engaged in dual instruction in circuits and landings. Given their age difference– it may be reasonable to assume that Bradley was the instructor.



A less well remembered aircraft of WW2, the Miles M.9 Master was a British two-seat monoplane advanced trainer designed and built by aviation company Miles Aircraft Ltd. It was inducted in large numbers into both the Royal Air Force (RAF) and Fleet Air Arm (FAA) during the Second World War. In a typical trainer configuration, the Master was equipped to carry eight practice bombs, plus a single .303 Vickers machine gun that was mounted in the front fuselage.

It is believed the aircraft suffered an engine failure before they crashed after striking a tree whilst attempting a forced landing on Brindley Common near Nantwich at 01:10 hrs.



RAF Calveley was a relatively local airfield to Wilmslow near the village of Wardle, Cheshire, north-west of Nantwich. It was originally one of a number of airfields intended to boost the fighter defence of Merseyside but by the time the airfield was complete, the need for fighter defences for the North-West of England had declined, so it was decided to use it for training, with the station opening as a Relief Landing Ground for No. 5 Service Training Flying School (SFTS) based at RAF Ternhill.
It was equipped with 174 Miles Master trainers. The airfield area and some of its buildings still exist and those lost from there, including Bradley and McLaren are commemorated on a modern memorial on the site. (Listed 3rd and 4th)

https://www.facebook.com/RAF.Calveley/?locale=en_GB

Lieutenant Colonel HAROLD BRIDGE

Cdg. 7th Bn.
Died 30 June 1943 Age 38 years old
Buried at WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Additional Info
Son of William and Elizabeth Bridge; husband of Helen Burd Bridge, of Handforth.



Lt. Col Bridge's Gravestone at Wilmsow Cemetery.

Lieut.-Col Harold Bridge, was Officer Commanding of the 7th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) but has been a difficult individual to research in terms of his service and his death. The various records show him to have come from Lynwood Heathrise, Camberley, Surrey and he died 30 June 1943 at St Thomas Hospital, Hidestile, Godalming, Surrey. His effects went to Helen Burd Bridge, widow and Lawrence Eyre West, solicitor.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser report of July 9th 1943 on his funeral explains that he was married to a Handforth girl – hence his burial in the Wilmslow cemetery. The "TD" reflects the award of The Territorial Decoration. This was a military award given to commissioned officers in the Territorial Force for long service. The TD was awarded to officers who served a minimum of 20 years, with war service counting double and service in the Regular Army counting half. Recipients of the TD were entitled to use the post-nominal letters "TD".

Handforth
OBITUARY
LIEUT.-COL. H. BRIDGE, TD DWR
Keen Territorial Officer

Lieut. –Col Harold Bridge TD who has lived at Hill House, Dean Road, Handforth, for about 12 years, died in hospital on June 30th.
A member of a Royton family. Lieut.-Col Bridge came to live in this locality when he married the only daughter of Mr WB Phillips of Fern Bank Handforth. Lieut.-Col Bridge was educated at Oldham Secondary School, and later entered the cotton business, to become ultimately, a partner in the firm of Bridge, Audley and Co., cotton merchants of Manchester and Liverpool. He was a keen Territorial and had belonged to the Colne Valley battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. At the outbreak of war he held the rank of captain, and some months ago was given a staff appointment with the War Office. He was 38 years of age.
The interment took place at Wilmslow Cemetery on Monday, following a service at St Mary's Methodist Church, Handforth. The officiating ministers were the Rev Arthur Phillips, superintendent minister of Stockport Trinity Circuit and the Rev RJ Smith.....The coffin was covered with a Union Jack, surmounted by a lovely cross of carnations and scabious. Members of an anti- tank unit formed a guard of honour outside the church and on the cemetery walk.
.....

> The Rev Arthur Phillips referred to Lieut.-Col Bridge as a gallant gentleman, who had been cut off in what should be the prime and strength of manhood. Mrs Bridge was lying ill in the same hospital after tenderly caring for her husband, and they all hoped she would regain her health and strength.

The newspaper report would suggest that Harold Bridge died of some infectious disease that his wife also contracted – but survived – or they were subject to a shared accident. What his illness was has not been identified in this research and it is also not clear whether his staff appointment with the War Office meant that he accompanied the Battalion on its travels below.

The 7th Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding) was based in Milnsbridge near Huddersfield. The 1/6th and 1/7th battalions of the regiment were both assigned to the 147th Infantry Brigade, which itself was part of the 49th (West Riding) Infantry Division. The brigade were sent to Iceland after it was occupied by Britain in 1940, and remained there until May 1942 when it was transferred back to the United Kingdom and went on to take part in D-Day after Harold's death.

The invasion of Iceland was a British military operation conducted by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines during World War II to occupy and deny Iceland to Germany. At the start of the war, Britain imposed strict export controls on Icelandic goods, preventing profitable shipments to Germany, as part of its naval blockade. Britain offered assistance to Iceland, seeking cooperation "as a belligerent and an ally", but Reykjavik declined and reaffirmed its neutrality

The German diplomatic presence in Iceland, along with the island's strategic importance, alarmed the British and on 9th April 1940, Germany overran Denmark, Iceland's former mother country. After failing to persuade the Icelandic government to join the Allies, the British invaded on the morning of 10 May. The initial force of 746 British Royal Marines disembarked at the capital Reykjavík. Meeting no resistance, the troops moved quickly to disable communication networks, secure strategic locations, and arrest German citizens. Requisitioning local transport, the troops secured various landing areas against the possibility of a German counterattack.

On the evening of 10 May, the government of Iceland issued a protest, charging that its neutrality had been "flagrantly violated" and "its independence infringed", noting that compensation would be expected for all damage done. The British promised compensation, favourable business agreements, non-interference in Icelandic affairs, and the withdrawal of all forces at the end of the war. Resigning themselves to the situation, the Icelandic authorities provided the invasion force with de facto cooperation, though formally maintaining a policy of neutrality. In the following days air defence equipment was deployed in Reykjavík and a detachment of troops sent to Akureyri. However, the initial invasion force was ill-equipped, only partially trained and insufficient to the task of occupation and defence of the island. On 17 May, 4,000 additional troops of the British Army arrived to relieve the marines. These included Henry's battalion of the 7th Battalion Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment).

By 1943 the British largely withdrew from Iceland and American forces took their place.

Writer ERIC JAMES ENGLAND

Royal Navy H.M.S. Glorious
Died 08 June 1940 - Age 20 years old
Commemorated at CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Mrs. J. England, of Handforth, Cheshire.



Ships Badge HMS Glorious

In the Royal Navy, a Writer's primary role was to perform clerical duties, such as managing legal, pay, welfare, and career issues for a crew. They were also responsible for the smooth running of the ship, including advising the captain on junior promotions and organizing crew pay. Writer was an equivalent rank to a Corporal in the Army.

HMS Glorious was the second of the three Courageous-class battlecruisers built for the Royal Navy during the First World War. They were relatively lightly armed and armoured and Glorious was completed in late 1916. Glorious was paid off after the war, but was then rebuilt as an aircraft carrier during the late 1920s.



HMS Glorious is accompanied by HMS Wishart, one of its escort destroyers, in 1939.

After the start of the Second World War in 1939, Glorious spent the rest of the year unsuccessfully hunting for the commerce-raiding German cruiser Admiral Graf Spee in the Indian Ocean before returning to the Mediterranean.

She was then recalled home in April 1940 to support the ultimately unsuccessful operations in Norway.

While evacuating British aircraft from Norway in June, the ship was sunk along with two other ships by the German battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in the North Sea with the loss of over 1,200 lives.

The story of the sinking of the Glorious is shot through with drama and subplots. The ship had just been the setting for the daring recovery on its deck of land-based Hawker Hurricane fighters escaping from Norway, even though the planes had no arresting hooks and their pilots had no carrier training.

But the Hurricanes—and most of the pilots—would go down with the ship a day later. The pilots were among the hundreds of men who perished in the Arctic waters because it took 24 hours for word of the sinking to reach the Royal Navy's high command.

The reasons why HMS Glorious was sailing largely unprotected in a "solo" return to Scapa Flo in the Orkney's are still subject to controversy and debate today and therefore, so will Eric's loss.

https://www.historynet.com/hms-glorious-sinking/

Sergeant KENNETH GASTON GRESTY



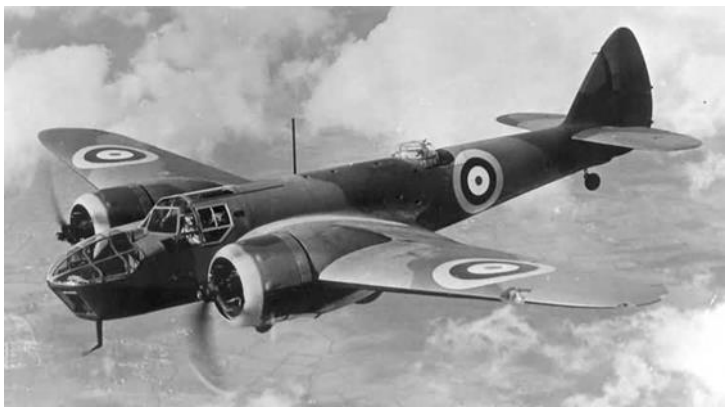
Royal Air Force 105 Sqdn.
Died 17 April 1941 Age 19 years old
Commemorated at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL
Son of Ernest and Elsie Gresty, of Handforth, Cheshire.

Kenneth Gaston Gresty, of Handforth, Cheshire, was born on 10th May 1921, the son of Ernest and Elsie Gresty. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School.

Gresty joined the RAF as a Boy Entrant on 27th September 1938. He later re-mustered as an Airman Radio Operator/ Air Gunner and after completing his training he joined 219 Squadron at Catterick.

He was lost on 17th April 1941 serving as a Sergeant with 105 Squadron, flying in a Mark IV Blenheim from Swanton Morley, Norfolk. His Blenheim IV, T2141, was shot down off the Brittany coast by Me109s during an anti shipping patrol. Pilot and fellow crew members Sgt. LL Evered and Sgt. IG Sarjeant were also lost.

No. 105 Squadron began the war as part of the Advanced Air Striking Force, making it one of the first squadrons to be sent to France. Flying the underpowered and under armed Fairey Battle all the squadrons equipped with them suffered very heavy losses during the Battle of France, and No. 105 Squadron was no exception. It suffered so badly that on its return to Britain in June 1940 it immediately converted to the Bristol Blenheim, while many other Battle squadrons were simply re-equipped with the Fairey aircraft.



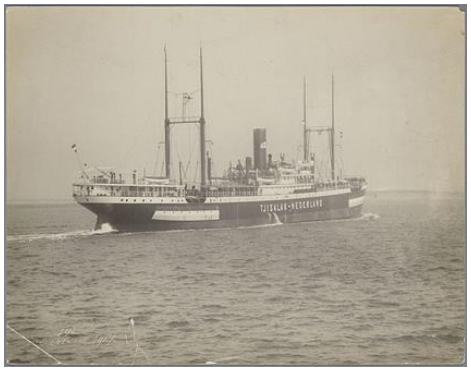
A Bristol Belenheim Mk IV

No. 105 Squadron used its Blenheims to attack German ports and airfields in occupied Europe, before shipping out to Malta in July 1941 to attack Axis shipping in the Mediterranean, soon after Kenneth's loss..

https://www.bbm.org.uk/airmen/Gresty.htm
https://www.destinationsjourney.com/historical-military-photographs/bristol-blenheim-mk-iv-light-bomber/
http://www.historyofwar.org/air/units/RAF/105_wwII.html

Apprentice MAX A. F. LICHTENSTEIGER

Merchant Navy S.S. Tjisalak (Netherlands)
Died 26 March 1944 Age 18 years old
Commemorated at TOWER HILL MEMORIAL
Son of Max and Gertrude Lichtensteiger, of Handforth, Cheshire.



SS Tjisalak was a 5,787-ton Dutch freighter with passenger accommodation built in 1917 for the Java-China-Japan Line and used by the Allies during World War II to transport supplies across the Indian Ocean between Australia and Ceylon. On 26 March 1944, she was torpedoed and sunk by the Japanese submarine I-8 while traveling unescorted. The freighter's crew were subsequently massacred in an infamous naval war crime.

The Tjisalak was sailing from Melbourne to Colombo with a cargo of flour and mail. The crew of 80 consisted of Dutch, Chinese and English merchant seamen, plus ten Royal Navy gunners manning the ship's four-inch gun. Also on board were five passengers (including an American Red Cross nurse, Verna Gorden-Britten) and 22 Laskar sailors returning to India after the loss of their ship. Tjisalak had been travelling for 19 days, when her captain became confused by an unusual wireless message from Perth, and changed his course, sailing at 10 knots (19 km/h; 12 mph) to conserve fuel. At 5:45 am on 26 March 1944, she was struck by a torpedo from the Japanese submarine I-8.

One passenger, a Lieutenant Dawson from Australia, was killed instantly, and the ship began to list to port. The order was given to abandon ship. Most of the crew obeyed, taking to the ship's boats and life-rafts, but the British gunners and the Dutch gun commander, second officer Jan Dekker, remained on board, waiting for the Japanese submarine to appear and opened fire. I-8 responded with her own deck-gun, forcing the gunners to abandon ship.

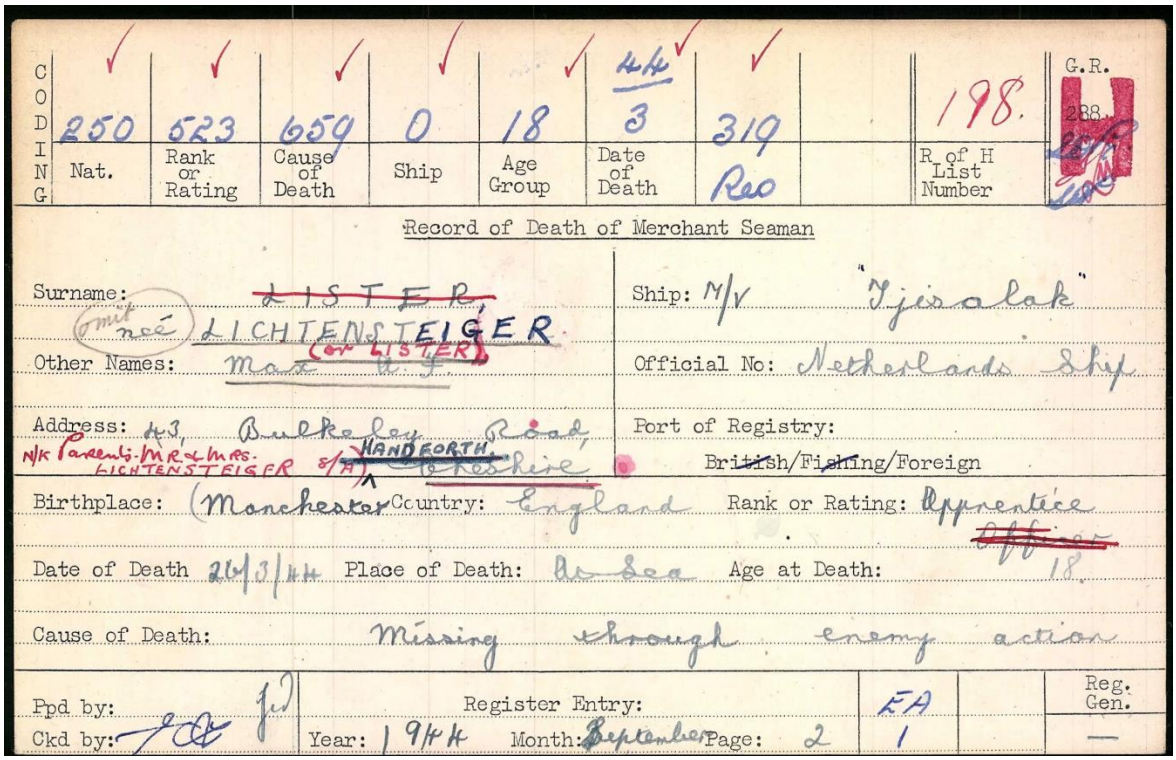
Once in the water, the 105 survivors were collected by the Japanese, who placed them on I-8's deck and ordered Captain Hen into the conning tower to confer with the Japanese commander, Tatsunosuke Ariizumi. Survivors reported Captain Hen as shouting "No, no, I don't know." At that moment, a Chinese sailor slipped into the water and was shot.

The Japanese then tied the survivors together in pairs and walked them aft around the conning tower, where they were attacked with various weapons. Four men jumped or fell from the submarine while being attacked and survived the random gunfire from three Japanese sailors seated behind the conning tower. These were Chief Officer Frits de Jong, Second Officer Jan Dekker, Second Wireless Operator James Blears and Third Engineer Cees Spuybroek. A Laskar named Dhange also survived the massacre.

After the Japanese had killed all but about twenty of the prisoners, they tied the remainder to a long rope, pushed them overboard, and then submerged. Dhange, the last man on the tow rope, managed to free himself before he drowned.

The remaining survivors managed to swim several miles through the open ocean back to the location of their sinking, where they found an abandoned life-raft. Three days later they were spotted by a distant American Liberty ship, SS James O. Wilder. After briefly firing on them by mistake, the Americans rescued the survivors and took them to Colombo.

The crew of the Japanese submarine I-8 later committed similar atrocities against the crew of the Liberty ship SS Jean Nicolet, and possibly other ships from which no one survived. The Captain, Ariizumi, committed suicide when Japan surrendered in August 1945, but three members of the crew were identified and prosecuted for their participation. Two were convicted and served prison terms which were commuted by the Japanese government in 1955. The third was granted immunity in exchange for testifying against his former shipmates.



CODING

Nat.	Rank or Rating	Cause of Death	Ship	Age Group	Date of Death			R of H List Number
250	523	659	0	18	3	319		198.

G.R. 288

Record of Death of Merchant Seaman

Surname: ~~LISTER~~ LICHTENSTEIGER (formerly LISTER)

Other Names: Max

Address: 43, Bulkeley Road, ~~HANDFORTH~~, Cheshire

N/K Parents: MR & MRS. LICHTENSTEIGER

Birthplace: Manchester Country: England

Date of Death 26/3/44 Place of Death: At Sea

Cause of Death: Missing through enemy action

Ship: M/V "Tjisalak"

Official No: Netherlands Ship

Port of Registry:

~~British~~/Fishing/Foreign

Rank or Rating: Apprentice ~~Officer~~

Age at Death: 18

Ppd by: J.J.

Ckd by: J.A.

Register Entry: Year: 1944 Month: September Page: 2

EA 1

Reg. Gen. —

The official record of Max's loss.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Tjisalak

https://www.militaryimages.net/media/max-a-f-lichtensteiger.118892/

Flight Sergeant ROWLAND STAFFORD METCALF

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 419 (R.C.A.F.) Sqdn
Died 30 May 1943 Age 33 years old
Buried CHARLEROI COMMUNAL CEMETERY
Son of John Thomas Metcalf and Lillian Metcalf; husband of Beatrice Metcalf, of Handforth, Cheshire.

Rowland Metcalf was navigator in Halifax aircraft JB805 of 419 Squadron (Royal Canadian Air Force). The report of his experiences and loss are given in a detailed report on the 419 Squadron website of Pilot, Warrant Officer Phillip Johnson and his crew in Spring 1943. As a navigator, Rowland would have been allocated to a Canadian squadron in order to ensure their earlier operational availability.

On April 3rd 1943, two months before their final action, Rowlands aircraft, skippered by Johnson and the crew made up of Sgt. Ross Bomb Aimer, Sgt. Humphreys Wireless/Air Gunner, Sgt. Thornhill Flt/Eng, Sgt. Thomson Upper gunner and Sgt. Wallis in the rear gunner position embarked for an attack on Essen.



Pilot Warrant Officer II
Phillip Shuttleworth Johnson

Three hours after take-off they were attacked by a Messerschmitt 110 night fighter whose guns ripped up the Halifax's fuselage as well as inflicting heavy damage to the rear turret and loss of elevator and flap control. The bomb load was released and evasive actions were taken to shake off the attack.



Rowland's aircraft was left with both gunners wounded and the pilot without any idea if they had lost the attacker or not. Johnson managed to struggle with the controls and reach Coltishall air base where the wounded were taken to Norfolk and Norfold hospitals. This time all recovered from their wounds.

However, by April 26/27th, the remaining crew were allocated to Halfax JB805 with replacement gunners and Bomb Aimer and were slated for another operation to bomb Duisburg.

Eighteen year old Sgt. Peets took the position of Bomb aimer and Sgt. D. J. Shtitz replaced the Upper gunner and Sgt. E. L. Armstrong the rear gunner.

In the course of the next few weeks this new crew were placed on mine-laying missions to the coast of Denmark and a return to bomb Essen, Duisberg, Dortmund and Bochum. At various times they were subject to bad weather, poor visibility, heavy ant- aircraft barrages, search lights, night fighters and a fuel tank failure.

On the night of May 29th/30th 292 Lancasters, 185 Halifaxes, 118 Stirlings, 113 Wellingtons, 11 Mosquitoes (719 in total) took off to attack Wupperthal in the German industrial heartland of the Ruhr.

This attack was aimed at the northern end of the long and narrow town of Wuppertal and was claimed by the Allies as the outstanding success of the whole bombing campaign collectively known as the Battle of the Ruhr. Both Pathfinder and Main Force bombing was particularly accurate and a large fire area developed in the narrow streets of the old centre of the town. It is probable that the fire was so severe that the first, small form of what would later become known as 'firestorm' developed. Being a Saturday night, many of the town's fire and air-raid officials were not present, having gone to their country homes for the week end, and the fire services of the town - in their first raid - were not able to control the fires.

Approximately 1,000 acres - possibly 80 per cent of the town's built-up area was destroyed by fire. 5 out of the town's 6 largest factories, 211 other industrial premises and nearly 4,000 houses were completely destroyed. The number of buildings classed as seriously damaged - 71 industrial and 1,800 domestic - indicates the high proportion of complete destruction. Various figures were given for the number people killed but estimates of at least 3,400 have been made – indicating the savagery and tragedy of bombing raids of WW2 – howsoever delivered.

The scale of the above figures indicate that the property damage in this raid was about twice as severe as any previous raid on a German city, while the number of people killed in this comparatively unprepared backwater of the Ruhr, was five times greater than any previous city raid

However, there were significant British losses. 33 aircraft were lost in total. Ten were Halifaxes like Rowland's. 8 Stirlings, 8 Wellingtons and 7 Lancasters also failed to return.

A pilot of a Luftwaffe night-fighter of 1/NJG4 squadron reported that he had shot down what was identified as Rowland's Halifax JB805 and it crashed near Peronnes-lez-Binche about 14 km East of Mons in Belgium on its return journey. Rowland had completed 9 operations at this point whilst his pilot Johnson had completed 13. The other crew members had completed between 6 and 13 sorties. All were killed.

Whilst deemed a strategic success, 4·6 per cent of the force that took off that night - did not return, accounting for approximately 300 airmen killed, wounded and/or captured.

Rowland is not only commemorated on the Handforth War memorial but also in St Mary's Methodist Church, Wilmslow Road by a brass vase or flower holder for the Holy Table inscribed:

"IN MEMORY OF/ FL/SGT METCALF R S/ AND HIS CREW/ MISSING PRESUMED KILLED OVER GERMANY/ MAY 30 1943/
"THEY SEE THEIR PILOT FACE TO FACE""

https://caspir.warplane.com/pdoc/pn/600030093/
http://www.419squadron.com/JB805.html

Corporal SAMUEL PHILIP MITCHELL



Royal Army Ordnance Corps 11 Ordnance Ammunition Coy.
Died 17 June 1940 Age 21 years old
Commemorated at DUNKIRK MEMORIAL
Son of Philip Mitchell, and of Elizabeth Ellen Mitchell, of Handforth, Cheshire.

Samuel was a member of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC). This was the British Army corps that supplied weapons, ammunition, and equipment to the army. As a Corporal he would have held some considerable organisational authority.

The RAOC's role included supplying weapons, ammunition, and fortifications, storing weapons, and ammunition, and distributing these to where they were needed. They also took responsibility for repairing weapons, vehicles, and other military equipment.

By June 1940, with the British army in full retreat towards Dunkirk, the role of the RAOC would have been very difficult. The last British troops were evacuated from Dunkirk on June 3rd. So, by the 17th (the day that France requested an Armistice from the Germans) the RAOC personnel at Rennes to the West of Normandy, were part of the very last British forces remaining in France with an uncertain future facing them.

On Monday, June 17, 1940, the German Luftwaffe bombed the railway complex in Rennes. The bombing targeted an ammunition train parked next to French and British troop trains and a refugee train. The consequent explosion killed over 800 people. This included 170 British servicemen and many French military personnel and civilians.



The explosion created an 80-meter long, 20-meter wide, and 5-meter deep crater. Wagons and bogies were thrown up to 300 meters away. The town was covered in thick black smoke and debris fell from the sky.

Those killed included many servicemen left behind after the evacuation of Dunkirk. Many of the injured were taken to hospitals, but many died later. The explosion caused panic in the town, and many residents fled to nearby villages. German troops entered the city the next day.

NB: On the same day the troopship RMS Lancastria was sunk by German air attack off the port of Saint-Nazaire during Operation Aerial with over 4,000 fatalities. It was the greatest loss of life in the sinking of any British ship in history. A terrible day for British forces. Churchill ordered that news of the sinking be kept secret from the British public.

Flight Sergeant WILLIAM DOUGLAS STOPFORD

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 540 Sqdn.
Died 08 August 1944 Age 24 years old
Buried DURNBACH WAR CEMETERY
Son of Sidney and Eunice Stopford; husband of Bessie Stopford, of Handforth. Cheshire.
GENTLE IN MANNER, FIRM IN DEED. BESSY.
RESTING, TILL WE MEET AGAIN. MAM AND DAD

Flight Sergeant William Douglas Stopford was a navigator in a specialist role in a specialist squadron.

At 11.in the late morning and in the bright daylight of August 8th 1944 with Pilot Desmond Lawrence Matthewman at the controls of a specially adapted Mosquito Mark IV, William took off for a high speed photo-reconnaissance mission over Germany. They left RAF Benson in Oxfordshire to review bomb damage of earlier Bomber Command targets around Munich.

William's squadron No. 540 was a dedicated Mosquito unit formed as one of five such specialist squadrons in March 1943 after the value of high speed "PRU" squadrons had been recognised in 1942.



A Mk IV Mosquito of 540 Squadron

Britain had begun the Second World War dangerously short of capable reconnaissance aircraft. Special, unarmed and fast Spitfires had solved part of the problem, providing an aircraft with the performance to take photographs over defended areas, but it did not have the range to make an ideal PR aircraft. The de Havilland Mosquito, originally developed as a high speed unarmed bomber, provided the answer. It had the speed and the range needed and the space to carry a wide range of camera installations.

The long range (2000 kms) of the Mosquito would allow it to reach just about anywhere that the main bomber force could bomb. This duty saw the Mosquitoes of the PRU reach deep into southern Germany as well as conduct naval reconnaissance to Norway searching for the main units of the German fleet.



540 Squadron with a PRU Mosquito Mk IV

Each new variant of the Mosquito improved its capacity as a PR aircraft. Higher altitudes and longer ranges allowed the Mosquitoes to penetrate further across Hitler's Europe. The Mosquitoes of PR Squadrons like 540 made many crucial discoveries, amongst them the secret German research centre at Pennemünde where the V1 and V2 rockets were being developed.



However, on this mission, William and Matthewson were shot down over Ohlstadt, upper Bavaria on 8 August 1944 by one of Germany's new Messerschmitt 262 jet fighters piloted by Lt. Joachim Weber of 9./JG7.

Their loss was the first ever confirmed aerial victory of any jet-powered aircraft in the world.

As recently as October 2024 – the value of the contribution of PRU Squadrons was debated in the House of Commons – with a view to establishing a special memorial to those who flew and served in them. In particular Luke Taylor MP (Sutton and Cheam) (LD) 28th October 2024 is recorded in Hansard as paying tribute to William's pilot DL Matthewman –DFC and Bar.

> It is appropriate to reiterate the incredible contribution of the Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, which took more than 26 million images of enemy operations and installations throughout the war. These images were used in the Cabinet war rooms—now the Churchill war rooms—located underneath the Treasury, and were instrumental in the planning of major operations throughout the war. Despite this incredible contribution, and with one of the lowest survival rates of the war—life expectancy in the PRU was around two and a half months—there is no national memorial to the unit. That troubling oversight is why the Spitfire AA810 project is leading the campaign to establish such a memorial to the pilots and navigators.
>
> I take this opportunity to mark the contribution of four veteran pilots from my Sutton and Cheam constituency, three of whom gave their lives and all of whom would be commemorated by this memorial.
>
> (One of these was.) Desmond Laurence Matthewman started the war in Bomber Command, flying with 51 Squadron. In February 1941, he brought home a bomber from a mission over Bremen whose tail flying controls had been damaged, making the aircraft almost impossible to control. Once over the UK, he and his crew jumped by parachute, an act which earned him his first Distinguished Flying Cross. On 8 August 1944, he and navigator William Stopford took off on a photographic mission to Munich but were met by the new German Me 262 jet fighter. Matthewman and Stopford were shot down over Ohlstadt in what has been recognised as the first jet aircraft combat kill in history.

https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-28/debates/C7A7B5EE-7D6A-469C-BC97-45DB3424B10F/RemembranceAndVeterans

http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/battles_mosquito_PR.html

https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1224010

https://wwiiafterwwii.wordpress.com/2015/08/12/the-s-92-czechoslovakias-me-262/

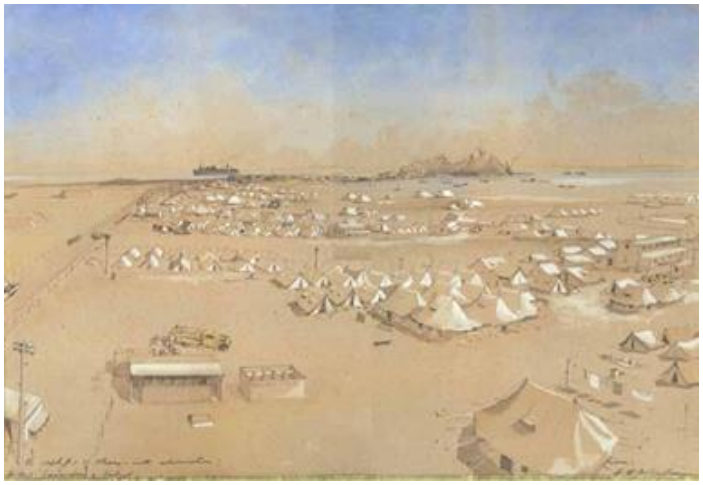
Ordinary Seaman CLIFFORD JAMES WARD



Royal Navy H.M.S. Stag
Died 29 July 1941 Age 21 years old
Commemorated at CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of James and Ethel Ward, of Handforth, Cheshire.

In March 1941, HMS Saunders was commissioned as a naval section of the Combined Training Centre (CTC) at Ismailiai in Egypt, and was also known at different times as HMS Stag. The base was a training facility for Royal Navy Beach Commandos, landing craft crews, and Combined Operations Personnel and teams. The base offered training in swimming, PT, canoeing, and close combat. It also had a slipway for training with Landing Craft Mechanised (LCMs), a tug, and a dummy ship.

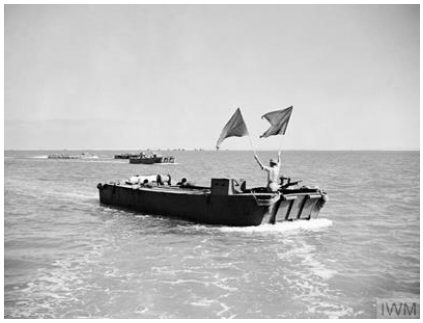
By May 1941, the 'nucleus' personnel of the Centre arrived and established itself in a camp on the Little Bitter Lake. It is probably around this time that Clifford arrived just some 2-3 months before he died. Its office accommodation was a houseboat moored alongside the sea with a camp that could house large numbers of naval personnel and troops training for use of landing craft. Navy men were therefore part of HMS Stag/Saunders. Almost all of the complex was tented and the environment was little but desert. Apart from some sandstorms, life was pleasant enough and the large marquee which served as the wardroom provided a welcome addition to the quality of life in camp.

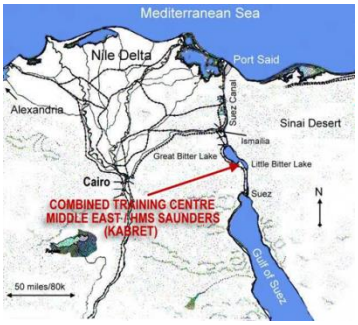


A sketch of HMS Saunders by Herbert Hastings McWilliams

The CTC's peak period in terms of volume of army personnel through the centre was in the lead-up to Operation Husky, the landings in Sicily in November 1942, eighteen months after Clifford died.

The CTC was the first Combined Operations Training Establishment outside the United Kingdom. Its purpose was to train Royal Navy personnel in the operation of landing craft and together, with the troops of many Allied nations, to practice amphibious landings prior to operations against the enemy in the Mediterranean. It is presumed that Clifford died in an accident or from illness.





Amphibious Training at HMS Stag/Saunders.

https://www.combinedops.com/Training%20CTC%20Middle%20East.htm

St John's Church, Lindow, Wilmslow



This section looks at the background and final stories of each of the service personnel and others listed as lost in WW2 on the St John's Lindow, Wilmslow War Memorial.

They appear in the order they are remembered on the memorial.



St John's Lindow Church is on Knutsford Road in Wilmslow.

Several names on the St John's Lindow memorial plaque duplicate some of those recorded on the St Barts, Remembrance Garden monument.

The stories of those "duplicated" can therefore to be found amongst the St Barts section of this paper. They are:

Ceceil Ford Bedell
Walter Cheetham
Ronald Edward Hulme
Peter N Leech

Kenneth Halstead is recorded on the United Reformed/Congregational Church memorial plaque but not at St Bartholomew's.

Flight Sergeant PELHAM BOLTON ALLEN

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 124 Squadron.
Died 15 February 1945 Age 22 years old
Buried or commemorated at MANCHESTER CREMATORIUM
No. 124 (Baroda) Squadron RAF was a fighter unit in World War II.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 23rd Feb 1945

> DEATHS
>
> Allen On February 15 1945 as the result of a flying accident. Flight Sergt. PELHAM BOLTON ALLEN of Crawerook Co Durham and second son of John W and Gladys Allen formerly of Wilmslow.

No. 124 (Baroda)* Squadron RAF was a Spitfire fighter unit in World War II.

At 3.55pm on 15 Feb 1945, 124 Sqn Spitfire HF.IX PV212 flying from RAF Coltishall, Norfolk, and piloted by F/Sgt P B Allen crashed into a building in the grounds of Mundesley Sanatorium, Norfolk. The accident happened during dive-bombing practice and Pelham was unable to pull up from his dive in time. The site was being used as a convalescent army barracks at the time and in addition to the pilot, one soldier was killed in the building by the crashing aircraft, which burst into flames.

The Sanatorium was originally set up for TB sufferers around 1900 and was the first large centre in England that had been built specifically for open-air treatment of the disease but the patients and staff were evacuated to Cheshire earlier in the war and the site was taken over by the Army.



Mundesley Sanatorium, Norfolk.

The other casualty was 24 year old Eric Melley, of the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) of Alcester, Warwickshire who was sent to the sanatorium to recover after being injured, he was about to be discharged to home when the Spitfire crashed into the building he was in.

Daily News (London) 16th February 1945

> Plane falls on billet
>
> An RAF pilot and a soldier were killed yesterday when a place crashed on to some Army billets at Mundesley Norfolk.
>
> The plane hit one end of the building where the soldier was alone in a room and set it alight. Soldiers in an adjoining room were unhurt.

After a variety of duties from 1940 on – including air defence at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, and bomber escort duties - 124 (Baroda) Squadron was charged with intercepting German reconnaissance aircraft at up to 50,000 ft in early 1945, using updated Spitfire Mk VIIs with pressurised cockpits. Over time they were stationed at a number of bases including Church Fenton and Biggin Hill.

On February 10th, just 4 days before Pelham was killed, the Squadron was re-equipped with new Spitfire Mk IX.HF(e)'s in order to carry out dive-bombing attacks on the mobile launch sites of the V2 rockets, mainly in the woodland areas around The Hague in the Netherlands.



A Spitfire IX being loaded with bombs for dive-bombing

124 Squadron became the fifth of six squadrons of Spitfire dive-bombers deployed to attempt to take out the V2 mobile launching sites, by flying sorties known in the RAF as "Ramrods". These were daylight bombing sorties on specific targets using a mix of fighters and light bombers.

It is assumed that Pelham was practicing in one of the new Spitfire IX's in an aircraft new to him –for the new role of dive-bombing.

- The Royal Air Force (RAF) Squadron 124 is called Baroda because of its earlier connection to India and the mongoose, an animal known for its speed and ferocity:

https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/army-casualty-mundesley-norfolk-feb-1945.55718/

http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2712406/MELLEY,%20ERIC

https://www.rafcommands.com/database/awards/details.php?qnum=1512540&qname=ALLEN

Warrant Officer ERIC BARDSLEY



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 576 Squadron.
Died 19 April 1945 Age 34 years old
Commemorated at BERLIN 1939-1945 WAR CEMETERY
Son of David and Mary Bardsley; husband of Frances M. Bardsley, of Paisley, Renfrewshire.
A GOOD LIFE HATH BUT FEW DAYS: BUT A GOOD NAME ENDURETH FOR EVER. ECCL.XLI.13

There is only one Eric Bardsley recorded in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission details. To date it is not clear why he is recorded on the St John's Church, Lindow, Wilmslow War memorial for 1939-1945. However, his story is truly and sadly worthy of record.

In the late afternoon of January 30th 576 Squadron Lancaster I W4245 registration UL-52 piloted by Pilot Officer Edward Horace Childs flew from RAF Eltham Wolds, Lincolnshire with 446 other Lancaster's, 32 Halifax's and 12 Mosquitoes for the third attack on Berlin in four nights.

Taking off at around 16:50 hrs with 10 others from their squadron, Eric as Sgt. Navigator and his crew set off for their second of the three successive operations to Berlin. Their Lancaster carried 1 x4000 lb and 9 incendiary bombs of various grades and sizes. The weather was described as cloudy with tops of 1,800 ft. The crews were instructed to bomb from 20,000 ft or above using blind bombing techniques with the remaining Mosquito Pathfinders leaving a good concentration of sky markers.



The Crew of Lancaster UL-52:
L-R Rear: F Sgt Ronald Johnstone, Sgt Herbert Bowles**, Sgt E Bardsley**, P/O Edward Childs (pilot) and Sgt.Victor White
Front: Sgt. Clifford Brewster and Sgt Clifford Giffard
*(Courtesy Lucy Childs and Clay Johnstone)

Five of the Mosquitoes were to simulate an attack on the town of Braunschweig between 18:55 and 19:53 hrs to divert German fighters away from the main raid – but this subterfuge failed

The squadron reported that they observed a good glow of fires and several explosions. The flak was moderate and the German searchlights were ineffective due to the heavy clouds. Considerable night fighter activity was reported both over the target and during the homebound trip.

All aircraft returned safely except one. Eric's aeroplane W4245 was attacked by a night fighter and exploded in mid-air over Königsberg, with parts of the aircraft falling in 'Lower Pond' in Königsberg.

Sadly, five of the crew pictured above were killed – but Eric and fellow crew member Victor Ernest Thomas White parachuted safely to ground. They were captured as prisoners of war and sent to PoW Camp 357 Stalag 'Kopernikus' at Thorn in Poland, about 180 miles northwest of Warsaw –with POW Numbers of 1093 and 1098 respectively.



Stalag 357 (pictured) was already inhabited by 7,000 British Army prisoners of war but in later stages of the War it became home for the 3,000 or so Air Force NCO's,(like Eric) who were accommodated in a separate compound. Later this camp became known as Stalag XXA.

During his time as a prisoner, Eric was promoted from Sergeant to Warrant Officer – one of the most senior NCO ranks in the RAF.

The reader will notice that whilst Eric was shot down in January – his date of death is recorded as April 19th 1945 some four months later. So what happened?

By the time Eric was shot down and captured, the German army was already in retreat in both Western Europe and in the East. As the Russians advanced in the East the many POW camps in eastern occupied territories were at risk (as the German's saw it) of liberation and the release of prisoners to fight again. So, as early as July 1944 Hitler had given instructions for plans to be set up to move prisoners westward.

As the Russians drove towards the west of Germany in the spring of 1945, large columns of British P.O.Ws were put on the move in areas between the advancing Russian and Allied Armies. One of these columns reached the little village of Greese on the 19th April, 1945 and was seen by Allied aircraft. They were moving in a westerly direction and the Typhoon ground attack fighters mistook them for German reinforcements moving towards the front lines and launched an attack with rockets and cannon. The aircraft came in for a second run but some of the brave prisoners ran into a field waving their arms to stop the attack, which the Typhoons did, realising their tragic mistake

The result was devastating. Over 20 allied airmen were dead along with some German guards and another 30 wounded. The dead were buried in the local cemetery of Gresse by the English Padre who accompanied the column and Pastor Stubbe of Gresse compiled a list of names and numbers for his cemetery records. Thanks to this, the 20 Air Force men were later identified – including Warrant Officer Eric Bardsley whose remains were later re-interred at the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery.

In the marches that took place from late 1944 to early 1945, over 80,000 POWs were forced to march up to 1,000 miles from Poland to Germany in one of the coldest winters of the 20th century.

https://aircrewremembered.com/AlliedLossesIncidents/?s=1550&q=1944-06-12&qand=&exc1=&exc2=&search_type=&search_only

https://kenfentonswar.com/stalag-357/

https://aircrewremembered.com/childs-edward-horace.html

https://www.rafcommands.com/archive/03207.php

Fusilier MAURICE BARR

Royal Scots Fusiliers 11th Bn.
Died 06 July 1944 Age 30 years old
Buried at BAYEUX WAR CEMETERY France
Son of Herbert and Annie Barr; husband of Marjorie Barr, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
OUR THOUGHTS OF YOU WILL NEVER CEASE.
YOUR LOVING WIFE MADGE, PAM, MAM AND GRAM.

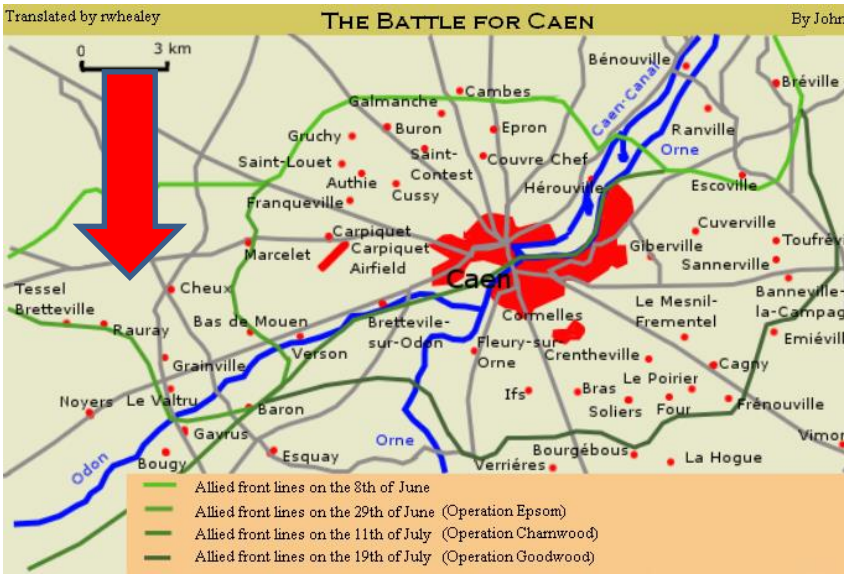




11th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers was formed on 5th June 1940. Once the unit had reached field strength it took up responsibility for coastal defence activities in the Norfolk area for three years whilst training for the future.

On 11th June 1944, 5 days after D-Day, 11th Battalion, Royal Scots Fusiliers faced that future and landed in Normandy on Gold Beach, and began their fight West.

Three weeks later, as part of Operation Martlet (also known as Operation Dauntless) Maurice was part of a series of British attacks to capture the French town of Caen and its environs. Their immediate objective was the village of Rauray, to the West of Caen in the "Bocage" (high hedged countryside). Being higher than the surrounding ground, the village gave good observation opportunities over the wider landscape.



The attack commenced at 4.15 a.m. on 25th June. The preparatory artillery bombardment was intense, but a combination of the dust and debris thrown up by the shelling, concealing smoke laid down at the time of the advance and the early morning mist reduced visibility to about two yards.

Into this curtain of dust and smoke 'B' and 'C' Companies of Maurice's Battalion moved forward. This poor visibility coupled with the devastating defensive fire of the opposing 12th Panzer Division resulted in chaos as many men became lost as they moved forward.

To make matters worse, all their radios were knocked out. In this confusion the opposing forces engaged in vicious hand to hand fighting and casualties were high. Several hours into the attack, the reserve companies of 'A' and 'D' moved forward, gathering up the remnants of their sister companies.



Enemy fire remained heavy and accurate such that by late morning only about 70 men remained. However, despite the odds, by noon, 'A' and 'D' Companies had gained a foothold on the western end of nearby Fontenay le Pesnel and by 3pm had consolidated their position, but were too low in numbers to advance further. Another Battalion successfully attacked the rest of Fontenay on passing to the second phase objective of St Nicholas Fe.

Royal Scots Fusiliers moving through a “Bocage” village.

With the Fusiliers dug in, stock was taken of the casualties of the day which amounted to 7 officers and 194 other ranks.

On 28th June the 11th R.S.F moved further West, taking up a position to the North of Juvigny and forming the right flank of 49th Division. For the next nine days the Fusiliers were engaged in aggressive patrolling and efforts to strengthen their defensive positions. Between 7th July and 25th July the 11th Battalion spent time in several front line positions, including Rauray and also in the quieter rest areas Ducy St. Marguerite and Chouain. Nevertheless, harrying, offensive patrolling was regularly maintained in this period. The end of the month saw the Battalion in defensive positions at Frenouville to the south east of Caen where they remained until 9th August.

In the midst of these days of fierce fighting – it seems likely that Maurice was wounded and evacuated. The War diary of the Battalion shows that the 11th were withdrawn from fighting by 3rd July to rest and re-equip. No Battalion fatalities or casualties were recorded between June 28th and mid July but Maurice is reported as having died on July 6th – exactly one month from the launch of D-Day and only four weeks from his landing in Normandy.

https://jameskitchenerheath5051929.blogspot.com/2015/07/11th-royal-scots-fusiliers-1940-to-1944.html
https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/history/17686282.d-day-75-dli-fought-way-off-beaches-normandy-streets/#gallery0
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/battalion.php?pid=1301
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Martlet

Private CALEB RONALD BELL

Durham Light Infantry 2nd Bn.
Died 27 May 1940 Age 20 years old
Buried ST. VENANT COMMUNAL CEMETERY France
Son of Thomas and Jessie Bell, of Davenport Green, Wilmslow, Cheshire.
PRECIOUS MEMORIES

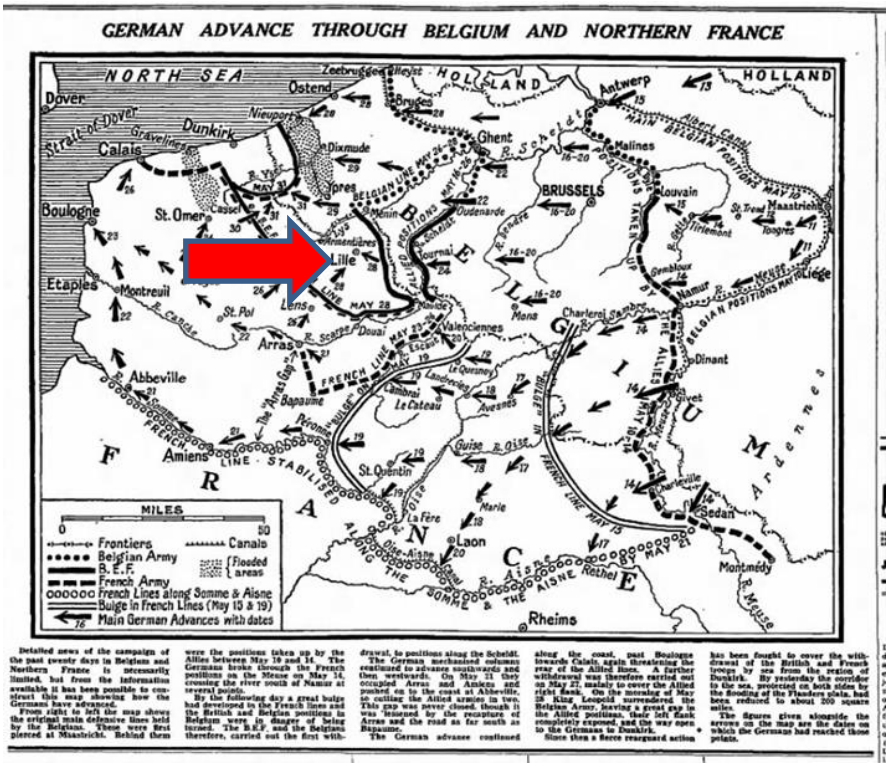


The 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry (DLI) was an established unit made up of existing full time soldiers – so it might be assumed that Caleb signed up for the Army before the outbreak of war.

As an established, war ready Battalion, the 2nd Durham Light Infantry (DLI) were sent to France on or around 27th September 1939 just over three weeks after the declaration of War as part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). The DLI role was intended to support French forces in repelling German invasion. However in the period known as the "Phoney War" the 2nd Battalion spent the next seven months training and preparing to move quickly to the border with Belgium when and if required.

When the German Blitzkrieg started on May 10, 1940, the 2nd Battalion did move into Belgium to the River Dyle. There they held the Germans for two days before ordered to withdraw on May 16

.



On 24th May the German SS-Verfügungs-Division took the village of St Venant and then, despite being ordered to halt, continued their advance the following day.

However, their occupation of St Venant was short lived as the British 6th Brigade (including 2nd Bn DLI) arrived and pushed them back. This was perhaps the first time that the SS had been forced to give up captured ground.

In St Venant British trenches were prepared with the Royal Welch Fusiliers preparing the outer defences and the 2nd Bn DLI and the 1st Btn Royal Berkshire behind them.

By the 27th May 1940, the date of Caleb's loss, the 2nd Battalion's War Diary reports

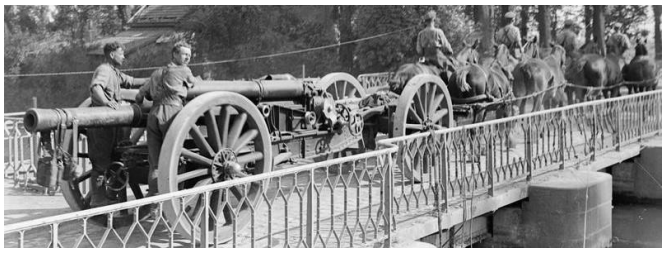
""Hard Fighting" and intense action at St Venant with stubborn resistance by the enemy and severe enemy casualties inflicted."

At 1.00hrs information was received that British infantry casualties were very heavy and enemy tanks were crossing the canal. Even Regimental HQ personnel, other than telephonists, were posted 50 yards in front of the HQ with rifles, anti-tank and Bren guns. These were not first line soldiers.

One 18 pounder gun was brought up as an anti-tank gun and German tanks were immediately engaged at 300 yards and two were put out of action. Other tanks were knocked out during the day. However, the enemy got round both flanks and the group was finally compelled to withdraw. As they did so they encountered more hostile fire and suffered further casualties. Three Officers and 50 other ranks failed to report later and were presumed lost or in enemy hands.

.

The bridge over the Lys river at St Venant was still intact and a highly desirable prize for the Germans who had been repelled almost everywhere along the canal line held by the French and British defenders.



A WW1 picture of the bridge over The Lys.

The opponents of the British 6th Brigade and 2nd DLI were the 3rd Panzer Division (tanks and infantry) supported by the motorised SS-Verfügungs-Division of the SS Germania Regiment who would lead the ensuing fight for the village. The 3rd Panzers launched their attack from Robecq on the 27th May at 0800 hours accompanied by the SS Germania.

Against the German tanks the British garrison was forced to fight from point to point but they did eventually manage to slow the German advance. However, slow didn't mean stop and the pressure continued to build on the bridge's defenders.

Lt Colonel Harrison of the Royal Welch Fusiliers who were fighting alongside the 2nd Btn DLI had moved his HQ back within the cemetery at St Venant, alongside the bridge and only a matter of metres from the HQ of the 2nd Btn DLI. As the day wore on he received the order that his men were to protect the bridge for as long as possible whilst the retreating units crossed over to the far side.

For many of the Durham Light Infantry the order to retire over the bridge was too late and Colonel Harrison and his group only just managed to scramble away to safety themselves. For the Colonel it was not far enough. Having reached the far side of the bridge he was struck down and killed on trying to leave the cover of a ditch.

Of the 700 members of Harrison's RWF who arrived at St Venant to defend the village with the 2nd Bn DLI only about 80 managed to reach the Dunkirk beaches.

The 2nd Battalion DLI paid an equally heavy price. After being ordered to conduct a further series of rear-guard actions to protect British forces on the beaches - only about 60 of its 760 men made it home via Dunkirk with the remains of the British Expeditionary Force. The others were killed, injured or captured. Caleb was one of those lost and is buried at St Venant.

However, more than 300,000 other troops were rescued from the Dunkirk beaches,

The 2nd Battalion Durham Light Infantry went on to win great credit at the infamous Battle of Kohima on the Indian border against the Japanese in 1944.

https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/battalion.php?pid=933

Flying Officer Philip Jones

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 31 December 1942 Age 25 years old
Buried at MONTGOMERY (OAKWOOD) CEMETERY ANNEXE, USA
Son of Ernest and Elizabeth Jones, of Wilmslow, Cheshire, England.





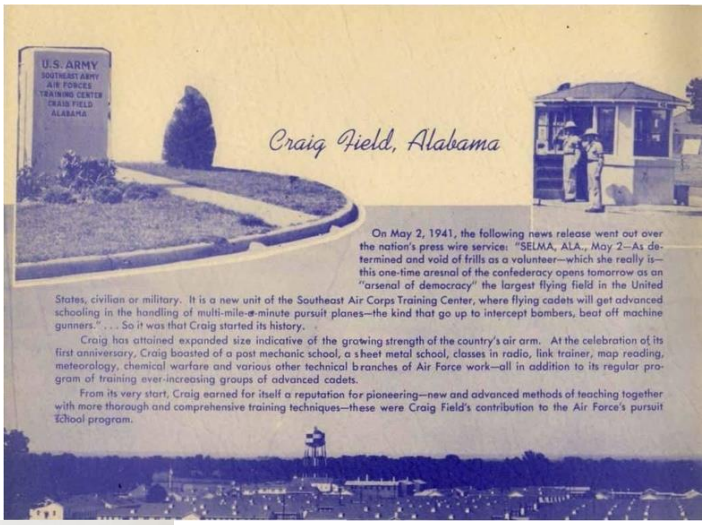
A Curtis P40 "War Hawk"Trainer

The records relating to Philip Jones state that he was killed flying a Curtis P40 (Serial 214277) from the Air Corps Advanced School, near Burnsville, Alabama, USA, 31 December 1942.

This was Craig Field – a US Army Airforce Advanced Flying school near Selma, Dallas County, Alabama. The field was built during the lead-up to World War II to train cadets to fly single-engine aircraft.

Philip was a participant in The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan - a program that oversaw the training of RAF pilots at various places like Craig Field, Maxwell Field and Napier Field in Alabama USA.

Before cadets were sent from the UK they were given 4 hours on Tiger Moth biplanes to weed out those who were not suitable for reasons such as air sickness, unusual susceptibility to negative G, or simply discovered they hated flying.





RAF cadet pilots (shown here marching in the USA on Armisitice Day) like Philip trained in classes of almost 200 cadets each. Classes alternated so they overlapped at about the 4 week point in their 8-week training.

Primary Flying schools were civilian operated under contract for the USAAF. These civilian schools used Stearman, Ryan and Fairchild trainers owned by the USAAF, but their flight instructors were civilian employees. Each cadet received 60 hours of flight training in nine weeks.

Towards the end of training, cadets would receive training in more sophisticated and military grade aircraft. For Philip this was the Curtis P40 but the American reports show that in his case the plane suffered a structural failure and crashed fourteen miles east of the airfield.

Sadly, Philip was one of several cadet pilots who died in training as this picture of the graveyard in Montgomery Alabama where he is buried testifies.



http://www.accident-report.com/Yearly/1942/4212e.html
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/68/Craig_Field_Alabama_1942_photo_pictorial.pdf

http://www.arafpilotsstory.co.uk/training/

Ordinary Coder JACK BERRY



Royal Navy H.M.S. Exmoor
Died 25 February 1941 Age 21 years old
Commemorated at CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Thomas Gould Berry and Elizabeth Berry, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser March 7th 1941

WILMSLOW SAILOR MISSING
Took Part in Ostend Bombardment

A twenty years old sailor, Jack Berry, ordinary coder, is posted as missing while on war service. He is the eldest son of Mr and Mrs Thomas G Berry who live in Stryncoombe, Cumber Lane, Wilmslow. Jack had been in the Navy for eight months, prior to which he was employed at the Universal Stores, Manchester.

Mr and Mrs Berry had previously lived in Gatley and Jack attended school at Cheadle and afterwards at Middleton Grammar School.

Since coming to Wilmslow, the young sailor threw in his lot with the Old Scholar's Association, and fond of hiking, was to be seen with the members on their walks.

The young man took part in a recent bombardment of Ostend and received burns to the face. He was home on leave about a fortnight ago.



HMS Exmoor was a Hunt-class destroyer.
On 23 February 1941 it was deployed with HMS Shearwater to escort a convoy from the Thames estuary to Methil in Scotland. The convoy was attacked by E-boats as it passed off Lowestoft on 25 February.

HMS Exmoor suffered an explosion aft, suffering major structural damage and rupturing a fuel supply line. A fire soon broke out and spread rapidly. It capsized and sank in 10 minutes.

In World War II, a coder in the Royal Navy would have been responsible for deciphering enemy codes and communicating with Allied forces. Coders would use deciphering machines to break enemy codes, and would use codes to communicate with Allied forces, such as Naval Cypher No. 3, which was used for radio communication and convoy coordination in the Atlantic. Coders would also use their knowledge of enemy codes to track enemy shipping.

As a Coder on board a destroyer at sea, Jack would have been on a three watch rota over every 24 hours (one watch on, two watches off) in Exmoor's Wireless Room, with at least one Coder and a Wireless Operator on duty on each watch. Coders like Jack decrypted and encrypted the ship's signal traffic using the Royal Navy's four figure book cypher system.

(NB: The Royal Navy bombarded Ostend, Belgium on February 12,1941, striking the harbour works and causing many fires two weeks before the Exmoor was lost.)

Civilian FRANK CONSTABLE



Civilian War Dead
Died 11 May 1941 Age 6 years old
Buried LAMBETH, METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
Civilian War Dead of 144 Tyers Street. Son of Dvr. Frank William Constable, Royal Army Service Corps. Died at 144 Tyers Street.

The only Frank Constable recorded in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database is a civilian boy, just six years old.

Google Earth shows that 144 Tyers Street was part of the Vauxhall Gardens estate Lambeth, a large area of terraced housing very close to the river and Vauxhall Bridge - an important target for bombers.



The night of the 10th/11th May 1941 when Frank died is recorded as being “The Hardest Night” – the most devastating single night of the London Blitz. The moon was full and the Thames had a very low ebb tide which meant that water from the river to fight fires was difficult to pump. These factors prompted a maximum effort by the Germans, before their military focus moved east to attack the Soviet Union.

On that night, 571 sorties were flown by German bombers with some crews flying two and even three missions. They dropped 711 tons of high explosive bombs and 86,173 incendiaries.

London Fire Brigade recorded at least 2136 fires, 9 of ‘conflagration’ level, 8 ‘major’ outbreaks (rating over 30 pumps), 43 serious (up to 30 pumps), 280 medium (up to 10 pumps) and at least 1796 small.

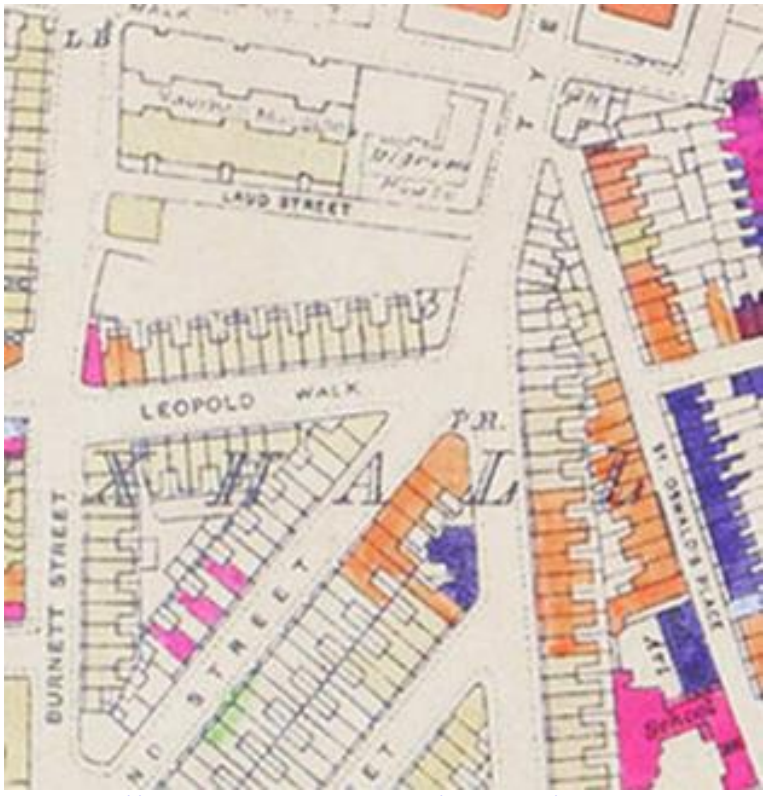
Approximately 1,436 people were killed on the night and 1,800 seriously injured.

The fires resulted in 700 acres of destruction – about double that of the Great Fire of London.

Final costs of damage on the night (in 1941 values) were £20 million. Anti aircraft guns expended 4510 rounds and 2 bombers were claimed destroyed.
In defence, Fighter Command dispatched 325 aircraft (not all over London) and they claimed 28 enemy aircraft. One Hurricane was destroyed and another Hurricane and a Beaufighter were badly damaged. The Luftwaffe themselves recorded a loss of twelve aircraft that night.



Tyers Street, Lambeth pre 1939.



Bomb Damage map around 144 Tyers Street where Frank is recorded as having been killed.

BLACK – Total destruction
PURPLE – Damaged beyond repair
DARK RED – Seriously damaged; doubtful if repairable
LIGHT RED – Seriously damaged; but repairable at cost
ORANGE – General blast damage; not structural

https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/online-exhibitions/history-of-the-battle-of-britain/the-blitz-the-hardest-night/

https://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk/zoom-item?i=251609&WINID=1732753224847

Able Seaman JACK DAWSON

Royal Navy: H.M.S. Dunedin
Died 24 November 1941 Age 43 years old
Commemorated at PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of John Robert and Rose Dawson; husband of Nancy Dawson, of Elgin, Morayshire.



HMS Dunedin boat badge

HMS Dunedin was a 4,850 ton Danae-class light cruiser. Launched in 1918, she was in service without a break up to WW2 beginning in September 1939 - although in 1937 she had served briefly at Portsmouth as a Boys Sea Training Ship.

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However, when the British fleet mobilised for war at the end of August 1939, Dunedin was re-allocated to the 12th Cruiser Squadron based at Kirkwall, Orkneys for service on the Northern Patrol and was charged with intercepting merchant ships using the northern routes to go to or from Germany.



Release from the harsh weather and bitter days of the North Sea came in January 1940 when she left the Northern Patrol for a short spell in Portsmouth before going to Bermuda to join the Americas and West Indies Station. For the next nine months, Dunedin patrolled the Caribbean, visiting every island and intercepting German blockade-runners and French Vichy ships.

On the 22nd of November 1941 Dunedin was still steaming in the Central Atlantic Ocean, just east of the St. Paul's Rocks, 900 miles west of Freetown and north east of Recife, Brazil just south of the equator along with a number of other ships responding to Enigma intelligence that four U-Boats were in the region.

On that day, German U-Boat U-124, commanded by Jochen Mohr, was using German intelligence to intercept an allied supply ship, Python. Mohr sighted Dunedin but Dunedin's lookout spotted U-124's periscope around 12.50pm and the Captain changed course to set off in pursuit. But because the submarine changed course, Dunedin unwittingly pulled away from U-124. When Mohr surfaced again he saw Dunedin disappearing into the distance, at least 4,000 yards away. He nevertheless fired three torpedoes. Incredibly, from this distance, two were on target even though Dunedin was steaming at 17 knots, and was under constant "wheel".

The two torpedoes hit within seconds of each other, at around 13.26 GMT, the first striking amidships, wrecking the main wireless office, the second further aft, probably near the officers' quarters. The first hit sent the ship lurching to starboard, the second caused even greater damage dismounting the after 6in gun, and blowing off the starboard screw. Immediately men began to abandon ship, jumping over the side to the Carley floats and any available debris. Dunedin turned on her beam ends and sank in about seventeen minutes. According to U-124's war diary, Mohr moved in before Dunedin sank and fired a fourth torpedo, but missed.

Shortly after the sinking, U-124 surfaced and circled the survivors. The U-boat was on the surface for no more than ten minutes before diving but while the survivors waited to see what was intended, and as a spontaneous act of defiance, they sang “There will always be an England”.

In the water, up to two hundred and fifty men from a ship’s complement of 486 struggled to haul themselves on to Carley floats and anything that would float. Seven Carley floats got away.


A Carley Float

For the next seventy-eight hours, their numbers dwindled in the equatorial heat. Some men died of their injuries sustained when the torpedoes hit, some died of exhaustion, some went insane, others drowned, and some were bitten and killed by sharks as an ever-present menace.

In the late afternoon of 27th November, the Nishmaha, a US merchant ship en route from Takoradi to Philadelphia, happened upon the six remaining Carley rafts. Only seventy-two men were still alive. Five would subsequently die before the Nishmaha reached Trinidad, leaving just sixty-seven out of the original complement of around five hundred. .



A memorial to the men lost on HMS Dunedin was dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum Staffordshire on 26th July 2003.

Amongst the names remembered is Jack Dawson’s. It is not clear why he is also remembered at St John’s Lindow but there are no other Jack Dawson’s of the Royal Navy shown in the CWGC database for WW2.

https://www.hmsdunedin.co.uk/hms-dunedins-story/

Private ERIC FROST



Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment) 7th Bn.
Died 26 July 1944 Age 20 years old
Buried at RANVILLE WAR CEMETERY
Son of John Edward and May Frost, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART; FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD" MOTHER, DAD AND FAMILY

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser August 18th 1944

Wilmslow Soldier Dies of Wounds

Private Eric Frost (19) has died of wounds received in Normandy. He is the eldest son of Mr and Mrs JE Frost of Beechfield, Cumber Lane, Wilmslow, was educated at Nursery Lane and the Modern schools and became an apprentice electrician. Eric served in the Home Guard before joining the Army eighteen months ago.

Researching the War diaries of Eric's 7th Battalion suggests that the only wounded immediately before the day that Eric died were incurred at what is now known as the Battles of Parc de Boislonde in Normandy on the 17th and 18th June 1944 – some five weeks before.

The diaries record that on those days the Regiment were part of a major attack and were subject to significant mortar and machine gun fire. Casualties included 1 Officer and 4 Other Ranks killed, Four Officers and 61 Other Ranks wounded, and 18 Other Ranks missing. Capt FC Scholes, was killed and four officers were wounded –one from machine gun fire from enemy aircraft just before crossing the start line for the attack.

After successfully attacking the German forces, the report adds that an enemy counter attack later formed up in a cornfield 400 yds EAST of the Battalion but was spotted by the Commanding Officer on a re-organisation recce and was broken up by artillery fire at once. The German counter attack force consisted of infantry and two tanks. The report then notes that spasmodic enemy shelling and mortaring "caused a few more casualties".

This report assumes that Eric was one of those wounded at this time.

The Facebook page of "The Dukes at War" states that on 17th June: The objective was to take Le Parc de Boislande, a thickly wooded area with a château at the centre overlooking Fontenay.

The attack started promptly at 1400 with support from tanks of 24th Lancers, 234 Anti-tank Battery and a carrier platoon. With the country being very enclosed, the leading companies became separated from the tanks. To further compound issues, the wireless link had broken down between companies and command. The leading companies in the face of heavy mortar and small arms fire were pushing forward but with casualties mounting fast. Despite this, by 1600, the wood had been cleared of Germans and all companies were consolidating the position. The wood had been held by

S.S Hitler Jugend (Hitler Youth) amongst others – 65% of whom had only had their 18th birthdays in 1944. Thirty German prisoners had been taken, but at a high cost with approximately 53 British killed and over 100 wounded.

The “Dukes” had very little respite that evening with intermittent artillery and mortar fire throughout the night.



The Chateau at the heart of the “Parc” through which the battle raged and presumed to be close to where Eric was wounded.

https://www.normandywarguide.com/war-diaries/7-duke-of-wellington-june-1944
https://www.facebook.com/TheDukesAtWar/photos/a.925512000804789/1774005575955423/?type=3&locale=hi_IN

Pilot Officer KENNETH HALSTEAD

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 15 July 1942 Age 20 years old
Commemorated at STOCKPORT CREMATORIUM
Son of George Wilfrid and Alice Halstead, of Wilmslow.



The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser - September 15th 1944

Wilmslow Service Casualties

PILOT OFICER KENNETH HALSTEAD

Widespread sympathy has gone out to Mr and Mrs Halstead, Fairbourne Drive, Wilmslow, in the loss of their only son. Pilot Officer Halstead, on service. Pilot Officer Halstead went to the United States with a contingent of University Air Cadets under the RAF training scheme. His modesty, unfailing cheerfulness and efficiency (writes a friend) made him one of the most popular cadets with his instructors and fellow pupils alike, and he became leader of his "flight". He won the hearts of many American friend during his course there. One letter from the States, written before the news of his tragic death, says that he was an "ambassador of goodwill" from us to them.

Having gained his "wings" he returned to England for the completion of his training, always keen, always intent on the next phase, eager for everything. "One of our best pupils" was the monotonous report of his instructors.

Kenneth Halstead was educated at the Acacias School Burnage and Hulme Grammar School. "Ken in class or on the cricket field, had in him the stuff that inspires hero-worship in the hearts of his fellows. He was in fact, universally admired. Perhaps the moving tribute of a friend, whose one desire was to fly in Kenneth's squadron, will reveal something of the shining influence of his personality: "If I, too, should be called upon to give my life, I should have no fear now that Ken has preceded me."

Pilot Officer Halstead was a member of Wilmslow Congregational Church, which he joined with his parents on his return from America earlier this year. He would have been 21 years of age in December.

The funeral service was held on July 20th at Stockport Crematorium, conducted by the Rev HG Newsham MA of Wilmslow and the Rev. EN Rowlands BA BD of Burnage, in the presence of a large and representative company of friends.

Like Philip Jones of Wilmslow, elsewhere in this report, Kenneth will have been one of the participant members of what was also known as the Arnold Scheme to train pilots as a product of greater co-operation between the UK and the then neutral USA that followed the introduction of Lend-Lease in March 1941. The scheme was established to train British RAF pilots in the US and ran from June 1941 to March 1943. During this period a total of 7,885 RAF personnel entered the scheme. Of these, 3,392 or over 40% were eliminated or 'washed out' and 81 were killed in training – like Philip Jones..

The final phase of RAF training was called Transition Training. This is where the cadet was introduced to the aircraft to be used in combat. For a fighter pilot this took two months and about 50 hours, but was more for multi engine pilots.

RAF graduates were sent home at the end of the Advanced Flying School for the Transition training as the aircraft that they were to use were different. RAF graduates would be sent on an acclimatisation course of 2 weeks to get them used to flying in Britain with the weather and crowded skies before being sent to an RAF Operational Training Unit (O.T.U.) course. The length of this varied depending on the type of aircraft they were to fly and the season they returned to the UK. It seems that it was in this final phase that Kenneth lost his life.

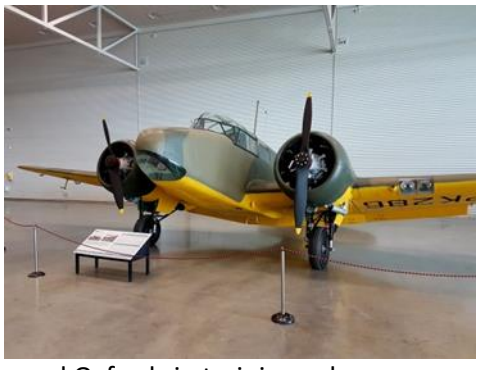
Kenneth was killed on the 15th July 1942 alongside fellow 21 year old Pilot Officer S E Godwin from Southampton. They were flying in an Airspeed Oxford (ED115) of Number 3 Advance Flying Unit. The aircraft met with their accident during a training flight and crashed 1 mile east of Aston Down, Gloucester.

The summary report stated that the pilot was conducting unauthorised low flying and the aircraft struck a piece of farm machinery used for stacking hay bales.

The Airspeed Oxford, nick-named "The Ox-Box" was a twin-engine monoplane aircraft. It saw widespread use for training British Commonwealth aircrews in navigation, radio-operating, bombing and gunnery roles throughout the Second World War.

Developed in the 1930s the Oxford was a response to a requirement for a capable two engined trainer aircraft .Its basic design was derived from a commercial passenger aircraft and was quickly put into production as part of the rapid expansion of the RAF in anticipation of a large-scale conflict.

Many thousands of Oxfords were ordered by Britain and its allies. It was considered to be a capable trainer aircraft throughout the conflict, as well as being used as a general-purpose and transport craft.





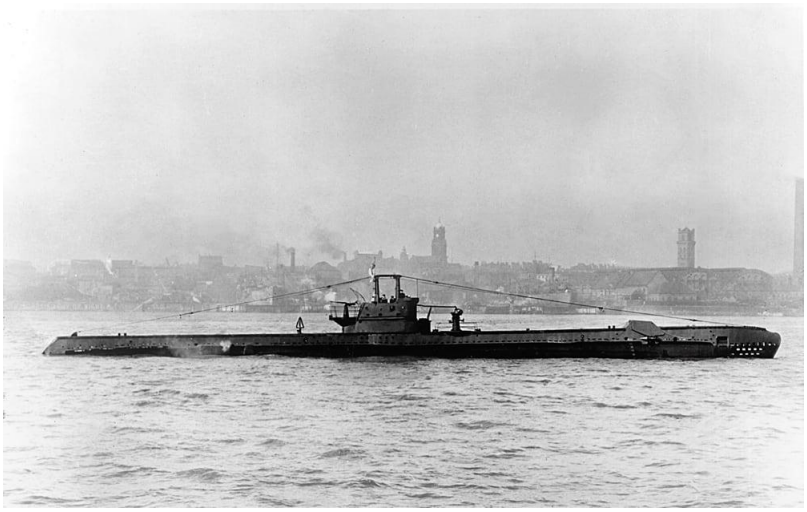
Airspeed Oxfords in training colours.

https://forum.rafcommands.com/forum/unaccounted-airmen-and-airwomen-project/1942/5961-420715-unaccounted-airmen-15-7-1942#post126634

https://www.rafcommands.com/database/search.php?qname=Halstead

Leading Seaman GEOFFREY HENSHALL

Royal Navy H.M. Submarine Syrtis
Died 30 March 1944
Commemorated at PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL



HMS SYRTIS sailed from Lerwick, Scotland for a patrol area off Kya and Bodo on the Norwegian coast on 16 March 1944. On 20 March she was ordered to move from the Kya area to patrol off Bodo.

She was instructed to leave her patrol area after dark on 27 March and was due to arrive back at Lerwick on 30 March 1944.

However, she failed to return from patrol and was reported as lost on 2 April 1944. No signals were received from SYRTIS during her patrol, but it is known from German records that she could not have been lost before 22 March. This is because on 22 March 1944, the 241-ton Norwegian steamer Narvik was sunk by gunfire from a submarine that surfaced just ahead of her. This could only have been HMS SYRTIS.

The Narvik was a converted cargo vessel also registered for some passengers. The ship was under German control and was placed as a regular scheduled cargo/passenger service between Narvik and Trondheim from 1941.

She was reported as being shelled and sunk on March 22nd 1944 by a British submarine, near Sleipnesodden, Rødøy, Helgeland, on one of its a regular voyages. She received several direct hits in the aftership and sank quickly. She had 16 crew and 9 passengers, among them 1 German. 18 of those on board managed to get in a lifeboat when another shell hit the side of the ship and 15 were killed by the resulting shrapnel, while 3 ended up in the water. These were later picked up by rescuers from nearby Sleipnesodden. The port lifeboat with 5 people was taken to Svinvær and it had several bullet holes in it. 7 crew and 2 passengers were rescued.

In response, the Germans launched an anti-submarine patrol in the form of a BV138 flying boat, but nothing was sighted. There were no attacks by ships or aircraft that might account for Syrtis' loss. The realistic likelihood remains that the boat hit a mine as there were several minefields close to her patrol area.

HMS Syrtis was a third-batch S-class submarine built for the Royal Navy during the Second World War. Completed in 1943, a year before her loss, Syrtis spent most of her time in the Arctic, off Norway, other than for a single patrol in the Bay of Biscay,

On her first patrol, Syrtis sighted a German submarine, but could not attack it. Her second patrol her crew boarded a Vichy French fishing vessel. Syrtis was then assigned to take part in Operation Source, an attack on German battleships in Norway, using midget submarines. Syrtis was to tow the submarine X9 to her target, then release it to perform its mission. However, the tow line parted en route, and X9 was lost with all hands.



Syrtis conducted three further patrols off Norway before her loss, but these were uneventful.

Liverpool Daily Post 1st May 1944

SUBMARINE PRESUMED LOST

The Board of Admiralty, in a communique on Saturday night, announced that the submarine Syrtis (Lieutenant M H Jupp DSC RN) is overdue and must be presumed lost. The next-of –kin of casualties have been informed.

Lieutenant Jupp, aged 25, who is a veteran of submarine warfare, was given command of the Syrtis in March 1943. Syrtis not previously mentioned is presumably a new construction of the "S" class craft which vary from 670 to 960 tons, carrying one 3-inch gun, a machine-gun, and six torpedo tubes.

Liverpool Daily Post 23rd December 1944

48 CASUALTIES IN SUBMARINE

The full crew of the submarine Syrtis – five officers and forty-three ratings – are today reported missing, presumed killed. Her commander Lieutenant M H Jupp RN held the DSC, awarded him in 1942, while serving in the submarine Tigris

From Cheltenham Chronicle, Saturday 31 January 1942

D.S.C. AWARD FOR OLD CHELTONIAN

In Tuesday night's " London Gazette" is a list of awards to officers and ratings of the Royal Navy for various acts of gallantry. For "bravery, coolness and skill in successful submarine patrols," the Distinguished Service Cross is conferred on Lieut. Michael Hugh Jupp, R.N. Lieut. Jupp, who is a Londoner, entered Cheltenham College in 1933 and passed direct from college into the Navy.

https://submarinefamily.uk/submarines/hms-syrtis/http://www.warsailors.com/homefleet/shipsn.html

Guardsman HAROLD SLATER



Grenadier Guards 1st Bn.
Died 17 November 1944 Age 31 years old
Buried at MOOK WAR CEMETERY, HOLLAND

Son of John Thomas Slater, and of Elizabeth Street Slater, of Great Warford, Cheshire.
WE CANNOT, LORD, THY PURPOSE SEE, BUT ALL IS WELL THAT'S WILLED BY THEE

Mook War Cemetery is the final resting place of 322 soldiers killed in the Second World War, situated in the Dutch municipality of Mook en Middelaar. The body of Harold Slater lies there.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser December 8th 1944

Guardsman Killed in Action

News has been received that Guardsman Harold Slater, aged 31, was killed on active service in November. He was the only son of the late Mr J T Slater and Mrs Slater of Hawthorn View, Great Warford (late of Urmston and Flixton).
In civil ife he was employed by Messrs W & A Bailey Ltd, corn merchants of Urmston, as a traveller. He was well known over a very wide area, in which he had many friends.
He joined the Guards in March 1942, and went to Normandy shortly after D Day.
His father Mr JT Slater died in April 1936, from an illness which was contracted while serving abroad during the last war.

The 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards were part of the British Army's elite infantry regiment during World War II. They were involved in several major battles, including the Battle for Caen (which both Maurice and Eric above were engaged in), Operation Goodwood and Operation Market Garden: (A Bridge Too Far: Arnhem) in 1944 and the Rhine crossing in 1945.

Harold's service number confirms the newspaper report that he joined the Guards before April 1942

Whilst other Grenadier Battalions saw service in Tunisia and Italy from 1943 the 1st, 2nd and 4th Battalions remained in England. 2nd and 4th were converted to tanks and Harold's 1st Battalion became motorised. This means that rather than tanks, they were equipped with a variety of troop transporters," Bren Gun" or "Universal" carrier all-purpose terrain tracked vehicles. They were also to provide infantry support to the tank battalions if required. The three battalions joined the new Guards Armoured Division and subsequently fought across Normandy, France and Belgium and by September 1944, found themselves on the Belgian-Dutch border.

After being heavily involved in the fighting in the Arnhem campaign between 17th and 27th September 1944, the Guards Armoured Division was severely depleted in strength and on 6th October 1944 the entire division was pulled back into reserve.



Carriers of 1st (Motor) Battalion, Grenadier Guards, , cross 'Euston Bridge' as they deploy for Operation 'Goodwood', 18 July 1944 © IWM

A typical Motor Battalion was made up of 37 Officers and 760 men and between 40 and 50 vehicles of different types.



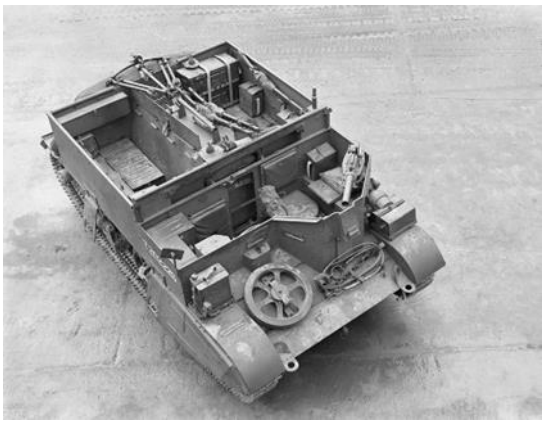
A Loyd Carrier - towing a 6 Pdr anti-tank gun, outside 's-Hertogenbosch 1944



An example of some of the trucks used by Harold's Battalion can be seen in the background..



A 15cwt truck loading an anti-tank gun



A Universal Carrier

Whilst there is currently no direct evidence in Harold's case– the words "killed on active service" can often mean as a result of an accident. Given that Harold's death is recorded and reported in November 1944 – well after his unit had been withdrawn from fighting - this may be the case. Alternatively he may have died from wounds received during the Arnhem campaign.

https://www.flamesofwar.com/Default.aspx?tabid=112&art_id=2101
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/battalion.php?pid=1023

Warrant Officer Class II PERCY WALLER



Royal Artillery 111 Field Regt.
Died 19 February 1942 Age 42 years old
Commemorated at MANCHESTER CREMATORIUM
Son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Waller; husband of M. Waller, of Higher Bebington, Cheshire.

Percy Waller's parent's home in Higher Bebington was on the Wirral – and the 111 Field Regiment – Royal Artillery was a Territorial Army unit based in Bolton, Lancashire but the Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser obituary column for 27th February 1942 explains the Wilmslow connection.

OBITUARY

RQMS P Waller MM – The news of the death of Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant Percy Waller, of the Field Regiment RA which occurred at Craigmore Hospital, Inverness, on Thursday of last week, came as a great shock to his many friends. RQMS Waller served in the last war, when he won the Military Medal for gallantry.

In civil life he was a cotton salesman on the Manchester Exchange. Shortly after the outbreak of the present war he joined up and secured rapid promotion. He lived at Davenport Green. In peace time the deceased followed the fortunes of the Rugby Club with interest. The funeral service was held at Manchester Crematorium on Monday. The Rev.C G Craddock BA vicar of Lindow conducted the service at which there was a large congregation.

111 (Bolton) Field Regiment RA (TA) was formed in July 1939 in Bolton as a duplicate of 53 Field Regiment with two batteries of 25-pound howitzer guns under the 42nd East Lancashire Division. In November 1940 a third battery was formed all as part of the 42nd Division.

After the Dunkirk evacuation, Home Forces underwent a reorganisation to meet the threat of a German invasion. In the autumn of 1941 it was decided to convert Percy's Division into an armoured division and his 111th Field Rgt was separated to become an independent Army Field Regiment in the Scottish Command, alongside various other units including Signals and, Royal Army Ordnance Corps. Two days before Percy died the unit was authorised to adopt the 'Bolton' subtitle of its parent regiment.

By mid-May 1942, shortly after Percy's death, the regiment were transferred from Scottish Command to War Office control preparatory to embarkation for overseas service. On 24 May 1942 they embarked for Egypt and the North Africa campaign.

The 111th was reorganised into three 8-gun batteries, but it was not until late 1940 that they had enough trained battery staff to form the third battery. Perhaps Percy helped provide some of the experience and background as an "old soldier" of WW1 that built the third battery.

Alongside its eight guns, divided into two troops, a Royal Artillery battery in World War II was also made up of multiple systems of artillery, such as mortars, rocket artillery, and surface-to-surface missiles. The systems were grouped together to improve battlefield communication and command, and to disperse the gunnery crews and their systems.

A Royal Artillery 111th Field Regt artillery unit on exercise in Scotland in 1942.



Whilst the quartermaster in a regiment is always a commissioned officer responsible for all supply issues, the RQMS was his immediate junior and a Warrant Officer class 2 appointment.

The RQMS was also often the deputy regimental sergeant major –so a very senior and important role delivered by Percy.

As RQMS Percy would have organised ordering, storing, and distributing equipment, such as clothing and tents as well as maintaining records, overseeing work parties and accounting for and storing ammunition .

Because he died in this country Percy's funeral could be organised by his family as described in the newspaper report. Whether he died as a result of illness or an accident is not yet known in this research.

https://ra39-45.co.uk/units/field-regiments/111-bolton-field-regiment-rata

Sergeant JAMES HADFIELD

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 78 Sqdn.
Died 25 August 1941 Age 23 years old
Buried at WAVRE COMMUNAL CEMETERY Belgium
Son of William and Sarah Jane Hadfield, of Moston, Lancashire.

Unlike all the other non-civilian names on the St John's Lindow memorial, the remembrance of James does not show any military designation, army, navy or air-force. It therefore cannot be certain that the following record relates to the person commemorated – or whether James was a civilian loss. However, only one James Hadfield is recorded in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database – and this James had relatively local connections in Moston Manchester – he – or a relative may well have had a connection to Wilmslow. It is therefore his record that is shared below.

The Wavre cemetery southeast of Brussels where James' body lies is a small local resting place for just 13 allied personnel of WW2..



Some are of British soldiers who were involved in the later stages of the defence of Belgium following the German invasion in May 1940 and the retreat to Dunkirk.

Others are of airmen shot down or crashed in raids on strategic objectives in Belgium, or while returning from missions over Germany.

Wavre contains 5 such graves of RAF men of RAF Whitley V, Z6466 including that of James.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, James' 78 Squadron was designated as a training squadron. It moved to RAF Linton-on-Ouse on 15 October 1939, returning to Dishforth in July when it returned to front-line duties as a night bomber squadron.

In February 1941, Whitleys from No. 78 Squadron and No. 51 Squadron, flying from Malta, were used to drop paratroops over southern Italy for Operation Colossus, the first British paratroop operation of the Second World War. Still flying Whitleys, by April 1941, the squadron then returned to Britain and moved to RAF Middleton St. George near Darlington



A Whitley at speed in typical "nose-down" flight.



Armstrong Whitworth Whitley V T4131 of No. 78 Squadron, 1940 and. 78 Squadron at Middleton St George

Four months later the RAF mission report for the 24th Aug 1941 describes a night operation targeted on Dusseldorf with 44 aircraft made up of 25 Whitleys, 12 Hampdens and 7 Halifaxes.

The position of the target had to be estimated through thick cloud and three aircraft failed to return. Another two collided over the UK and another Whitley of 78 Squadron crashed on return.

Of 78 Squadron, Whitley V, Z6466, EY-A - piloted by Sgt. W. G. Rogers took off at 20.09 hrs but crashed 27km SE of Brussels on its return flight. The following crew were killed and were laid to rest at Wavre.

Pilot : Flight Sergeant William George Rogers
2nd Pilot : Sergeant Eric Charles Findon
Observer : Sergeant James Hadfield
Wireless Operator / Air Gunner : Sergeant Walter Donald Edge
Rear Gunner : Sergeant Benjamin Douglas

Later review of Luftwaffe records show that James' aeroplane was shot down by Leutnant Sigmund & Unteroffizier Bauer of the 1./NJG 1, who was flying a two-engined Messerschmitt Bf 110 from St Trond airfield.:

Nachtjagdgeschwader 1 (NJG 1) was a German Luftwaffe night fighter-wing of World War II formed on 22 June 1940 to combat night bombing attacks by Bomber Command.



An Armstrong Whitworth AW38 Whitley under service.

The Whitley was a mainstay of Bomber Command until the advent of the 4 engined bombers in 1942/3. The Whitley continued to serve as a glider tow, transport and trainer - as well as with Coastal Command and paratroop transport and training at Ringway Manchester.

https://ibccdigitalarchive.lincoln.ac.uk/omeka/collections/show/1830
https://asn.flightsafety.org/wikibase/234162
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/royalairforce/sqdview.php?pid=277

Alderley Edge War Memorial – St Philip's Church



The Alderley Edge War Memorial is located at Ryleys Lane, Alderley Edge.

The war memorial, was erected in 1922, designed by Sir Hubert Worthington and is made of sandstone. The names of those lost during WWII were added later.

The memorial only records two of the three Gaiger brothers all of whom were lost in 1943.

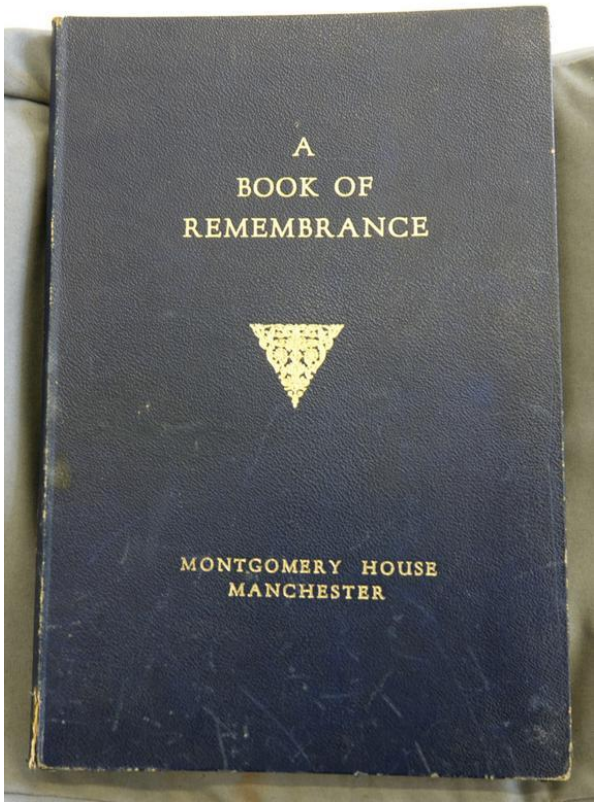
One civilian is also recorded. Constable Frank Marshall.

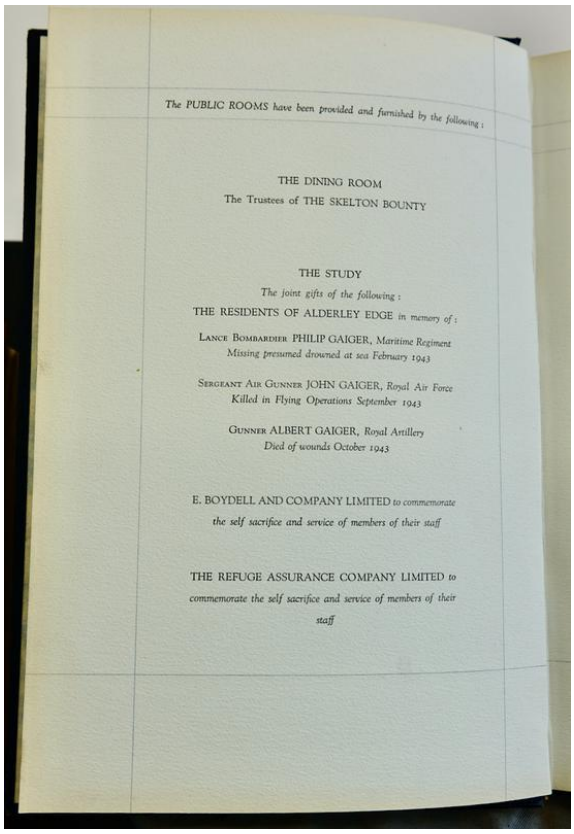
Pilot Officer Harold Plant is also listed on the St Bartholomew's memorial in Wilmslow and so is not duplicated here. The full list of names on St Philip's and St James' Memorial is as follows:

Richard Wyke ALLSOP, Sgt WO-AG RAAF	John LEE, MC Major RM Commando
Harry ATHERTON, 2nd Mate MN	Frederick MAXFIELD, PO RAF
Cyril BEBBINGTON, Pte Kings R	John OWEN, PO RAF
Albert BURGESS, Pte Ches R	Harold PLANT, PO RAF
George Henry CLAYTON, Gdsn Gren Guards	John Derek B RIGBY, PO RAF
John Handasyde DICK, Lieut KSLI	John SIDDANS, AB RN
Albert Thomas GAIGER, Bdr Maritime R RA	Stephen Paul SUTTON, Capt RA
Alfred Richard J GAIGER, Sgt WO-AG RAF	Stephen P WALLBANKS, MM Sgt DLI
Kenneth HALE, LNA FAA RAF	Harold John WILKINSON, F/Sgt RAF
Reginald Paul HEALY, F/Sgt RAF	Geoffrey A LEADBEATER, F Eng
Arthur Henry HOWARD, F/Sgt RAF	Frank MARSHALL, PC Ches Constab
Robert S L KAYMER, Sgt/Pilot RAF	

The Alderley St Philip's War memorial does not include the name of a third Gaiger son who was also killed during 1943. Alexander Philip Gaiger whose details are reported below is not recorded on the monument for some reason.

As a postscript – Alderley Edge recorded its collective sympathy for one local family's loss by a collection in the village that resulted in a room being named for the Gaiger sons at the YMCA Montgomery House hostel set up in Manchester to provide accommodation for young people..




The PUBLIC ROOMS have been provided and furnished by the following :

THE DINING ROOM
The Trustees of THE SKELTON BOUNTY

THE STUDY
The joint gifts of the following :
THE RESIDENTS OF ALDERLEY EDGE in memory of :
LANCE BOMBARDIER PHILIP GAIGER, Maritime Regiment
Missing presumed drowned at sea February 1943

SERGEANT AIR GUNNER JOHN GAIGER, Royal Air Force
Killed in Flying Operations September 1943

GUNNER ALBERT GAIGER, Royal Artillery
Died of wounds October 1943

E. BOYDELL AND COMPANY LIMITED to commemorate
the self sacrifice and service of members of their staff

THE REFUGE ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED to
commemorate the self sacrifice and service of members of their
staff

Montgomery Houses, were built around the country by the YMCA with the encouragement of Field Marshall Montgomery after WW2. As well as sporting and recreational facilities, Montgomery Houses were built with rooms so that young people from all over the world could come to stay in welcoming, friendly, environments. It was a legacy designed to give the opportunity for learning, sport and recreation.

Many individuals and organisations contributed funds to the construction costs, and many of the rooms were dedicated to young men who had lost their lives during WW2 serving under 'Monty'.

Here it is recorded that Alferley Edge funded "The Study" in remembrance of the Gaiger sons.



Montgomery House, Demesne Road, Manchester now provides student accommodation

https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/97333

Sgt. Richard Wyke ALLSOP

Born: 23 Jul 1915 Southwell, Newark and Sherwood District, Nottinghamshire, England
Royal Australian Air Force 1 Coastal Operational Training RAF
Died 28 December 1941 Age 26 years old
Buried ALDERLEY EDGE CEMETERY
Son of Richard and Marie Louise Allsop, husband of Gloria Jean Allsop of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

On December 28th 1941 Richard was training as wireless operator and air gunner on a Lockheed Hudson (VAM786) of No 1 (Coastal) Operational Training Unit RAF of the Royal Air Force, within No. 17 Group RAF, which was part of RAF Coastal Command.

He was joined on the flight by pilot Sergeant H Puusepp (RAAF), Sergeant R G Luke (RAAF) trainer/observer and Sergeant G I D Backhouse

Formed on 1 April 1940, at RAF Silloth, near Carlisle, No. 1 (Coastal) Operational Training Unit initially trained aircrews for RAF Coastal Command landplanes and was equipped with Avro Anson, Lockheed Hudson, Bristol Blenheim and Bristol Beaufort aircraft. However, with the creation of more OTU's the unit started to specialise in training Lockheed Hudson aircrew.



The Hudson served throughout the war, mainly with Coastal Command but also in transport and training roles, as well as delivering agents into occupied France.

It was also used extensively with the Royal Canadian Air Force's anti-submarine squadrons and by the Royal Australian Air Force.

Hudsons of Coastal Command

While performing a practice bombing exercise, the crew encountered unknown technical problems and attempted to divert to nearby Maryport Airport. On final approach, the twin engine aircraft went out of control and crashed a few km from the airfield, bursting into flames. All four occupants including Richard were killed.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser January 2nd 1942 explains why a member of the Royal Australian Air Force was laid to rest in Alderley Edge.

KILLED ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Sergt. R W Allsop

RAAF

Sergeant Richard Wyke Allsop, a wireless operator-air gunner in the Royal Australian Air Force, and son of the late Mr R Allsop and of Mrs Allsop of 4, Orchard Green, Alderley Edge, was killed in a flying accident in this country on Sunday.

Sergeant Allsop, who was 26 years of age, was well known in Alderley Edge where as a boy and a young man he attended St Philip's Sunday School, often rang the bell at church and was also a member of the choir. He played goal for St Philip's Sunday School Football Club at the time when they established a fine record in the Stockport Sunday School League. He left England for Sydney, Australia on December 31st 1938 and came back to England with the RAAF on July 18th, and when on leave renewed many old acquaintances in Alderley Edge. He leaves a young wife in Sidney.

The funeral took place on Wednesday when the service at St Philip's Church and also at the cemetery, was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev WJ Gravell.



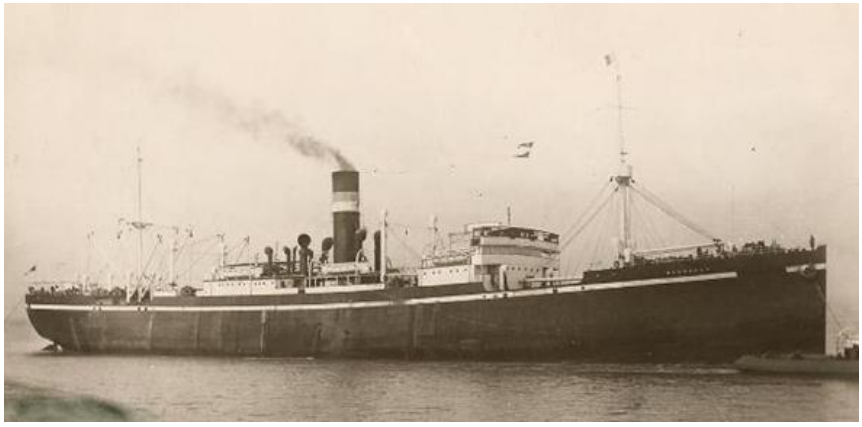
Hudson I N7264 'QX-Q' of Coastal Command

https://www.baaa-acro.com/crash/crash-lockheed-l-414-hudson-v-maryport-4-killed

https://www.key.aero/article/forgotten-hero-lockheed-hudson-action

HARRY ATHERTON

Merchant Navy S.S. Magdapur (Liverpool)
Died 10 September 1939 Age 37 years old
Son of Tom Pickstock Atherton and Anne Atherton, of Alderley Edge; husband of Florence Annie Atherton, of Redcar, Yorkshire.



Harry Atherton was second officer on the SS Magdapur whose homeport was Liverpool.

Early in the War, the SS Magdapur was incorrectly recorded as the first ship to be sunk in the War.

She was actually the 3rd.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser Friday Sept 15th 1939

FUNERAL OF MR H ATHERTON
Victim of Torpedoed Vessel

The funeral of Mr Harry Atherton, son of Mr and Mrs T Atheron, Moss Lane, Alderley Edge, a victim of SS Magdapur, which was torpedoed five miles off the coast on Sunday took place on Thursday afternoon. Interment at the Alderley Edge cemetery followed a service at the Wesley Methodist Church.

Mr Atherton, who was second officer on the Magdapur and was 37 years of age, leaves a widow and one son. He had been engaged in a seafaring life since 1918. He was at Alderley Edge last Friday. Sincere sympathy with the widow and with Mr Atherton's parents has been universally expressed.

A report of the funeral will appear next week.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser Friday Sept 22nd 1939

FUNERAL OF MR H ATHERTON
Sacrifice For His Fellow Men

The funeral of the late Mr Harry Atherton (37) who, as reported in last weeks "Advertiser" met his death when the SS Magdapur was torpedoed, took place on Thursday afternoon last week, when the service at the Wesley Methodist Church, Alderley Edge was attended by a large congregation. The Rev Albany S Renton, who was assisted in the service by the Rev Lan Miller, spoke of Mr Atherton's death as a sacrifice for his fellow men, and extended a word of comfort to those who were left.

As her name implies, the SS Magdapur had strong connections with India. Her owners, the Brocklebank Line, had a long tradition of specialising in the India trade. She was thus one of many British ships who relied on "lascars", or Indian seamen, many of whom traditionally worked below in the engine room. The Magdapur had a significant complement of 60 lascars among her 81-strong crew

SS Magdapur was a cargo ship of 8,640 tons. On 10 September 1939, one week after the declaration of war, she was underway in ballast from the Tyne to Southampton, her master was Arthur Dixon. On that day, rather than being torpedoed as reported in the “Advertiser” - she actually struck a mine laid by the German submarine U-13. She sank at 17:25.

Six people died as a result of the attack, but 75 people were rescued from the sea by the Aldeburgh lifeboat “Abdy Beauclerk”. The rescued were 18 white men and 56 “lascars” . All were smothered from head to foot in black oil. The second officer – Harry Atherton - was brought ashore dead. Five other members of the crew were missing.

Of the six men who were lost, Harry is buried at Alderley Edge because his body was recovered whilst the Indian casualties are commemorated on the dual rolls of honour kept at Bombay and Chittagong.



SS Magdapur, built in 1921, sunk 10th September 1939, the first British casualty of the Second World War, on a mine laid by U13. 74 crew were rescued by Aldeburgh Lifeboat. Photographed from the lifeboat.

https://www.shipsnostalgia.com/media/ss-magdapur.356494/
https://lifeboatmagazinearchive.rnli.org/volume/war-years/1939/the-ss-magdapur?searchterm=royal+family&page=907&sf251698735=1
https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/13.html

Private CYRIL BEBBINGTON



The King's Regiment (Liverpool) 1st Bn.
Died 25 May 1944 Age 22 years old
Commemorated at RANGOON MEMORIAL, Myanmar
Son of John and Ethel Bebbington, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire. His brother, Ord. Smn. Roy Bebbington, R.N., died in the United Kingdom.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser August 11th 1944

Alderley Edge Man Missing In Burma

Private Cyril Bebbington (21) son of Mr John Bebbington, 1, South Street, Alderley Edge, is missing in Burma, where he had been in action for six months.
Joining the forces over two years ago, he was at Gibraltar for twelve months, and then, after a brief spell in England, he was posted to the Far East. He was educated at Alderley Edge Council School and before joining up was employed by Messrs. Burns Bros. Coal merchants, Alderley Edge. He was one of six brothers in the services.
John, his eldest brother, is serving at a weapon training school: Gunner George Bebbington RA now in Italy saw a good deal of service in Tunisia: Lewis landed in Normandy with the paratroops: Gilbert is in the Navy and Roy, who is only 16, is in the Cadets. It constitutes a splendid record of service for one family.

Ten battalions of the King's Regiment (Liverpool)) were formed between 1939 and 1940. By late 1941,three of those battalions (1st, 2nd, and 13th) were stationed abroad with the remainder poised to defend the United Kingdom against a possible German invasion. After time in Gibralter and India Cyril's battalion, the 1st battalion, went on to serve for two years in Burma as part of the "Chindits" second phase offensive in 1944 – known as "Operation Thursday". The Chindits were a unit intended to penetrate deep behind Japanese lines from India.

Within this campaign part of the 1st King's (Liverpool) Regiment made up " 81 Column" and was led by Lt-Colonel Walter Scott. And as Chindits they were ultimately flown into a jungle clearing in American WACO gliders to then help clear a runway that could be used by powered aircraft.



A Chindit column crossing a river in Burma

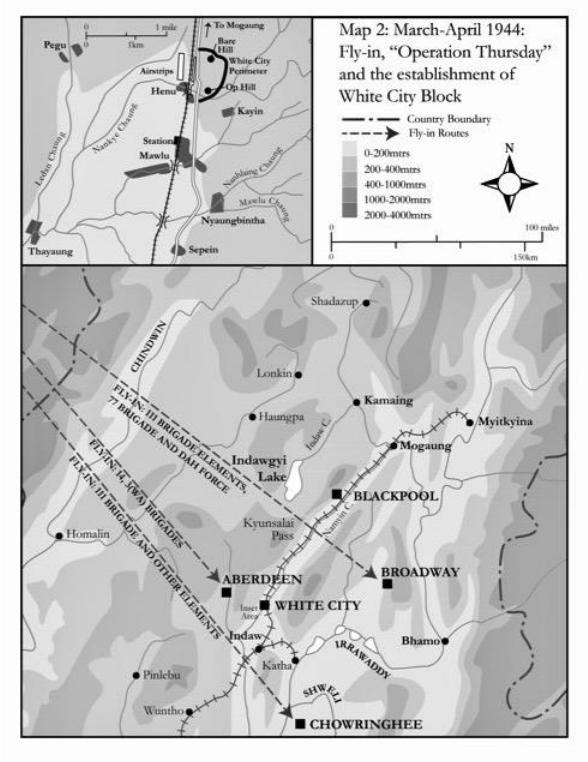
81 Column was one of 45 Columns, each with 400-450 men and around 60 mules and a few casualty-carrying ponies. Columns occasionally came together to confront the enemy and then dispersed back into the jungle before the Japanese could concentrate against them.

The airfield that 81 column built and protected from attack was code-named "Broadway". They then re-deployed to re-enforce another stronghold against the Japanese code –named 'Blackpool'.

Across these two operations, a total of 163 men of the battalion died during and after Operation Thursday. 137 of these during the operation in Burma, 11 in India after being evacuated and 4 as prisoners of war in Burma; the last man died as late as 30th March 1945 as a PoW.

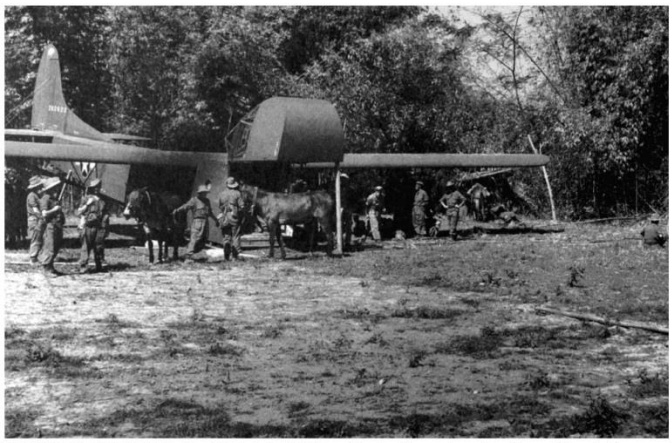
15 men were killed in Glider 20B before they reached the “Broadway” airfield site. 7 men were killed on the 5th March during the glider landings and a further 9 on the 6th March. 18 men died on the 20th May and 13 on the 28th March.

The battalion's worst day for fatal casualties was 25th May 1944 when 27 were killed during the evacuation of the Blackpool stronghold. It was on this day that Cyril was killed.





Chindits brewing up.



INVALUABLE AIRCRAFT Chindits at Lalaghat airfield practice loading mules onto a Waco glider via its opened nose. The craft also had a side door for troops to use. USAMHI

https://achillestheheel.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/waco2.jpg
https://www.chinditslongcloth1943.com/roll-call-f-j.html
https://thechinditsociety.org.uk/operation-thursday-part-3

ROY BEBBINGTON

Royal Navy H.M.S. Jutland
Died 06 May 1947 Age 18 years old
Buried at ALDERLEY EDGE CEMETERY
Son of John and Ethel Bebbington, of Alderley Edge. His brother Cyril also died on service.
HIS BROTHER CYRIL WAS KILLED IN BURMA
25.5.1944 AGE 22 WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Because Cyril Bebbington's younger brother Roy is mentioned specifically in Cyril's memorial – it is appropriate to tell his family's sad story even though his death came after the end of WW2 hostilities and he is not listed on the 1939-1945 memorial.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser May 16th 1947

MR R BEBBINGTON

The funeral took place on Saturday at St Philip's Cemetery following a service at the church of Mr Roy Bebbington (18) of South Street, Alderley Edge, who died on Tuesday last week following an accident on the railway at Portsmouth. He had been serving in the Navy for 12 months and formerly played for St Philip's Football Club. He was at one time employed at Hurst Lea, Alderley Edge and later with Messrs. A and T Keogh Ltd. Contractors, Wilmslow

Liverpool Echo May 6th 1947

A Naval seaman, Roy Bebbington, aged 19 of South Street, Alderley Edge, Cheshire died to-day, in a Portsmouth hospital, 24 hours after he had been found by the side of the S.R. line at Fratton, Portsmouth. He had severe injuries to his arm and head, and it is thought that he had been knocked down by a train. The inquest will be opened to-morrow.



Roy's ship HMS Jutland (D62) was a 2,480 ton 1943 Battle-class fleet destroyer. She was named after the Battle of Jutland, the largest naval battle of the First World War. She was launched on 20 February 1946, and was commissioned on 30 July 1947.

It was between these two dates that Roy died from the wounds he received in his accident.

Private ALBERT BURGESS



Cheshire Regiment 6th Bn.
Died 21 January 1944
Age 23 years old
Buried at MINTURNO WAR CEMETERY Italy
Son of Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Burgess, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription
HE DIED FOR FREEDOM AND HONOUR

The 6th Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment was formed in March 1939 at Stockport with men from the Cheadle, Hyde and nearby areas. 'B' and 'C' Companies did guard duties at Birkenhead docks and it remained in the Stockport area until April 1940 training until October 1940. Then it joined the 44th (Home Counties) Division as attached Corps Troops, becoming the Machine Gun Battalion for that Division on 11 November, 1941, until 24 November, 1942.



Machine gun battalions like the 6th Cheshire's operated in support of front line infantry of other regiments to which they were attached.

They were equipped with Vickers heavy machine guns (as shown here on parade display) and 4.2 inch mortars.

Thus the various companies of the Cheshire's were spread throughout an Infantry Battalion or Brigade to provide close support.

From the UK, the Albert's battalion moved to Kirkuk, Iraq and came under the 56th (London) Infantry Division on January 12th, 1943. On March 19th, 1943, the battalion then left Kirkuk for a few days of training at Gaza, Palestine. This was followed by a move to Tunisia as part of the North Africa campaign with the division. It reached Enfidaville on April 22nd, 1943 and served in the battle of Enfidaville – the same battle in which Private Maurice Edward BADDELEY of Wilmslow was killed in May 1943.

Following the battle, the battalion spent the next month in battlefield clean-up and then withdrew to Libya on May 26th to train for the invasion of Italy.

Albert's Battalion joined the Italian campaign alongside the 56th (London) Division leaving Tripoli and landing at Salerno, Sicily on 09 September, 1943 then continuing through the capture of Naples, the Volturno Crossing, the Battle for Monte Camino (in which Grenadier Guardsman George Henry Clayton of Alderley Edge was lost) and then to the massive offensive of the River Garigliano Crossing which lasted from 17 January to 31 January, 1944.

The crossing of the Garigliano River was an essential move in the overall Allied plan to attack and breach the so called Gustav Line.

This was the string of mountain based German defences that stretched across Italy south of Rome. Until the Allied armies broke through this line of defence they would not be able to proceed to Rome and on to Austria and Germany



Crossing the Garigliano River Jan 1943

The assault began at 2100 hours on January 17th. A small red flare ball floated across the still, star-spangled sky and landed on a German post over the river. That was the signal.

Five hundred guns thundered a terrific bombardment. Under cover of a smoke-screen and with covering fire by men of the London Irish and other supporting troops, British troops swept across, some in assault boats manned by men of the 6th Cheshire's. As the British troops neared the opposite bank, German artillery fired overhead or into the river. On the British south bank mortars (including 6th Cheshire's) kept up a bombardment in close support. Another unit fired over six hundred rounds in less than sixty minutes.

The river was fifty to one hundred yards wide, and was running strongly and fast, owing to the winter rains. The crossings by Albert's 56th (London) Division and the 5th Division, farther down the river, went according to plan. By dawn on the 19th, a bridgehead had been forced, including the small town of San Lorenzo which guarded the approaches to Castelforte and the valley beyond.



However, on 21st January 1944 British forces were subject to enemy counter attacks by 29th Panzer Grenadier Division including constant shell fire, and experienced heavy casualties. The British forces were cold, wet, and near to exhaustion, and could do little more than dig in, or rather attempt to. The rocky terrain afforded little protection.
It was on this day that Albert is recorded as having been killed

After this point allied soldiers fought on doggedly under very difficult conditions and gradually advanced North through Italy, mountain by mountain and valley by valley – against high quality German troops led by General Kesselring.

Ultimately Rome was liberated on June 4th 1944 – some six months later – although many British soldiers died in the campaign. From the Wilmslow area several men were lost in the campaign and are recorded elsewhere in this research.

https://www.cheshireroll.co.uk/soldier/?i=25558/4125843-private-albert-burgess
https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/6-th-bn-cheshire-regiment.45266/
https://www.londonirishrifles.com/index.php/regimental-history/significant-events-from-our-history/garigliano-river-january-1944/

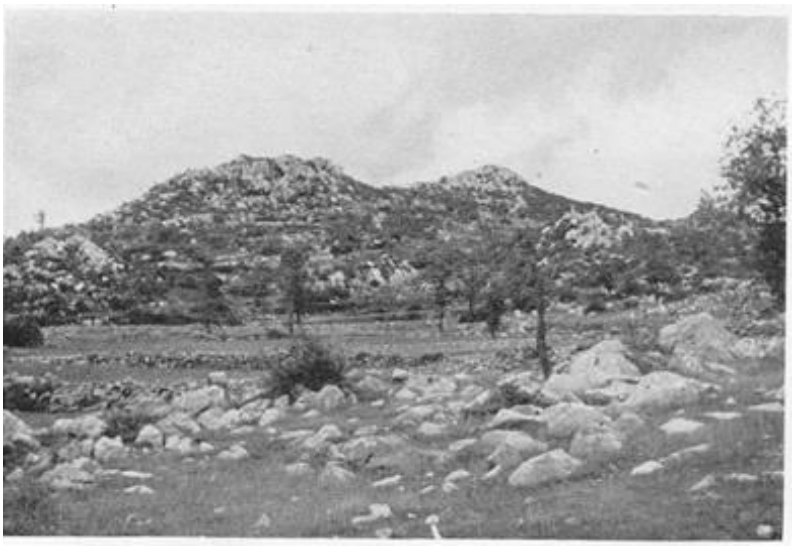
Guardsman GEORGE HENRY CLAYTON



Grenadier Guards 6th Bn.
Died 11 November 1943 Age 29 years old
Buried CASSINO WAR CEMETERY, Italy
Son of Harry and Hannah Clayton, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire; husband of Jessie Clayton, of Alderley Edge.
DARLING HUSBAND OF JESSIE OF ALDERLEY EDGE, CHESHIRE, ENGLAND. "GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN"

George and the 6th Battalion Grenadier Guards fought at Monte Camino, also known as "Murder Mountain", from November 8th to 12th 1943. The battalion was part of the 201st Guards Brigade and the 56 Division, and was attached to the 5th Army. Like Albert Burgess above who was part of the crossing of the Garigliano River two months later – this was part of the Allied attempt to breach the German Gustav Line that crossed Italy and was designed to prevent progress up through Italy to Austria and Germany.

Monte Camino was an 8,000 ft section of a two-peaked, rugged mountain some 6 miles along and 4 miles wide overlooking a valley that was a gateway to the Gustav Line and the now infamous Monte Casino 10 miles further on. As such it was part of a forward defensive line known as the Bernhardt Line – designed to hold up attacking forces on the western side approaches.



Monte Camino from the South on the left



Due to poor intelligence the British command thought that Monte Camino was only lightly defended. They did not know that the 15th Panzer group had control and benefited from good, hard vehicular access to the top of the mountain on the North side – whereas the Southern side only offered narrow mule tracks to any attackers.

Conditions and terrain experiences of the 6th Bn

On the 8th of November in incessant, cold rain – the 6th battalion Grenadier Guards climbed the steep rock slopes to attack for the first time. Over the next five days they launched and repulsed eight separate attacks and counter attacks – the last of which involved the fixing of bayonets and a battalion charge up the hill to take certain German positions

At the end of five days in winter rain, the Grenadiers withdrew having been relieved by the Ox and Bucks Regt.

However, at around the same time, the Germans on the other side of the mountain also withdrew.

Later, the Germans realised the British too had withdrawn and re-occupied the mountain top. This later led to a second battle of Monte Camino – 3 weeks later – but this time the intelligence and planning and resources were much better, including heavy artillery and air attacks.

Of 483 Grenadiers Guards of the 6th battalion who went up the mountain in the attack on November 8th, only 263 returned five days later. One of the 220 lost was Guardsman George Henry Clayton.



A plaque remembering the battle placed on the mountain.

https://www.sofo.org.uk/montecamino80/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNZQO5w5CAE

https://www.italystarassociation.org.uk/

Lieutenant JOHN HANDASYDE DICK



King's Shropshire Light Infantry 7th Bn.
Died 02 November 1942 Age 25 years old
Buried at EL ALAMEIN WAR CEMETERY
Son of James Murray Handasyde Dick and Mary Handasyde Dick, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
BELOVED SON OF JAMES & MARY HANDASYDE DICK "TILL THE DAY BREAK"

On November 1, 1942, the 151st Infantry Brigade, part of the 51st (Highland) Division, was involved in the Battle of El Alamein. The Brigade included the 6th, 8th and 9th Battalions of the Durham Light Infantry (DLI).

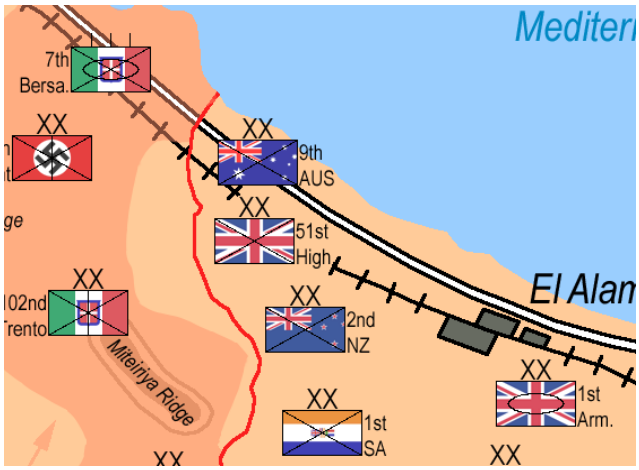
Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser November 27th 1942:

KILLED IN MIDDLE EAST

News received on Friday of the death in the Middle East of Lieut. John Handasyde Dick (25), youngest son of Mr and Mrs J M Handasyde Dick of "the Oaks", Alderley Edge, was received with sincere regret by a large circle of friends. Of a genial disposition he was well-known and very highly respected. He was in the Shropshire Light Infantry, but when he went out to the Middle East some weeks ago was attached to the Durham Light Infantry, and was killed in the great advance of the 8th Army.

As the "Advertiser" report makes clear – John was assigned to one of the Durham Light Infantry Battalions at this time. The King's Shropshire Light Infantry (KSLI), which was John's original regiment, was clearly under re-organisation and in fact during 1942, John's 7th Battalion was converted to the 99th Anti Tank Regiment and was then disbanded in 1943. This re-organisation may explain why John was with the DLI and he was probably part of fresh reinforcements that had arrived in October and completed training for the forthcoming Alamein offensive.

On October 30, the 151st Brigade, along with the 152nd Brigade, was attached to the New Zealand Division to launch an attack on the German line as part of Operation Supercharge.



On 2nd November 1942 the Company went into battle. At 12.45am as part of the 51st (Highland) Division the various DLI companies formed a line behind the white tapes of the start line, drank a rum ration, and fixed bayonets.

The plan was to advance 4,000 yards into the enemy's territory.



A British officer armed with a revolver leading his men forward with fixed bayonets, El Alamein, 1942

Lieut. John Handasyde Dick was killed in the first hours of the attack.

The attack began in the early hours of November 2, and the objectives were taken by 6 AM. The enemy counterattack was repelled, and the 152nd Brigade attacked again, causing the enemy to withdraw by November 3.

This was during the main action of what became known as the Second Battle of El Alamein (23 October – 11 November 1942) that took place near the Egyptian railway halt of El Alamein. This followed the e First Battle of El Alamein and the Battle of Alam el Halfa that had prevented the Axis from advancing further into Egypt.

The Allied victory was the beginning of the end of the Western Desert Campaign, eliminating the Axis threat to Egypt, the Suez Canal and the Middle Eastern and Persian oil fields. The battle revived the morale of the Allies, being the first big success against the Axis. The end of the battle coincided with the Allied invasion of French North Africa in Operation Torch on 8 November, which opened a second front in North Africa.

https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/regiment.php?pagenum=7&pid=1496

https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/brigade.php?pid=6403

Gunner ALBERT THOMAS GAIGER

Royal Artillery 65 Field Regt.
Died 18 September 1943 Age 21 years old
Buried at SALERNO WAR CEMETERY
Son of Alfred James Gaiger and Harriet Hannah Gaiger, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
IN EVERLOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR SON AND BROTHER. NEVER FORGOTTEN

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser October 22nd 1943

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Gaiger.-Died of wounds September 18th, on active service, Central Mediterranean Forces, ALBERT dearly loved third son of Mr and Mrs GAIGER, 7, Crescent Road, Alderley Edge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr and Mrs GAIGER, Sisters, Brother and Sisters in law acknowledge with gratitude the many letters and messages of sympathy received during their great sorrow.



As well as at Alderley Edge, Albert is commemorated on the Roll of Honour Memorial to the 65th Regiment Royal Artillery at Grove Park Lewisham.

65 Field Regt Royal Artillery was part of 56 British Infantry Division. It had served in France with the BEF in 1940, was evacuated at Dunkirk and then moved to North Africa in 1941-43. Here it fought in both the first and second battles of El Alemain before leaving from Tunisia as one of two British Divisions that landed at Salerno in southern Italy on 9 Sep 43 and they fought their way up to the Gustav Line that centred on Monte Cassino.

It is unlikely that Albert served in France given his age of just 21 – but he probably would have been in the regiment by the time they were operating in North Africa in 1941-42.

The Italian campaign and the same Division also saw the loss of neighbours George Henry Clayton and Albert Burgess from Alderley Edge - both of whom landed on the beaches at Salerno, on or around the same day as Albert.

The Division had some horrible battles on the way to the Gustav Line and forded the River Garigliano on 17 Jan 44 before they got stuck. They were then moved to reinforce the Anzio beachhead and remained there until withdrawn to North Africa in Apr 44.

Because Albert is reported as dying from his wounds it is difficult for the scope of this research to identify exactly how and where he was injured. However, his loss is another example of the tragedy and suffering that was experienced throughout the arduous Italian campaign – which can at times be forgotten as a result of the profile given to D-Day.

Lance Bombardier Alexander PHILIP GAIGER



Royal Artillery 3/2 Maritime Regt.
Died 09 February 1943 Age 19 years old
PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Alfred James and Harriet Hannah Gaiger,
of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser February 26th 1943

Popular Youth Missing at Sea

News that L-Bdr Philip Gaiger, of 7, Crescent Road, Alderley Edge, has been posted as missing at sea, has been received with sincere regret in Alderley Edge and Wilmslow, for he is well-known in both villages.

A son of Mr and Mrs AJ Gaiger, he joined the R.A. in May last year, and, responding to a call for volunteers as A.A. gunners for the Merchant Navy he was later transferred to the Maritime Regiment RA with which he had been serving on convoy work. Although only 19 years of age, he has seen a great deal of activity, particularly when sailing with convoys to Russia.

Before joining the forces he was a member of St Philip's Sunday school, Alderley Edge, and was employed by Mr J Woodall, baker and confectioner, Church Street Wilmslow. When war broke out he joined the local company of Home Guards, in which he was very popular.

He has three brothers and one sister in the Services: William, who is a corporal in the Lancashire Fusiliers was in Malta for nearly two years, and is now a cadet training in the Middle East for a commission; Albert is serving in the RA with the 8th Army in the Middle East; john is a wireless operator/air gunner in the RAF; and Gladys is serving in the Civil Nursing Auxiliary.

In service to their country, they are all following in the footsteps of their father, who saw active service in Egypt during the last war.

The Maritime Royal Artillery came into being in March 1940, when the Royal Navy was short of gunners and training to man the defensive armament on merchant ships engaged along the costal routes of the south and east coasts of England. E-boat and air attacks on British coastal shipping intensified after Dunkirk and more trained soldiers were required. The deficit was quickly met when 940 men volunteered from the army and were armed with Lewis guns or Bren guns to provide Anti-Aircraft defence.

The approach became so successful that it was reorganized into four Maritime Anti-Aircraft Regiments. The regiments were later split into independent batteries and troops, and the force was renamed the MRA.

The 2,861 ton Cargo ship Pacific, of the W.H. Cockerline was loaded with a cargo of coal at Sunderland for London. It left Sunderland on the 7th February 1943 and was last reported on the 8th February. Nothing more was heard from the ship and her thirty-eight crewmembers. In March 1943

the ship was officially recorded as missing and a Joint Arbitration Committee considered the ship lost by “marine cause” A wreck presumed to be the Pacific was found just over eight miles East of Cromer, Norfolk.

The bodies of three men were eventually washed ashore off the Dutch coast and after being identified were laid to rest by the Dutch people at Texel (Den Burg) cemetery, Netherlands
Two of those are recorded as Gunner, James Henry New 3 Bty., 2 Maritime Regt., Royal Artillery. (SS Pacific) and Lance Bombardier, Alexander Philip Gaiger 3/2 Maritime Regt., Royal Artillery. (SS Pacific).



An armed merchant ship with guns fore and aft as manned by members of the Maritime Royal Artillery.

The Luftwaffe was supplied with the new Focke-Wulf Condor in its attacks on merchant ships in the Western Approaches and wider Atlantic and more soldiers were later assigned to deep sea vessels armed with Bofors 40 mm/56 (1.57”) Mark 1 and Mark 2 guns, 20 mm Oerlikon guns as well as light machine-guns.

By May 1941, over 9,000 soldiers were serving aboard merchant ships.

It was then decided to create a regular unit, styled the Maritime Anti-Aircraft Regiment (MRA) of the Royal Artillery, from the existing serving soldiers. Apart from those already manning the Bofors, these infantrymen soon became very good gunners.

Training consisted of aircraft recognition, small arms and gun training on Hotchkiss, Marlin. .303 Lewis, 20 mm Oerlikon, .5-inch Browning, 40 mm Bofors and pillar box rockets, as well as the naval 4-inch breech loader and 12-pounder guns. As the war progressed and shipping losses to U-Boat attacks mounted, the maritime gunners were trained in all aspects of naval gunnery and attended Admiralty gunnery courses, with NCOs qualifying as naval gun-layers.

The MRA was deployed to bases around the world, including Liverpool, London, Glasgow, Leith, Newcastle, Cardiff, Cape Town, Alexandria, Halifax (Nova Scotia), Madras, Bombay, and Colombo. Crews were also allocated to Defensively Equipped Merchant Shipping (DEMS) such as the SS Clan Campbell served on by Signalman Percy Naylor of Wilmslow and lost in March 1942. This was a little reported function of the army and Royal Artillery that is revealed by Alexander’s loss.

https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/dems-gunner-losses.90119/page-28
http://ww2f.com/threads/s-s-pacific-sunk-9-feb-1943.5723/https://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/ss-pacific-and-mv-pacific.13151/

Sergeant ALFRED RICHARD JOHN GAIGER (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner)



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 427 (R.C.A.F.) Sqdn
Died 16 September 1943 Age 27 years old

Buried at ALDERLEY EDGE CEMETERY
Son of Alfred James and Harriet Hannah Gaiger husband of Alice May Gaiger, of Alderley Edge.

Known to his family as John.

On Thursday 15 September 1943, Mk V Handley Page Halifax DK523 of 427 Squadron took off at 20:35 hrs from RAF Leeming, Yorkshire for an operation against the French Dunlop rubber factory at Montluçon, an industrial town some 170 miles south of Paris. A round trip of approximately 1,200 miles.

The aircraft was armed with a bomb load of 5,960 lbs and was one of thirteen aircraft from 427 Squadron. This mission was shared with 20 Halifaxes from 158 Squadron out of RAF Lisset, Humberside. Of 427 squadron three aircraft returned prematurely with a variety of mechanical problems, the remaining ten proceeded on through the night.

At 2.50 am, around six hours later, one of the three planes with problems, Halifax DK 253, passed over the village of Harmondsworth, Middlesex west of London. It was flying extremely low towards the West passing over fields and jettisoning bombs. It struck the ground adjacent to a building known as Cambridge House, the home of a Mr & Mrs Freebody.

The impact was of such intensity that the aircraft bounced some 25 feet high, tearing through the branches of the ash and willow trees lining the river bank of the River Colne, and felling the jib of a dredger parked on the bank side, finally exploding and disintegrating over a wide area of what was then known as Middle Moor.



The full crew of John's Halifax:

Pilot-Flt/Sgt Alexander Chibanoff-RCAF--Age 22
Flt/Engr-Sgt David Richard Coe-RAFVRd-Age 19
Nav-Flg/Off Frederick Vere Webb-RCAF--Age 27
Bomb Aimer-Flg/Off Kendall Bell Begbie-RCAF--Age 26
W/Op-Sgt **Alfred Richard John Gaiger**-RAFVR--Age 27
Air Gnr-Sgt Eric Thomas Potts-RAFVR-Age 22
Air Gnr-Sgt Harold William Frost-RCAF-Age 20

The engines ploughed on ahead, over the river Wyrardisbury and settled in Hawthorn Moor, having travelled a quarter of a mile after initial impact - all indicative of a high speed impact. The entire crew made up of the four Canadian and three British airmen perished in the crash.

That morning an entry was made in the personal diary of an ARP warden at Harmondsworth Moor.

Incident 16th September 1943:

HALIFAX bomber flew in low on a NW and W position (sic) disintegrating before finally crashing in a field on Harmondsworth Moor, pieces falling in Trustler's field and Cedar Farm. Bombs jettisoned in Philp's field behind Eustace Watkin's drawing out all the shop windows along the Bath Road and many houses near Pinglestone Close, and also shops in Sipson Way also lost windows. Aircraft exploded on impact killing all crew, petrol tanks exploded, causing huge sheet of flame. There was no alert at the time.



A memorial stone and plaque commemorating the crash of John's Halifax and the loss of all the crew was placed and dedicated on 7 July 1999 by British Airways, in association with the Community of Harmondsworth.



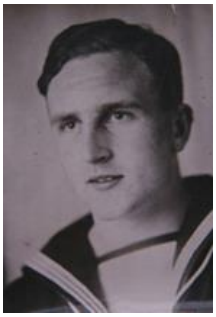
427 Squadron started as a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) bomber squadron formed at Croft, England on 7 November 1942 and spent its wartime entirely in England as a part of No. 6 Group RCAF, part of the Royal Air Force (RAF) Bomber Command.

427 flew Vickers Wellingtons from its first operational mission on 14 December 1942 until May 1943 when it was relocated to Leeming, North Yorkshire and re-equipped with Handley Page Halifax Mk V aircraft, the squadron flew intensely until early 1944 when it replaced its inventory with Halifax Mk III aircraft.

Because the air crash was in this country John's family were able to lay his body to rest in the Alderley Edge cemetery unlike those of his two brothers.

http://kenscott.com/memorial/halifax/
https://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/ww2-aircraft-crash
https://asn.flightsafety.org/wikibase/164176

Leading Airman KENNETH HALE



Royal Navy H.M.S. Goshawk
Died 17 January 1941 Age 19 years old
Commemorated at LEE-ON-SOLENT MEMORIAL
Son of John and Margery Hale, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

In 1941, HMS Goshawk, also known as RNAS Piarco, to which Kenneth was being posted, was a Royal Naval Air Station in Trinidad that was home to several units, roles and squadrons: 749 Naval Air Squadron: Formed on January 1, 1941, was the Observer Training Squadron that trained observers for the Fleet Air Arm. The squadron was equipped with the Supermarine Walrus and the Grumman Goose.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser March 21st 1941

NO HOPE FOR ALDERELY EDGE MAN

Able Seaman Kenneth Hale

General sympathy will be extended to Mr and Mrs John Hale. Edge End, Moss Lane, Alderley Edge, who, on Monday received an official intimation that no hope could be held out for their son. Able Seaman Kenneth Hale, who was first reported missing in February.

Nineteen years of age, Kenneth joined the Fleet Air Arm last July, and as an officer cadet had passed his examinations as an observer and would shortly have received his commission.

He was very well known and highly respected through-tout the district. A life-long member of the Methodist Church, Alderley Edge, he sang in the choir as a boy, and he held the distinction of being the youngest local preacher ever to have preached in the ALderley Edge Methodist Church, for he was only 17 when he first entered the pulpit there.

As a pupil at the Alderley Edge Council School he won a scholarship at the Macclesfield Grammar School (now the King's School). He matriculated at 15 and on leaving school took up a position in the actuarial department of the Co-operative Insurance Society. He continued his studies and was prevented from sitting for his final examinations as an actuary by reason of the fact that they were cancelled owing to the war.

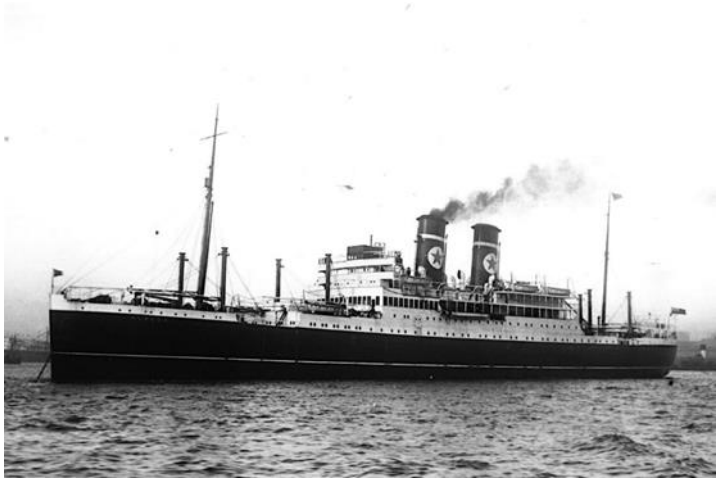
He was a member of the Wilmslow Rugby Club.

He had several thrilling experiences during his life in the Service. On one occasion his ship was torpedoed and put in for repairs, on another occasion his vessel was bombed, and the last occasion it was torpedoed he was amongst those reported missing. This is the first service casualty of the war from Alderley Edge,

Kenneth is recorded as being on board the SS Almeda Star on passage to Trinidad.

SS Almeda Star was a British turbine steamer of the Blue Star Line. She was both an ocean liner and a refrigerated cargo ship, providing a passenger service between London and South America and carrying refrigerated beef from South America to London. She was built in 1926, significantly enlarged in 1935 and sunk by enemy action in 1941.

On 22 December 1940 Almeda Star was on the River Mersey in Liverpool when she was slightly damaged in an air raid – this may have been when Kenneth was already on board and is referred to in the Advertiser report above.



However, on 15 January she sailed from Liverpool bound for the River Plate, carrying 194 passengers including 142 members of the Fleet Air Arm en route to RNAS Piarco on Trinidad. They were 21 officers and 121 ratings from 749, 750 and 752 squadrons.

Shipping between Britain and the Atlantic had to pass through the Western Approaches, so this area attracted a number of U-boat attacks. On the morning of 16 January, the day after Almeda Star sailed, German submarine U-96 sank the passenger liner Oropesa in the Western Approaches, killing 106 of the people aboard. At 07.45 hrs on 17 January 1941 Almeda Star was about 35 nautical miles north of Rockall in heavy seas when the same submarine, U-96 commanded by Kptlt Heinrich Lehmann-Willenbrock, hit her amidships with one torpedo, causing Almeda Star to stop.

The ship did not immediately sink so U-96 fired again at 0805 and 0907 hrs, hitting Almeda Star in the stern and again amidships. The ship had launched four lifeboats but still had people on deck when U-96 surfaced and opened fire on her with her 88 mm deck gun. Between 0932 and 0948 hrs the submarine fired 28 incendiary shells, about 15 of which hit Almeda Star and started small fires aboard. The fires soon went out so at 0955 hrs U-96 hit the ship with a fourth torpedo, which exploded in her forepart. Within three minutes Almeda Star sank by her bow.

Almeda Star had transmitted one distress message and the Royal Navy responded by sending seven destroyers to search the area. They found neither survivors, boats nor wreckage, all 360 people aboard were lost, including those in the four lifeboats that had been launched. U-96 had been at the scene for more than two hours but escaped undetected. The Atlantic in January would have been very cold and survival in a turbulent sea would not have been possible.

https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/crews/person/48544.html
https://www.researchingww2.co.uk/the-loss-of-the-ss-almeda-star/

Flight Sergeant
REGINALD PAUL HEALEY



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 405 (R.C.A.F.) Sqdn
Died 09 June 1942 Age 20 years old
Buried at RHEINBERG WAR CEMETERY, Germany
Son of Agnes Millicent Lynton Healey, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
BEING MADE PERFECT IN A LITTLE WHILE, HE FULFILLED LONG YEARS

Paul is recorded as being an air gunner on Halifax DG224 – Identifier LQ-U "Uniform" on the night of 9th June 1942. The crew of eight took off from their base at RAF Pocklington 15 miles from York just before 11.00pm.on a bombing mission to Essen.

These gunners were stationed in the rear or mid-upper turret and were separated from the other crew members.

They were responsible for defending the aircraft against enemy fighters.
The primary role of an air gunner on a Halifax bomber was to act as a lookout and warn the pilot of any approaching enemy aircraft. They were also responsible for advising the pilot on how to evade the enemy, and if combat broke out, to destroy or drive off the enemy.



A Halifax Mk II of 405 Sqdrn with Squadron identifier LQ

It was reported that the aircraft was "coned" by searchlights and hit by heavy Flak.

Those who did not survive were initially buried in the British Military Cemetery at Köln-Zolstock. They were later reinterred at Rheinberg War Cemetery.

Flight Engineer:Sgt D R Riches survived the loss of Paul's plane and became a PoW in Stalag Luft 4 Sagan and Belaria. His PoW Number was 523 making him one of the early RAF aircrew to be imprisoned. The full crew of Halifax Halifax DG224 was:

Pilot:Plt Off Lloyd George Higginson RCAF.
Pilot:Sgt William John Pethybridge RCAF
Flight Engineer: Sgt D R Riches
Observer:Plt Off Alan James McEwen RCAF
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner: Flt Sgt Edmund Thomas McGill RCAF
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner:Flt Sgt Leslie Heycock.
Air Gunner:Flt Sgt Ernest Norman Jefferies RCAF
Air Gunner: Flt Sgt Reginald Paul Healey.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser in the course of June - August 1942

MISSING

HEALEY – Missing from air operations, Flight Sergeant R Paul HEALEY, precious, beloved eldest son of Pegs and stepson of Cecil Lynton Murphy, The Hollies, Alderley Edge .

Flight Sergeant Missing

Flight-Sergeant R Paul Healey of Alderley Edge, is reported missing from an operational flight over enemy territory

Eldest son of Mrs Murphey and stepson of Mr CL Murphey, of the Holllies Alderley Edge. Paul who is 20 years of age, volunteered for the RAF when he was 18, and has been on operational service for nearly two years. Those two years were full of action and interest, for Paul always applied himself with energy and determination to anything he undertook and qualifying as a gunner he participated in many operational flights over the Channel, Northern France and Norway, and took part in many raids over Germany. He was thrilled by his experiences in the great raid on Cologne and told how he could see the fires when crossing the coast of Holland 150 miles away. He took part in raids over Emden, Essen and other German towns and had flown with a Canadian squadron.

ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER

The news received last week that he was missing from one of the big operational flights was received with sincere regret in Alderley Edge, where he is very popular amongst a large circle of friends.

When 10 years of age he joined the Alderley Edge Boy Scouts and became assistant scoutmaster. He attended St Philip's Sunday School for many years and was member of St Philip's Church choir, which he invariably assisted when home on leave. He was educated at the King's School, Macclesfield.

His brother, Donald, who was an apprentice at AV Roe's volunteered for the RAF when 18 and is now training for a pilot in Rhodesia.

Missing-Now Reported Killed

FLIGHT SERGEANT PAUL HEALEY

Missing after a mass raid over Germany in June, Flight Sergt. Paul Healey, eldest son of Mrs Murphey, The Hollies, Chapel Road, Alderley Edge, is now officially reported killed. Twenty-one years of age Paul volunteered for the RAF when 18, and during the last two years he had taken part in many operational flights over the Channel, Northern France, Norway and Germany. He was thrilled by his experiences during the great raid on Cologne, and amongst the many other places he had been over on operational flights were Emden and Essen

At the age of ten he joined the Alderely Edge Boy Scouts and later became assistant scoutmaster. He attended st Philip's Sunday School and was a popular member of ST Philip's Church choir. He was educated at the King's School, Macclesfield.

His brother, Donald, who volunteered for the RAF when 18, is now training in Rhodesia as a pilot.

“Vancouver” Squadron 405 RCAF was formed on 23 April 1941 at Driffield, Yorkshire and was under RAF operational command. It was firstly equipped with the twin- engined Vickers Wellington bomber and It was the first of many Canadian heavy bomber squadrons that would eventually equip all of No.6 Group of Bomber Command.

It flew the RCAF's first bombing on 12/13 June 1941, ten weeks after formation, attacking the railway marshalling yards at Schwerte.

It converted to the four-engined Handley Page Halifax in April 1942, taking part in the historic 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne on the night of 30/31 May 1942 which is referred to in the Advertiser report.

https://asn.flightsafety.org/wikibase/204384

Flight Sergeant
ARTHUR HENRY HOWARD

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 09 April 1943 Age 22 years old
Buried at KHARTOUM WAR CEMETERY, Sudan
Son of Cecil and Margaret Russell Howard, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
"I WILL ARISE AND GO TO MY FATHER" DEEPLY LOVED AND MOURNED. FATHER, MOTHER, TONY AND JACK

Arthur's story is not as clear as some others. Information about him does not give a squadron number for him – but the aeroplane in which he was killed can be identified and its final location coincides with where his body is laid to rest in Sudan.

The aeroplane was a Hawker Hurricane I (an early pre-war model) registration P3600 . Records for the particular aircraft show that it was involved in two non-fatal accidents before its loss. An injured pilot in 1940 – maybe as part of the Battle of Britain and then a belly landing in 1941.

However by April 1943 the aircraft had obviously been repaired and shipped or flown to Egypt and was with 71 Operational Training Unit (OTU) based at Carthago.

Formed at Ismailia in Egypt under the control of No 202 Group on 1 June 1941 from the fighter element of No 70 OTU. 71 OTU's task was to acclimatise fighter and army co-operation pilots to desert conditions.

From June to September it was tasked with providing night defence of the Canal Zone but in the latter month it moved to Gordon's Tree airbase in the Sudan.

Further moves occurred for the Unit on 1 May 1942 to Carthargo and 5 May 1943 to Ismailia just after Arthur was lost.



A Hurricane being prepared under desert conditions – North Africa.

It is interesting to note that in some records Arthur is identified as a Wireless Operator (Air). This role would not explain why he was flying a single seater Hurricane fighter – albeit an elderly one. It may be reasonable to speculate that Arthur had been promoted/recommended for single seater flight training and was in the final stages of training for desert warfare when he was lost in a training accident/incident.

https://www.rafcommands.com/database/hurricanes/details.php?uniq=P3600
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bh1SxsAbtwA&ab_channel=TinusleRoux

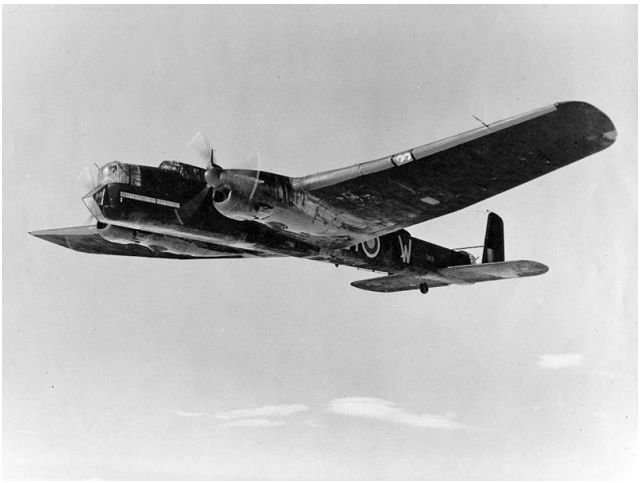
Sergeant
ROBERT SYDNEY LANGSTON KEYMER

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 78 Sqdn.
Died 16 May 1941 Age 25 years old
Buried at JONKERBOS WAR CEMETERY, Netherlands
Son of Colonel Shirley Langston Keymer, T.D., and
Elizabeth Jean Keymer, of Alderly Edge, Cheshire.
OUR DEAR SON & BROTHER WHO DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE IN PEACE. FATHER, MOTHER, FAMILY

May 1941 saw little activity in the air by the RAF as a result of earlier heavy efforts of Bomber Command but low returns and poor results meant squadrons needed a rest period. However, some bombing did need to be seen to be taking place.

On 16/17 May an attack was made on the city of Cologne with 95 aircraft made up of. 44 Wellingtons, 28 Whitleys and 23 Hampdens. Lack of moonlight and the intensive searchlight activities of the Germans made the identification of the targets difficult, but 82 crews reported good bombardment results.

Cologne itself reported scattered bombing in a large area with concentrations in the southern districts of the city. An industrial target was destroyed and 22 others were damaged. 30 houses were destroyed and some 100 damaged. In the centre of town, the town hall was hit, a hospital, a department store and the famous Cafe Bauer. 20 people died and 24 were injured. One RAF airplane did not return to the base.



A Whitley of 78 Squadron – identifier EY

This aircraft, with serial number Z6493 and squadron code EY-V “Victor” belonged to 78 Squadron and was stationed at RAF Middleton St George (Co. Durham)

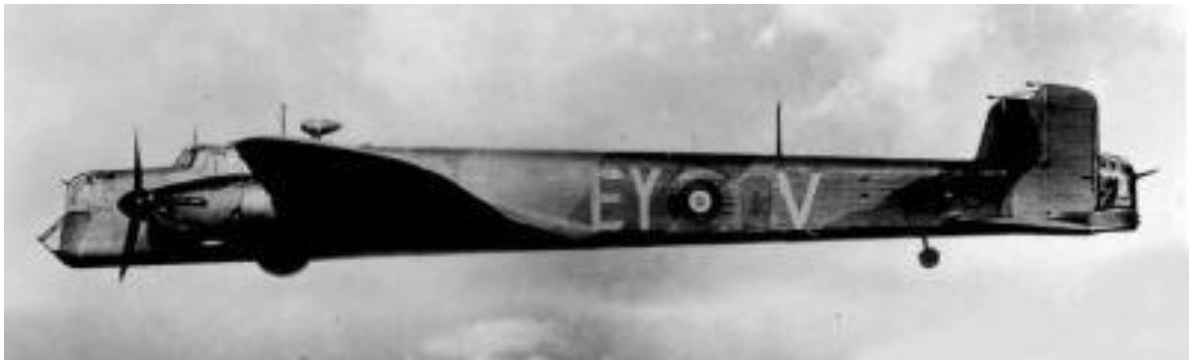
Pilot F/O John Garrould took off at a quarter to eleven, on a moonless night and set course for the East. The bombardment proved very difficult due to the intense activity of the German searchlights.

Garrould and his crew, including Robert as second pilot, were intercepted on the return flight by an experienced night-fighter pilot Jägerleitoffizier (Sqdrn Leader) Knickmeier.

Knickmeier led his colleague UnterOffizier (Sergeant) Eberhard Pross towards the unfortunate Whitley and after a few bursts it was hit. The night-fighter pilots reported that their target started burning violently, was unmanageable and crashed in the Mariaveen district, Holland.

All crew members died on the spot but sSadly only three could be exactly identified. All were buried at Ehrenfriedhof Venlo with two buried as “unknown soldiers” in a collective grave. After the war their mortal remains were reburied at Jonkerbos War Cemetery.

As are the fortunes of war, UnterOffizier Pross, the Luftwaffe pilot who shot down Robert’s plane, was also hit during the attack. It is not known when and where he was wounded, but he lost control of his aircraft when landing at Venlo airbase. His Messerschmitt BF 110 crashed and turned over and Pross was killed. He too was buried in Dresden-Tolkenwitz. although his fellow crewman Bordfunker Facius survived the crash.



Robert’s specific aircraft “V” Victor of 78 Squadron lost 16th May 1941.

The crew of “V”- Victor Z6493 are all buried together in the Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Nijmegen, Holland.

Pilot P/O John Aubrey Trevor Garrould Age19
2nd Pilot Sgt Robert Sydney Langston Keymer Age 25,
Observer F/S Reginald James Garlish Age 20
Alexander P. Smith)
Wireless Operator/Air Gunner Sgt Edward. Oakes Age 22.
Wireless Operator/Rear Gunner F/S Alexander Plant Smith Age 20

Facebook: RAF Bomber Command Crews and Aircraft Pictures

https://wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/view.php?uid=247159

Major John LEE, Military Cross



46 Royal Marine Commandos
Died : August 25, 1944 Aged 32
Cemetery/Memorial: Ranville War Cemetery
Son of John and Mabel Lee; husband of Joan Isobel Lee, of Hove, Sussex

The Fourth Special Service Brigade was created in March of 1944 specifically for the invasion of France. Comprised entirely of Royal Marines, the brigade was tasked with securing the flanks of the invasion beaches and was intended to quickly link up the entire British front from the Orne River to Port-en-Bessin and the Americans on Omaha beach.

The newly raised 46 and 47 RM Commandos joined 41 RM Commando as part of this Brigade with Major Lee as second in command of 46. The Brigade was expected to be in combat for at most a week before being returned home, however fate had other plans for them and in the early days Major Lee's award for the Military Cross was made for action as follows:

> *"This officer was given the task of leading the assault of two forward troops during the attack on Le Hamel on 11 June. The assault had to move over 400 yards of open ground including the crossing of two obstacles.*
>
> *The forward troops were under fire particularly from the flanks. The success of the assault was largely due to the magnificent leadership shown by Major Lee who moved in front of the main wave. In the subsequent street fighting Major Lee was always in front, he showed sound judgement and enterprise.*
>
> *Awarded the Military Cross for gallant and distinguished service during earlier operations at Le Hamel."*

Four days earlier on 7th June 1944 (D-Day plus 1) at 09 00hrs Major Lee's 46RM Commando had disembarked on Nan White Beach at Bernieres. Over the next few days they were involved in fierce fighting at Petit Enfer, Douvres, La Deliverande and Rots and then at Le Hamel where Major Lee's MC was earned.

On 17 June 1944 the Commando was re-assigned to 4th Special Service Brigade whilst dug in at the area of Sallenelles - Hauger. Operations in the area continued and by August 1944 the Commando moved forward to Dozule and Breville sur Mer.

On the 25th of August the city of Paris was liberated, and the German general von Scholtitz signed the surrender of his troops. To the north and south of Paris, the Germans continued to cross the Seine river. Despite American armoured attacks and the incessant raids of the Allied aviation, the majority of Germans who had been stationed in Normandy for several weeks succeeded in retreating and reaching the east bank of the Seine.

The Americans and the British also crossed makeshift bridges over the Seine and progressed north and south of Paris to try to cut the road to the German forces withdrawing.

On August 25, 1944, the 1st Special Service Brigade led an attack on Beuzeville , but German defences prevented them from advancing. 46 Commando were clearly also involved. Along with Major Lee, Marine Michael Coyle, 46 (Royal Marine) Commando is also recorded as killed in action here as well as Marine John Hall, No. 45 R.M. Commando and other heavy casualties.

By the end of September, and after further heavy casualties suffered by No.46 Royal Marine Commando, - the remainder of the Brigade was withdrawn to the UK and stationed on the Isle of Wight.





Major Lee's Grave at Beuzeville and his memorial in Alderley Edge Cemetery.

https://www.commandoveterans.org/JohnLee46RMCommando#:~:text=Major%20John%20Lee%2C%20MC%2C%20LLB,Lee%2C%20of%20Hove%2C%20Sussex.

Pilot Officer FREDERICK MAXFIELD



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 150 Sqdn.
Wireless Operator/Air gunner
Died 15 October 1942 Age 29 years old
Buried ULRUM GENERAL CEMETERY, DE MARNE
Netherlands
Son of Frederick and Margaret Maxfield; husband of Sybil Max field, of Hayes, Middlesex.

150 Squadron started life in 1938 equipped with Fairey Battle light bombers, taking them to France as part of the Advanced Air Striking Force in September 1939. It received heavy losses in attempting to oppose the German invasion of France in May 1940 and was evacuated back to England by 20 May.

Once back in the UK, the squadron re-equipped with Vickers Wellingtons 1C's as night-bombers in October 1940, at RAF Newton. It moved to RAF Snaith, East Yorkshire, in July 1941 becoming operational.

Sgt Frederick Maxfield received a commission to P/O on probation (emergency) on 14th August 1942.



Three weeks later, on the night of 4th / 5th September 1942 the crew of Wellington Z1671 of 150 Squadron with Frederick as wireless operator/air gunner (in the middle of the picture) were tasked with joining an operational flight to bomb Bremen.

They took off from RAF Snaith airfield at 23.35hrs.

On their return to Yorkshire the aircraft suffered engine failure so was force landed in a field at 05.25hrs in the Sutton upon Derwent area but in the landing the rear of the aircraft including the turret broke off. The turret struck a tree and sadly the rear gunner P/O Vivian Weston Parry of Cemlyn, Anglesey, died. The remaining four airmen, including Frederick were injured, but survived and the aircraft, built at Hawarden, Chester was written off. (Rear gunner Pilot Officer Vivian Parry is 2nd from the left in the picture above).

Once recovered, Frederick returned to service with a new crew in Wellington Z1671, and some six weeks later they took off at 18:50 15 Oct 1942 again from Snaith for a bombing raid on Cologne.

The crew was made up of Sgt P C Harrison,Frederick, Sg E N Smith, Flight Sgt P W S Varley, Pilot Officer D L Hemming, Flight Sgt D L Morrow (RCAF) but the aircraft failed to return and the crew was reported as missing - believed to have crashed in the sea off the coast of Holland returning from their bombing mission. Frederick's body was recovered and was buried at ULRUM GENERAL CEMETERY, DE MARNE Netherlands by local civilians

During its time at RAF Snaith two hundred and five of RAF 150 Squadron airmen lost their lives on active duty.

https://www.yorkshire-aircraft.co.uk/aircraft/yorkshire/york42/z1671.html

Flying Officer JOHN OWEN

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
206 Sqdn.
Died 14 December 1942 Age 21 years old
commemorated at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL
Son of Arthur and Beatrice Mary Owen, of Wilmslow, Cheshire. Associate of the Institute of Bankers.



John Owen played at Wilmslow Rugby Club on the first team for 1939-1940 before joining the RAF and after time as an aircraftman he was promoted to Flying Officer and then became a pilot with 206 Squadron as part of Coastal Command protecting convoys from air and U-Boat attack.

206 Squadron started with Hudson aircraft that John piloted but were upgraded to Boeing Flying Fortresses that allowed a much further reach into the Atlantic . The long range capability of Fortresses helped close what was known as the “Gap” in which U-Boats could operate without fear of bombing or depth charge attack from the air.

As can be seen in the photograph of 206 Squadron Fortress ”J” below, a sister aircraft to John’s “A” for Archie, they were fitted with early air to sea radar that could locate U-Boats which were on the surface.

John's Commanding Officer wrote: *"Flying Officer John Owen joined 206 Squadron in 1941. His reputation for keenness and thoroughness in everything he undertook was unexcelled. He took part in the 1,000 bomber raid (Bremen 25.06.1942) and made 2 damaging attacks on U-Boats during his penultimate patrol. John enlisted in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve as No. 980399 Aircraftman 2nd Class Aircraft hand/Pilot on March 5th 1940. He undertook training in the UK and Southern Rhodesia and was promoted to Flying Officer on February 12th 1942."*

The following is largely copied from a website recording David Clarke’s memories of serving with 206 Squadron and his memories of his friend and cousin John Owen. RAF Benbecula is located in the Hebrides islands.



David Clarke also confirmed that John Owen was in one of twelve Lockheed Hudson crews from 206 Squadron in the 1,000 Bomber Raid on Bremen on the 25th June 1942.

"At 09-37 hours on December 14th 1942, 3 Fortresses took off from RAF Benbecula (Hebrides) in very poor weather to provide cover for convoys ONS 152 and TA 29. Fortress IIA FL453 'A' was piloted by John. The aircraft was due back at 5pm on the same day, however, when no weather report was received from the aircraft at the most distant point of its patrol it was presumed to have been lost before 2pm on December 14th 1942.”

The following day 3 aircraft were dispatched to search for the missing crew, but nothing was found of FL453.

One explanation for the loss of the aircraft is that the barometric pressure could vary considerably between an aircraft's base and the area being patrolled and crews routinely descended to around 100 feet (30m) above the sea once on station to set their altimeters to zero feet.

This gave them some reassurance that their altimeter was correctly set while providing a small margin of 'padding'. John may have flown into the sea while attempting this procedure in the bad (December) weather."



David Clarke's website and research shows that John's Fortress FL453 'A' was the 23rd of the 45 Fortress IIA's delivered to Britain rather than being built specifically for the RAF. Its USAAF serial was 41-9228 and it was assigned to the Cheyenne Modification Centre on May 26th 1942. It arrived at Dorval Canada on July 1st 1942 and departed on July 10th arriving at Gander, Newfoundland to re-fuel and the following day under the command of American civilian pilot Dillon Mervin Teel to Prestwick, Scotland. It was then flown to Burtonwood Repair Depot (B.R.D) at Warrington 3 days later for the final modification and painting and delivered to Benbecula in the Hebrides by a 206 Squadron crew on July 30th. It was 1 of the first 3 Fortress IIA's taken on strength.

There is a story about John that is recorded in Men of Coastal Command 1939-1945 written by Chas Bowyer: *"One Fortress pilot, Pilot Officer J.Owen, carried out a perfect straddle of a target with his depth charges (DC's) from 8000 feet on an unsuspecting whale-which cost him a small fortune in drinks in the Mess bar that night".*

The crew of John's Fortress were Sgt R.N.Hildred - Co-Pilot, Sgt R.Bentley – Navigator, F/Sgt E.Crowe - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, Sgt W.Shanks - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, Sgt W.J.Parnell - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner, Sgt G.C.Wilson - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner



All were photographed by their plane only days before they were lost – and are recorded on the Runneymede memorial for RAF aircrew lost without trace.

The Boeing Flying Fortress helped turn the tide of WWII, bristling with gun turrets and powered by four Wright Cyclone piston engines. About 200 Fortress II, IIA and III variants were delivered to the RAF from mid 1942 onwards.

The Flying Fortress then remained in RAF service in limited numbers throughout the war. The most important user of the aircraft was Coastal Command which used it for anti-submarine patrols over the Atlantic. During 1942 and 1943 three squadrons used the Fortress for this duty, one operating in the Far East. The two home based squadrons 220 and 206 retained their Fortresses until 1944 and 1945 respectively. By 1945 the Fortress was being used by two Meteorological squadrons, one air-sea rescue squadron and one anti-submarine squadron.



A 2nd photograph of the crew of Fortress FL453 'A' for Archie – Pilot John Owen 3rd fro left

https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wilmslow/a/club-history-19930.html?page=2
https://www.rafcommands.com/database/wardead/details.php?qnum=100526
https://coastalcommand206.com/pages/206-squadron-coastal-command-pilots-part-i-john-lowe

Flying Officer
JOHN DEREK BREARLEY RIGBY



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 500 Sqdn.
Died 01 August 1942 Age 22 years old
Buried at SANDWICK CEMETERY, ROSS AND CROMARTY
Son of John Kay Rigby and Grace Annie Rigby, of Dartmouth. B.A. (Cantab.);
Administrative Officer, Tanganyika Territory.
Personal Inscription
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

JOHN DEREK BREARLEY RIGBY, Flying Officer, Royal Air Force. Only son of Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Rigby, of Croston Towers, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. He entered Crosby House in September, 1933, gained House colours for cricket, leaving in July, 1937, with a Major Scholarship to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, obtaining first class Honours in the Natural Science Tripos. He joined the R.A.F., and on receiving his commission was posted to Coastal Command, being killed on active service in July, 1942.

"Derry" Rigby attended Wadham House School, Hale where he created a record of being in the top form for 4 years and Head Boy for 2 years. He was also Captain of the School's football, hockey and cricket teams. In 1933 he won a scholarship to go to Oundle School and in 1936, went to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. where he won a Natural Sciences Tripos Part 1. with 1st class honours in 1939. He had College colours for rugby and squash rackets. He obtained his B.A. (Cantab.) degree in March 1941.

He held a civil flying 'A' licence that he obtained as a member of the Civil Air Guard and joined the RAF in October 1939. In August 1940, he was summoned for interview at the Colonial Office and offered the post of Administrative Officer, Tanganyika Territory. In Tanganyika, he learned that anyone with previous RAF service could re-join and so went to Nairobi, Kenya to re-join the RAFVR. He was posted to Coastal Command flying Hudson Bombers.

The Civil Air Guard (C.A.G.) was a UK organization that encouraged and subsidized pilot training in preparation for another war. Established in July 1938, the C.A.G. was open to both men and women. Members were members of civilian flying clubs who agreed to serve in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in an emergency. The C.A.G. offered subsidized tuition for pilot training.

Derry became a member of RAF 500 Squadron based at RAF Bircham Newton operating Lockheed Hudsons by November 1941. In March 1942, the squadron moved to RAF Stornoway in Scotland, with detachments at Limavady in Northern Ireland for anti-submarine patrols over the Western Approaches.

RAF records show that Flying Officer J D B Rigby, Pilot Officer F R Hancock and Sergeant B F C Rixon were missing, believed killed aboard Hudson FH375 of 500 Squadron. The report says that their aircraft failed to return from an operational flight over the Isle of Harris, Scotland, 31 July 1942.

The Hebridean **Pairc Historical Society** have written a comprehensive report on the story of the loss of Derry's Hudson Bomber crash on the island of Southern Pairc.

In 1942 a Lockheed Hudson bomber crashed in Southern Pairc close to Mulhagery. The bomber flew into the rocky hillside at Fiar Chreag while flying in over the water in foggy weather. Had the plane managed to climb another 10 feet they would have cleared the top of the hill. Fiar Chreag rises very steeply from close to the sea and would have come up very quickly if they were flying blind in fog.



A Hudson bomber on Atlantic patrol as flown by Derry

The RAF knew that the plane must have come down over land but despite spending over three weeks searching from the air they failed to find the crashed bomber. At that time there were Walrus Seaplanes based at the airfield in Stornoway and these flew over the area but without any success.

Nearly four weeks after the crash the crew of the regular passenger flight from Glasgow to Stornoway spotted something glinting in the sun and reported this when they reached Stornoway.



The Cockpit of a Hudson



Internal view including anti submarine radar in use

Following the sighting a land based search was undertaken but still failed to find the plane on the first day as they had been directed to the hills above Valamus 10 miles away. The following day when they found out that they were searching in the wrong area they moved to the Fiar Chreag close to Mulhagary.

The Squadron was getting ready to move to St Eval, and all aircraft were serviceable except for FH375 (Derry's) which had its radar U/S. The radar was repaired but it required an air-test to finish the job. The weather at Stornoway was bad with low cloud and all aircraft were grounded. But for

some reason the Hudson was allowed to take off. Its crew were F/O Rigby as pilot, P/O Hancock on radar and Sgt Rixon who was the radar technician.

When the Hudson failed to return a sea search was started, followed, when the weather improved by an air search. Nothing was found and the search was wound down. Then on the 25th August, the pilot of a Scottish Airways Rapide reported seeing wreckage near Kebock Head. But this reported location was too far north and again nothing was found. The Squadron had to move and leave the search in the hands of 15 Gp Coastal Command.

The search was now made on foot, by means of landing the men on suitable beaches. On the 29th August, the party landed at Mulhagery, and within 90 minutes they had returned to the boat with the bodies of the crew of the Hudson. Because of rough water it was not possible to put the bodies aboard the pinnace. So it was not until the 9th September that the bodies were landed at Stornoway.



Hudson fitted with radar and a lifeboat as flown by 500 Squadron Stornoway.

Because the crash site was so remote none of the aircraft parts were recovered until in 1975 when the gun turret was removed and underwent restoration.

It was subsequently presented to RAF Elvington Museum in Yorkshire and can be seen there.

Because of the delay in finding Derry's aircraft the Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser did not report his loss until the 27th Nov 1942 identifying that:

Brilliant Athlete and Scholar Killed

Reported missing last August, Flying Officer J.D.B (Derry) Rigby, aged 22, is reported killed on active service. He was the only son of Mr and Mrs John K Rigby, of Croston Towers, Alderley Edge, who previously lived at "Brereton" Arthog Road, Hale.

https://oundle-heritage.daisy.websds.net/Filename.ashx?systemFileName=OUNRohwwII000188.pdf&origFilename=OUNRohwwII000188.pdf

https://www.traffordwardead.co.uk/index.php?sold_id=s%3A18%3A%22169%2Caltrincham_ww2%22%3B&letter=R&place=&war=II&soldier=Rigby

https://www.cepairc.com/2009/03/hudson-iii-plane-crash-at-mulhagery/

Able Seaman JOHN SIDDANS



Royal Navy H.M.S. Tamar
Died 04 October 1942 Age 42 years old
Buried or commemorated at
PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Harry and Susannah Siddans; husband of Florence Siddans, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

HMS Tamar was actually a 19th century warship hulk moored in Hong Kong harbour that gave its name to land based naval services and operations buildings for the Far East.

All development activity of the site faltered at the outbreak of World War II and ceased entirely as Hong Kong was attacked and invaded by strong units of the Japanese Imperial Army and air force from December 8, 1941, only hours after the Japanese aerial bombardment on Pearl Harbour in Hawaii.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for 27th August 1942:

ALDERLEY EDGE SEAMAN SAFE

Able Seaman John Siddans (41) who was reported missing in the Far East last January, is a prisoner in the hands of the Japanese. He has been in the Navy for 20 years. His wife lives in Tyler Street.

Given the date given for John Siddans' death and his location, it seems very likely that he was amongst 1,816 POW's whilst travelling on the Lisbon Maru which was torpedoed by US Submarine Grouper. Almost all were lost as the hatches were battened down. The ship was en route from Hong Kong to Shanghai.
The Lisbon Maru Memorial was unveiled on 3 October 2021 at the National Memorial Arboretum.





Remarkably, in January 2015 Hong Kong local history enthusiast Dave Willott was using a metal detector to look for war relics in a ravine beside what is now called Tai Tam Reservoir Road but which back in December 1941 was known as Stanley Gap Road. The ravine had a number of trenches and dug outs, so it was probably a section or platoon position who were responsible for manning a nearby road block on Stanley Gap Road.

In this ravine beside the road Dave came across a number of buttons, shoulder flashes, bits of military webbing, buckles, ammunition and even what was left of a military boot. The shoulder flashes belonged to different units like 7th Rajput Regiment and one was from HKVDC. However the most exciting find was an ID bracelet belonging to a British war time Naval Rating.

The initials Q.O. on the ID bracelet signify "Qualified in Ordnance work" and indicate that John Siddans was in the Gunnery Branch of the Royal Navy.

On his website, author and historian Philip Cracknell's further detailed research shows that "Jackie" survived the fighting and he survived incarceration in appalling conditions in Japanese Prisoner of War Camps at North Point and Sham Shui Po. In late September 1942, he was shipped with other POWs to Japan to work as slave labourers in factories, ports and coal mines.

The Japanese freighter Lisbon Maru, in which he was traveling was torpedoed by an American submarine not realising that it was carrying British POWs. The POWs had been battened down in the holds but those from one hold were able to escape and release others. However many were unable to get out in time and drowned whilst others were machine gunned in the water by the Japanese escort vessels. Later they must have been ordered to start picking up survivors.

Tony Banham who wrote "The Sinking of the Lisbon Maru" (2006) has seen records which confirm that Jackie must have got away from the sinking ship and was picked up by a Japanese escort vessel but died on the way to Shanghai. The survivors were left on the upper decks of the escort vessels with little or no clothing, no blankets were provided and little or no food and drink. Jackie died of exposure and his body was thrown over the side with others who died after being picked up.

Philip Cracknell adds that he found a reference to John Siddans, in a book called "Prisoner of the Rising Sun" (2009) by Stanley Wort who served as a Royal Navy Rating in Hong Kong during WW2.

On my second day aboard HMS Tamar I went for a shower. There were banks of shower heads situated in a spacious area on the lower deck of the forecastle. As there was no air-conditioning aboard they were well used. When I arrived with my sponge bag and took out a piece of Lifebuoy Carbolic Soap which I had always used in England, an old (at least he seemed old to me at the time for he must have been at least forty) three-badge AB named Jackie Siddans shouted, 'Don't use that stuff, it will take your skin off. Here, catch, borrow this'. What he threw me was a tablet of pink Camay toilet soap popular among ladies at home. For a while I wondered what kind of outfit I had joined. Two weeks later when I had my first experience of prickly heat I realised that the old sailor's action was kindly meant and when I went ashore I bought myself some pink Camay.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 1945

> ROLL OF HONOUR
>
> **SIDDANS:-** Treasured memories of my dear husband Jack, Royal Navy, previously reported prisoner of war in Hong Kong, later reported missing, now known to have died on way to Nippon, presumably in Japanese vessel "Lisbon Maru" on October 4th 1942 and was buried at sea the same day. In the garden of memories we meet every day.
>
> Florrie.

https://battleforhongkong.blogspot.com/2015/03/able-seaman-john-jack-siddans.html

Lieutenant
STEPHEN PAUL SUTTON



Royal Artillery
Died 17 June 1943
Commemorated at
BROOKWOOD 1939-1945 MEMORIAL

On 13 May 1943 Axis forces in Tunisia surrendered, ending the North African Campaign and opening the way for the Allied Invasion of Sicily. SS Yoma was transferred to the Mediterranean, and on 17 May she set sail from Gibraltar to and from Alexandria.



Then on 8 June she again left Gibraltar for Alexandria, as part of Convoy GTX 2. She called at Sfax in Tunisia and Tripoli in Libya, leaving the latter on 16 June. She left Tripoli carrying 134 officers and 994 other ranks of the British Army and 22 officers and 643 ratings of the Free French Naval Forces. Many of the British troops were Royal Engineers, who were going to Alexandria to be kitted out and were then to operate port facilities for the Sicilian campaign.

On the morning of 17 June the convoy was northwest of the port of Derna, Libya. At 0733 hours many of the men were below decks having breakfast when German submarine U-81 commanded by Oberleutnant zur See Johann-Otto Krieg fired two torpedoes.

Accounts differ as to whether Yoma was hit by one or both torpedoes but it resulted in her starting to sink within five minutes. As men scrambled for safety, the ladders on No. 2 mess deck collapsed, trapping many men below decks. Yoma settled rapidly by her stern and was shrouded by escaping steam and clouds of coal dust. Her Master, George Patterson ordered "abandon ship". One of the crew, Chief Officer Olding, was among those who made for their boat stations. Olding and his lifeboat crew succeeded in releasing their boat so that it floated as the ship went down. The ship sank stern first, and as she did her bow rose more steeply. Olding described:

"...by this time the Yoma was well down by the stern and the next thing I knew she sank under my feet and I found myself in the water... as the boat rose I saw a lot of men on the foc'sle head: they would not jump into the water,... as the bow lifted a number of them lost their footing and fell onto the bridge, many others being dragged under by the ship."

484 people were killed: Captain Patterson, 29 crew members, three DEMS gunners and 451 military personnel. Because of the danger from enemy submarines Convoy GTX 2 continued on its way. However, a rescue operation was undertaken by five Navy ships. Between them they rescued 130 crew members, five DEMS gunners and 1,342 military personnel. Sadly these did not include Stephen Sutton.

Most of the 484 people killed in Yoma's sinking have no known grave. The Brookwood Memorial in Surrey, the largest WW2 memorial in Britain, lists those who were UK or Commonwealth military personnel. The Second World War part of the Tower Hill Memorial in the City of London also lists those who were members of Yoma's Merchant Navy crew.

Alderley & Wilmslow Advertiser - Friday 29 October 1943

(R.A. is Royal Artillery and the BNAF was British North African Force).

R.A. Officer Believed Lost at Sea

Lieut S.P. SUTTON

Missing since June. Lieut. Stephen Paul Sutton, RA, son of Mr and Mrs G Sutton, Meadowlands, Alderley Edge is believed to have been drowned in the Mediterranean when the vessel in which he was travelling was sunk by enemy action.

A message received indicates that when the vessel was struck he went below to collect his men, but the vessel soon went down and he was never seen again.

Lieutenant Sutton, who was 31 years of age, volunteered for service at the outbreak of war, and was called up in November 1939. He was married in May 1941 and joined the BNAF in November last year and served in North Africa until June, when he was promoted to the rank of staff captain. When he lost his life, he was on his way to take up a new appointment in Egypt.

"A very gallant man, and a fine soldier" is a tribute paid by Lieut. Sutton's Brigadier in a letter of sympathy to his wife.

Before joining the Army Lieut. Sutton was a member of the Manchester Stock Exchange. A fine sportsman, he played for the Alderley Edge Cricket Club, and was match secretary for some time. He played hockey with Brooklands and Cheshire Casuals and also got his county cap.

His wife is a section officer in the WAAF with which she has served since the beginning of the war.

https://uboat.net/allies/merchants/ship/2953.html

Sergeant
STEPHEN PRESCOTT
WALLBANKS Military Medal



Durham Light Infantry 8th Bn.
Died 09 September 1944 Age 25 years old
Buried at GEEL (STELEN) CHURCHYARD, Belgium
Husband of Mary Doreen Wallbanks, of Alderley Edge, Cheshire.
IN MEMORY'S GARDEN WE MEET EVERY DAY

Born in Lincolnshire, Stepehn was a plumber before he joined the 8th Battalion Durham Light Infantry (8 DLI)LI. He fought in North Africa, Sicily and in Normandy.

On 10 June 1944 at St. Pierre, he gained the Military Medal when his battalion of the 8 DLI was attacked by three German tanks. Sergeant Wallbanks took a PIAT anti-tank weapon, after the gunner had been killed, and despite machine gun fire and shrapnel fired three shots in quick succession. All missed, but the German tanks withdrew.



A PIAT (Projector, Infantry Anti Tank) in use.

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Three months later at Gheel in Belgium on 9 September 1944, Stephen Wallbanks was killed in action during the crossing of the Albert Bridge of the Gheel Canal under heavy fire. He was 25 years old.. He is buried in in Gheel (Geel) churchyard.

The Battle of the Geel Bridgehead, was a battle between British and German troops near Geel (Gheel) in Belgium. It occurred between 8 and 23 September 1944 and was one of the largest and bloodiest battles to occur during this phase of the war.

On day 2 of the battle, on 9th September, the Durham Light Infantry, supported by 61st Reconnaissance Regiment and the tanks of the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry, pushed forward from the bridgehead towards Geel.

They captured the city the next day despite German resistance and counter-attacks, which cut off part of the regiment and drove them back to the south of Geel. .

Lt-Colonel Brownrigg of 61st Recce recounted what happened:

"Our next real engagement was in the Gheel bridgehead. 'C' Squadron under the command of the Durham Light Infantry Brigade was ordered to go over the smaller of the two bridges and reconnoitre some miles beyond. As they crossed the bridge they came under heavy machine-gun and 20mm fire from close range. All the Squadron Headquarters vehicles were holed, and soon afterwards the bridge was broken. The enemy had been reinforced during the night, and the bridgehead was only 300yds or so deep here, the infantry holding it having been continuously counter-attacked. They were overjoyed to see our armoured cars, which fought their way forward like tanks throughout the day, shooting off all their ammunition. The whole squadron did a great day's work, but the casualties were heavy."



Stephen's medals are part of the DLI Medal Collection

Men joined the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) during World War II for a variety of reasons, but mainly by conscription when civilians were taken on and underwent basic training at Brancepeth Castle and this is probably how a Lincolnshire plumber joined a regiment with connections in the North East.

These conscripted men to the DLI were required to fight in almost every major campaign of World War II, including once the Battle of France was lost, and Dunkirk in 1940 (at which time Stephen was probably still under conscription/enrolment but not involved) but once fully trained he would have been shipped to North Africa where he is reported to have fought in North Africa at Tobruk, Gazala, Mersa Matruh, El Alamein, Mareth, and in Tunisia. In the course of which he worked through promotion to the rank of sergeant.

From North Africa the 6th, 8th, and 9th Battalions of the DLI fought in Sicily in 1943 and were then returned home to prepare for a front line role in D-Day when the 6th, 8th, and 9th Battalions of the DLI landed on Gold Beach in Normandy on June 6, 1944.

https://dlicollection.durham.gov.uk/Medals/FullBiography/6354/Wallbanks,%20Stephen%20Prescott/N

Flt. Sgt. HAROLD JOHN WILKINSON

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 228 Sqdn.
Coastal Command
Died 06 January 1944 Aged 23
Commemorated at RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL





A Short Sunderland Mk III of the type flown by 228 Sqdrn.

Flight Sergeant Harold John WILKINSON was one of eleven crew on Short Sunderland III JM709 of 228 Sqdrn RAF.

They took off from RAF Station, Pembroke Dock South Wales at 05:37 on 6 January 1944, to carry out an anti-submarine patrol in the Bay of Biscay.

The crew was engaged in an anti submarine patrol mission over the Bay of Biscay..

A German report shows that the seaplane was flying in the clouds and when it came out of the cloudy area, it was spotted by the pilot of a Luftwaffe Focke-Wulf Fw.190. It was shot down and crashed some 190 km west of Brest, France. All 11 occupants were killed.

During combat with Sunderland JM709 of 228Sqnn, Lt. Erich Stain was shot down and killed in his Fw190 G-3 Wrk.Nr 160819. However, the Sunderland was then shot down.

The Short Sunderland Mark III was a flying boat used by No. 228 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF) during World War II:

The Mark III had a top speed of 205 miles per hour, a range of 3,000 miles, and a service ceiling of 17,200 feet. It was armed with, and could carry a bomb load of 4,950 pounds. By the start of World War Two in September 1939 three squadrons had been equipped with the Sunderlands. Seven hundred and forty-nine Sunderlands were built, and they served throughout the war.

The Sunderland's design was so good that it remained in front line service for over twenty years. It was also the last flying-boat operated by the Royal Air Force. It was the first British flying boat to have power-operated gun turrets as part of its defensive armament. This strong protective armament including two 0.50-inch machine guns and eleven 0.303-inch machine guns resulted in the Germans giving it the nickname 'Flying Porcupine'.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 14th January 1944:

Flight Sergeant of Coastal Command Missing

News has been received that Flight Sergeant Harold John Wilkinson, 23, son of Mr Charles Wilkinson of Chapel Road, Alderley Edge is missing in operations with Coastal Command

Educated at Alderley Edge Council School, he attended St Philip's Sunday School. He became a motor mechanic with Mr W Swann, and was employed by Messrs. Edington and Sons, when, before the outbreak of war in 1939 he decided to join the RAF. He qualified as Flight Sergeant Engineer and as such made many operational flights with Bomber Command before he transferred to Coastal Command a couple of years ago. He has seen a good deal of service on Atlantic patrol and in U-Boat hunts over the Bay of Biscay.

He was mattied last May and was home on leave shortly before Christmas. He is very popular with a wide circle of friends in Alderley Edge

Royal Air Force Pembroke Dock, or more simply RAF Pembroke Dock, was a Royal Air Force Seaplane and Flying boat station located at Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire, Wales. The Royal Navy contingent left in 1926 with the Royal Air Force occupying the site from 1 January 1930.

During the initial stages of the Second World War, it became the home of two Dutch flying boats and their squadron personnel as well as hosting RAF, Fleet Air Arm, Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force and United States naval aircrews.

It became the largest Flying Boat station in the world and at one point during the Second World War it was host to 99 aircraft.



Choppy Seas



RAF Pembroke Dock

https://www.rafcommands.com/database/awards/details.php?qnum=652373&qname=WILKINSON
https://asn.flightsafety.org/asndb/340412
https://www.1wags.org.au/information/featured-stories/flight-lieutenant-kenneth-littlejohn-dowling---400554/

Sergeant GEOFFREY EDWARD LEADBETTER

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
34 (S.A.A.F.) Sqdn.
Died 22 November 1944
Buried or commemorated at
BUDAPEST WAR CEMETERY, Hungary



34 Squadron was a heavy bomber squadron of the South African Air Force during World War II. It was formed in Egypt on 14 April 1944 and operated from Egypt and Italy until the end of the war. It was equipped with Consolidated Vultee B-24 Liberator IVs.



A Liberator of 34 Squadron SAAF

The Consolidated B-24 Liberator was an American heavy bomber. The high wing gave a high cruise speed, long range and the ability to carry a heavy bomb load. In comparison with its contemporaries, the B-24 was relatively difficult to fly and had poor low-speed performance and was less robust than the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress but it was the most produced multi engine aircraft of the War.

As used by Geoffrey's squadron served in several Allied air forces and navies the B-24 proved useful in long range bombing and supply operations and anti-submarine roles.

In July 1944, 34 squadron moved from Egypt to Foggia, Italy and formed part of No. 2 Wing (SAAF) along with 31 Squadron SAAF. The squadron's first operation was on the 21st of July. It operated over northern Italy, the Balkans, Austria and Southern France, as well as mine-laying operations along the Danube. The squadron was also involved in re-supply air drops to partisans in Yugoslavia (Operation Flotsam) as well as air supply drops to the defenders in the Warsaw uprising of August–September 1944.

The flights to Warsaw from Italy, were a desperate attempt to sustain the ill-fated uprising by Polish Resistance forces.

Between August 13th and October 16th 1944, forty-one Liberators from 31 and 34 Squadrons that would have included Geoffrey's crew took off from their base in Foggia, loaded with supplies for the

Polish insurgents. They had to fly through some of the most heavily defended night-fighter spots of Europe to reach the burning Polish capital. Warsaw was in flames as the Liberators came in through a barrage of steel. Unable to change course or altitude, they were sitting ducks for the German gun crews who fired at them with everything they had. Two minutes into the run-in, the Liberators had to go down to rooftop level, the friendly darkness banished by searchlights and blazing buildings. Then fly through a heavy curtain of merciless flak to reach the dropping zones for the badly-needed supplies they carried. Of the 41 SAAF Liberators that set out on the 1800 mile nonstop flight to Warsaw and back, eleven aircraft did not return. Eighty three airmen were lost on these missions of mercy.

A month later on 22 Nov 1944 Liberator B.VI EW235 took off from Foggia with 34 Sqdn SAAF and Geoffrey as Flight Engineer but he and his crew failed to return from the bombing mission to the railway marshalling yards at Szombathely, Hungary where they met heavy flak.

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https://www.saairforce.co.za/reviews/34/the-men-who-went-to-warsaw

Civilian
CONSTABLE FRANK MARSHALL



Cheshire Constabulary
Died 08 April 1941 Age 24 years old

Buried at CREWE, MUNICIPAL Cemetery

Son of Frank and Caroline Marshall, of 101 Knutsford Road, Wilmslow. Died at Martin Street.

Frank Marshall was appointed to Cheshire Constabulary as a Constable on August 29, 1938.

During the Second World War, Crewe was not only a strategically important railway junction for ferrying vital war materials and service personnel all over the country, but home to the Rolls-Royce aero-engine production factory who were also heavily engaged in producing important items for the war effort.

The worst bombing in Crewe during World War II occurred on the evening of April 7 and morning of April 8, 1941, and was concentrated on Martin Street and Earle Street. Low-flying German raiders bombarded a number of terraced streets destroying row upon row of houses adjacent to the railway yards.



The Martin Street bomb shelter where Frank was killed.



Bomb damage on the same night in the adjacent railyards.

There were a total of 16 persons killed in Crewe on the night some of whom were sheltering in an surface air raid shelter in Martin Street, the debris of which is shown in the photo.

The Crewe Chronicle April 12th 1941

RAID DAMAGE AND CASUALTIES

INCIDENTS IN NORTH-WEST TOWN

A stick of bombs, dropped on one street, demolished houses and damaged others as far away as half a mile. One bomb dropped on a piece of waste ground making a large crater.

A motor-car standing near by was not damaged, but a surface shelter and houses were wrecked. In the surface shelter were a policeman and one or two people, and they were among the casualties. Another bomb hit houses adjoining as church. They were razed to the ground, and the occupants buried in the debris, but the church, beyond a few broken widows, escaped damage and afforded shelter to those who had to leave their homes.

Some distance away a bomb dropped in the centre of a row of dwellings and whis was where most of the casualties occurred. A member of the local authority, who was on duty as a warden in the locality, heard that his brother, sister in law and nephew had been killed. He continued his work as a member of the rescue party.

Earlier in the evening the raiders dropped bombs in the same locality. One man was killed and one or two people seriously injured.



https://cheshirepolicemuseum.org.uk/photo-albums/

CIVILIAN MAY BRANDON

Civilian War Dead
Died 29 November 1940 Age 33 years old
Buried or commemorated at
CHESTER, RURAL DISTRICT
Civilian War Dead and Dean
Nurse



May Brandon is recorded as one of two lives lost to War in 1939-45 at Dean Row Unitarian Chapel, Dean Row, Wilmslow. She was a nurse at Barrowmore Tuberculosis Sanatorium and Hospital near Chester when she was killed.





The barrack like set up of chalet's and workshops of Barrowmore Hall set up in the 1920's as a long stay TB Hospital.

In the early hours of the 29th November 1940, Chester was subject to a major German air raid with over 200 bombs hitting the city. The raiders dropped a mix of parachute land mines and incendiaries.

One of the raiders may have sighted the extensive complex of huts and buildings at Barrowmore Hall and targeted a parachute land mine on the estate.

After the parachute opened, the mine would descend at around 40 miles per hour When it came down on land, a clockwork mechanism would detonate the mine 25 seconds after impact. The design was intended to be sure that the massive bomb did not bury itself deep in the earth – but would explode with maximum horizontal blast effect.



A German parachute mine

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When the 500kg bomb blew up at Barrowmore, 18 patients and two staff lost their lives. It also badly damaged the buildings and the main Sanatorium was damaged beyond repair.

The Chester Chronicle of November 30th 1940 made the following report whilst being sure not to reveal any detailed geographic information for censorship reasons.

A LITTER OF BROKEN GLASS
NORTH WEST TOWN'S NIGHT VISITATION
LITTLE MATERIAL DAMAGE
PATIENTS RESCUED FROM COUNTRY HOSPITAL

Widely scattered districts in the North West experienced a particularly severe raid during last (Thursday) night. Waves of enemy planes in twos and threes kept up the attack for a considerable time. But having regard to the intensity of the attack, casualties were remarkably few and no damage was done to military objectives.

The raiders began by dropping incendiary bombs and followed these with high explosives. People who were out during the raid estimate that about 150 planes took part. The most serious damage was at a sanatorium where numerous persons were trapped as a result of a direct hit. It is feared that there are casualties, some being fatal.

.....

ATTACK ON A HOSPITAL
PATIENTS TRAPPED IN DEBRIS

As the result of last (Thursday) night's raids in the North West what was a country mansion and more recently a hospital is badly damaged. In the early hours the enemy located what they must have considered a military objective, as they scored a direct hit on the main hall of the hospital. Trapped in the debris were patients and some members of the staff are feared to be with them.

When I travelled along the winding lanes long before dawn to reach what was once a happy convalescent home (writes a reporter) I was joined by rescue and salvage workers, gentry and agricultural workers all hurrying on their mission of mercy to help extricate the unfortunate victims. Until we reached the drive there was no indication of the scene of desolation and destruction – it was hidden from the outside world by stately trees. An ambulance and a fire engine came tearing out of the drive, making for the nearest town.

INSTANT RESPONSE

Past the drive we swept into a courtyard and there was the mansion. That was only the first view. You would hardly have guessed anything was wrong, but around the corner AFS and salvage workers worked feveriishly like ants in the glare of hurricane lamps, digging, hacking and sawing among the wreckage. One team seemed to be working faster than the rest and soon the reason was apparent. A chorus went up from them – "Doctor and ambulance please!!" There was an instant response. A medical man who had been waiting and watching for the call was soon among the rescue party. He was quickly at work administering injections and giving advice for the care of the patients until they reached hospital.

The second victim to be extricated was a member of the nursing staff, and she was taken away on a stretcher accompanied by cries of "Stick it, Mary!"

Despite the tragedy around them, members of the staff could still raise a laugh. Pointing to a number of chalets blown to matchwood by the blast, one of them said, "We nick named that "Wood Street!" It has lived up to its christening. So has Tin Pan Alley""

STAIRCASE CRUMBLED

Two members of the staff, Eric Lancashire and Cyril Bell, told me how they were carrying a patient downstairs when the staircase crumbled beneath them after a deafening explosion. "Luckily" they added "we were not injured, although we fell a considerable distance. Our patient was a bad case, but he is still living, and we are thankful we were able to get him out.

In the engineers room the window was blown out. And the ceiling collapsed, but a picture of the Crucifixion remained swinging in the early morning breeze. The staff told of one patient who was known to be on a bad way and whose life had been despaired of. He was among the first batch to be rescued"

Early on the scene directing operations was the Chief Constable of the county. Pointing to the scene of desolation, he simply asked, "Can you imagine a more pitiful target? All of us have been very moved by the scene and I know that sympathy will be expressed for the victims. The Chief Medical officer of the Hospital and his two assistants kept an unceasing vigil for more of the rescued.

A SHEET LADDER

There were no casualties among the inmates of the Colony or their families and the single men who live in a hostel, also escaped. Their abodes, however, suffered severely from the blast, and the windows of the pavilion were blown in. To rescue some of the wounded someone suggested a "sheet-ladder" which was quickly improvised, and was the means of saving many patients from long exposure. One member of the staff produced a case which he managed to rescue from his room. It contained 27 medicinal bottles and not one of them was even cracked. In the grounds, beds and valuable pieces of furniture were found in fragments. Some of the residents declared that when the bombs were dropping they could have sworn they were some distance away. They were disillusioned by the terrific explosion and the thunderclap caused by falling masonry, which, it is also stated, could be heard several miles away.

It is interesting to note that the need for TB sanatoria must have remained a major requirement for public health even during the war years – and despite all the difficulties of wartime – the sanatorium at Barrowmore was rebuilt at great speed and by May 1944 the Chester Chronicle reported:

New Barrowmore Sanatorium - "1940s Blitz Recalled"

The Ministry of Health, gave every possible help and encouragement in the building of a new Sanatorium. The first part of this was opened in 1943 with capacity to take 50 patients. In addition there were an additional 50 Chalets for the convalescent patients.

https://www.barrowmore.co.uk/about-us/history-of-barrowmore/

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Sergeant JOHN DOUGLAS BARBER

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 44 Sqdn (Rhodesia).
Died 22 June 1944 Age 19 years old
Buried at LANKLAAR COMMUNAL CEMETERY, Belgium
Son of Harry and Elizabeth Barber, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.

John Douglas Barber is one of only two names remembered from the Second World War on a memorial plaque at Dean Row Chapel, Wilmslow. His other memorial is his Commonwealth War Graves Commission grave stone in Belgium.

In February 1939 – just before war was declared 44 Squadron was equipped with the Handley Page Hampden, a twin engined medium bomber with which they started the War –all a long time before John Douglas Barber would have joined the RAF. This aircraft was flown by the Squadron for the first two years of combat operations. At the outbreak of war, most of the crews were pre-war regulars. Few would survive to see the end of the war in Europe and were regularly replaced by new recruits such as John – who probably only joined the RAF on or around his 18th birthday in 1942 just a year before he was lost.

On 16 September 1941 the crews of 44 Squadron caught their first sight of the future when the prototype Lancaster was rolled out in front of them. The Squadron was then chosen as the very first recipient of the new four-engined bomber. Accordingly, on Christmas Eve 1941 the first three Lancasters were delivered to their base at the time, RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire. After a brief period of conversion training the Squadron flew its first operational sortie on the night of 3/4th March 1942 when four Lancasters were tasked with mine-laying in the Heligoland Bight.



Three Lancasters of 44 Squadron. Sqdn Code: K-M

Soon after, in May 1943 the Squadron moved to nearby RAF Dunholme Lodge from their comfortable peacetime airfield at Waddington, on a "temporary" basis, while runways there were tarmaced, and were no doubt aghast at the hastily built buildings and Nissen Huts which made up the airfield.

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As always seemed to happen, the temporary move proved pretty much permanent and continued here for all the time that John was with the squadron.

John Barber's Lancaster III ND552 took off at 22.58 on 21st June 1944 from Dunholme Lodge with the following crew

Sergeant John Douglas BARBER Flight Engineer
Flying Officer Neil Joseph SMITH Pilot
Flying Officer Neil Joseph Smith, Royal Australian Air Force, age 22.
Sergeant (W.Op./Air Gnr.) Laurence Herbert Bozier,
Sergeant (Air Gnr.) Raymond William Brett,
Flying Officer (Nav.) Thomas Sawers Calder,
Flight Sergeant (Air Bomber) Michael William Beevor Steele,.

They left for a bombing raid on the synthetic oil plant at Wesseling (just South of Cologne) in Germany. The aircraft was part of a formation of 133 Lancasters and 6 Mosquitos. Sadly, 37 aircraft were lost during this raid, a very high loss rate of over one quarter and one of the highest during the whole war.

One of the Lancasters lost that night was John's Lancaster which was attacked by German night fighters. It crashed in a coal mine site between the villages of Eisden (Limburg) and Lanklaar in Belgium.

All crew members lost their lives and are now buried together in the Lanklaar cemetery with two other RAF casualties. They are also all remembered on a monument on the site of their airbase at Dunholme Lodge.


Lanklaar Belgium


Dunham Lodge Lincolnshire

https://www.tracesofwar.com/sights/20543/Commonwealth-War-Graves-Lanklaar.htm
https://www.memorialflightclub.com/blog/44-squadron-lancasters-%E2%80%93-september-1942
https://44sqn.com/history-44-sqn/

WILMSLOW WATER LANE METHODIST CHURCH MEMORIAL



Wilmslow Methodist Church today**.**



The Wesleyan Chapel as it was known to the people named here.



The commemorative plaque at Water Lane Methodist Church (formerly Wesleyan Chapel).

This was re-installed and re-dedicated in the new-build and records two names that are duplicated on the Styal War Memorial and one that appears on the main Memorial in the Remembrance garden on Chancel Lane.

The “duplicated” names are P J Halliday, J L Halliday and D A Smithies.

Consequently, the details of only two victims from 1939-1945 are recorded in this part of the paper against this memorial.

CAPTAIN JAMES WOODROOFE GUY FLETCHER



Royal Artillery: 64 (The Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry) Anti-Tank Regt.
Died 12 May 1944 Age 30 years old
Buried at SALERNO WAR CEMETERY
of Edward Harris Fletcher and Marion Philippa Fletcher, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
Personal Inscription PER MORTEM AD VITAM. BELOVED YOUNGER SON OF E.H. AND M.P. FLETCHER WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE
Commemorated Wilmslow Methodist Church & Oakham School

James attended Oakham School between 1925 and 1930 marked by a number of school prizes and awards over the years he was there. As the newspaper report of his loss tells, after school, he studied Social Sciences in Liverpool. He worked in Banking. He played rugby for Wilmslow RUFC. When the war broke out, he joined the Royal Artillery, 64 Anti-Tank Regiment (The Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry). After being commissioned he rose to become Captain. James was also a regular player and member at Wilmslow Rugby Club.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser June 2nd 1944:

ACCIDENTALLY KILLED IN ITALY

Captain JGW Fletcher

Captain JGW Fletcher, accidentally killed in Italy was the younger son of Mr and Mrs EHE Fletcher of Lindow House, Wilmslow, and a grandson of the late Mr AJ Fletcher, the first General Manager of the Union Bank of Manchester Ltd and a well-known Wilmslow resident.

A native of Wilmslow, Capt Fletcher was educated at Oakham School, Rutland. He entered the service of Barclay's Bank Ltd in their Manchester Trustee branch, but relinquished this appointment in order to further his studies and to obtain practical experience in social service work. He studied social science at Liverpool University and in his third year was President of the Guild of Undergraduates. From there he undertook work on demolition and at sea on a trawler. Then he served as a probation officer in Liverpool and the Metropolitan district. During all this time he retained membership of the International Students Union and travelled widely, studying social service and conditions in Sweden and France.

The experience he thus obtained was unique and enabled him to apply mature consideration to the subject. When discussing this widely controversial subject with him once could not help but feel that here was a young man with a keen desire to add his quota towards the solving of a great problem.

On the outbreak of war he put all this on one side, because he felt just as keenly as he felt about social service that the war had first to be won. He joined the Royal Artillery, qualified for a commission and served in the North African landing. Temporarily knocked out on the first day of the landing, he later re-joined his unit and saw further service in North Africa and then in Italy.



A 17-pdr anti-tank gun of the British 64th Anti-Tank Regiment (Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry) in Tunisia - February 20, 1943.

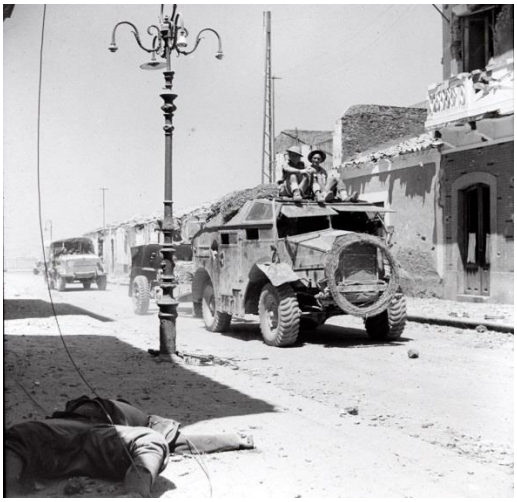
The 64th (Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery was mobilised in September 1939 and the regiment remained in the United Kingdom until July 1942 when it became an integral part of the newly created 78th "Battleaxe" Infantry Division.

The 78th was formed specifically for “Operation Torch”, the Allied invasion of French North Africa, from regular British Army units and landed at Algiers in November 1942 where James is reported as being knocked unconscious on the first day of landing.

Thereafter it continued to fight in the Tunisia Campaign, then in the Allied invasion of Sicily, up the length of Italy during the Italian Campaign. ,

Notable engagements included in Tunisia Longstop Hill, in Sicily the Battle of Centuripe and, while fighting in the Italian Campaign, the assaults on the Viktor Line (Battle of Termoli), the Barbara Line and the River Sangro (Gustav Line) as well as the Battle of Monte Cassino at the time of James’ fatal accident.

The 17-pdr or “Ordnance Quick-Firing 17-pounder” was a 3” / 76.2mm anti-tank gun which started development in late 1940 by the British Military as they saw a need for a more powerful anti-tank gun with the increasing armour of German tanks.



A Quad tractor of 64th Anti-Tank Regiment tows an anti-tank gun through the town of Adrano, August 1943

A little further information about James is recorded in his school records.

J. W. G. Fletcher, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Fletcher, of Wilmslow, Cheshire, was at Wharflands from 1925 to 1930 when he joined the Trustee Dept. of Barclay's Bank. Five years later he took a three-year course in Social Science at Liverpool University, being President of the League of Undergraduates in his last year. He then became a Probation Officer in the Metropolitan District and volunteered for service in the Army when war broke out. He landed in N. Africa as a Lieutenant, R.A. and was wounded almost immediately near Algiers. After leaving hospital, he served on the 78th Divisional Staff. He later rejoined his battery of an Anti-Tank regiment and was killed in Italy in May, 1944.

Details of the accident that befell Capt. James Fletcher have not yet been found. Whilst it coincided with the Allied attack on Monte Cassino – it is not clear if this is where James was situated.

https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1999-03-88-38
https://oakham-rutland.libguides.com/c.php?g=675068&p=4865843

PILOT OFFICER STANLEY OWEN

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 622 Sqdn.
Died 18 November 1943 Age 20 years old
Buried BUSSY-LE-CHATEAU CHURCHYARD
Son of Alfred and Hilda May Owen, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

No 622 Squadron was formed on 10 August 1943 at the famous RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk from C Flight of No.15 Squadron. Equipped with Stirlings, it began operations on the same night as forming, converting to Lancasters in December. It formed part of the main force of Bomber Command and took part in attacks on German industry until the end of the war.

Having taken off at just after 5.00 pm and joining 395 other aircraft, 622 Squadron lost two Short's Stirling four engine bombers during operations to bomb Mannheim on18th/19th November 1943 3 moths after their delivery to the Squadron. Seven other Stirlings of other squadrons also failed to return from the raid that night.

One of these was Stirling III EJ113 "Q" for Queenie crewed by Sgt GH Austin, Sgt DR Comber, Flt SGt AM Kearney – (Pilot) Sgt ML Nesvold, **Flt Sgt S Owen, (Wireless Operator),** Sgt L Pezaro, Flt Sgt RJ Thomson, and F/O S Willetts.

It was later reported in German Luftwaffe records that Flt Sgt. S. Owen's plane was lost and all his crew were killed in action.. Their bomber was claimed by Ofw. Reinhard Kollak, as shot down NE of Chalons-sur-Marne at 21:40 hrs.

The Manchester Evening News for 23rd November 1943 reads:

> **OWEN** – Flight Sergeant Pilot **STANLEY** only son of Mr and Mrs A Owen, Gravel Lane, Wilmslow reported missing from recent operations.

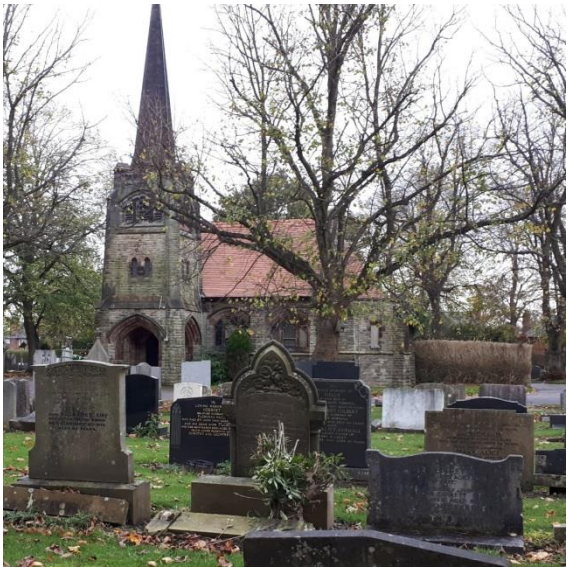


The Short Stirling was a British four-engined heavy bomber of the Second World War. It has the distinction of being the first four-engined bomber to be introduced into service with the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the war.

The Stirling had a relatively brief operational career as a bomber before being relegated to second-line duties from late 1943, due to the increasing availability of the more capable Halifax and Lancaster.

https://www.themildenhallregister.co.uk/the-squadrons/622-squadron/
https://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/royalairforce/sqdview.php?pid=734
https://ww2history.eu/the-history/air-force-operations/airplanes-allies-and-axis-lost/stirling/17420-EJ1131943-11-19.html
https://aircrewremembered.com/AlliedLossesIncidents/?q=EJ113
https://www.rafcommands.com/database/wardead/details.php?qnum=100560

Wilmslow Municipal Cemetery:



The Cemetery is on Manchester Road Wilmslow.

The Cemetery holds 23 Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorials, thirteen of which relate to the period of the Second World War.

These are all actual interments of remains and therefore all are for servicemen who died on service within this country or whose bodies were returned here.

Their stories are often harder to research because their deaths may not be possible to link to particular war events. Several reports are therefore more brief than many in this report.

Several are also recorded on the Wilmslow, St Bartholomew's or other memorials, so their stories are to be found in those sections of this report. They are

Lt Col H Bridge, (Handforth), Sgt D Broadhurst (St Barts), Sgt K Johnson (St Barts), Sig. P Naylor (St Bart's), Sgt. S Booth (St Barts)

The remaining names at the Wilmslow Cemetery are:

Flying Officer THW Baker
AB R Bracegirdle
Lieut JDA Buisson
L/C A Connolly
F/Sgt R Bowdon Hill
A/C2 LJ Hunns
Sig V Potts
A/C2 WH Barlow

Flying Officer THOMAS HENRY WILLIAM BAKER



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 75 Sqdn.
Died 11 August 1942 Age 26 years old
Buried at WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Son of Matthew Botham Baker and Edith May Baker, husband of Elizabeth Montgomery Baker, of Cheadle.
I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD; AND, BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOR EVERMORE REV.I.18

On the 12th of August 1942 nine aircraft of 75(New Zealand) Squadron RAF were detailed to attack the city of Mainz near Frankfurt from RAF Feltwell, Norfolk. Each carried a bomb load of 4000lb made up of 1000lb, 500lb and incendiaries. F/O Thomas Henry William Baker, RAFVR 107286 – was listed as second pilot of Wellington X.3646 skippered by Sgt G.E.Bradey.

During the attack, anti-aircraft fire was reported as light and searchlights scarce and ineffective. One fighter was seen by P/O Horne in Wellington B.J.765 as he was crossing the Dutch Coast homeward bound but no attack was made. The weather was moderate, being cloudy near target.

However, three aircraft failed to return from the raid , Wellington B.J.767 captained by F/O Dobbin, and Wellington B.J.625, flown by Sgt Barclay.T.S. The third plane was that of Sgt Bradey. During the return from the attack Sgt Bradey was severely wounded in the abdomen by flak over Cologne and presumably, as 2nd Pilot, Tom Baker would have taken over.



The aircraft continued on its homeward journey but having crossed the Dutch coast the pilot ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft. The plane finally crashed in the North Sea as a result of damage received. Five of the crew of six, were killed. Four are listed as the pilot George Bradey, Squadron Leader Ronald Ernest Kimber, (Observer), Flight Sergeant Arden Ivan Ellis, (Wireless Operator), and Flight Sergeant Cyril Vincent Green (Front Gunner). These have no known resting place and are remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

Rear Gunner Sgt. J. E. London survived leaving the aeroplane and may have managed to parachute to safety over land – or was picked up from the sea and captured. He spent the remainder of the war as a prisoner.

The body of second pilot Flying Officer Thomas Henry William Baker, was recovered from the sea by Allied shipping and returned home and this explains how his remains now lie in Wilmslow Cemetery . (Memorial shown above).



George Bradey crew's were on their 10th operation with the Squadron but this was only Tom Baker's first operation with them.

He had flown only 3 other missions with 75(NZ) Squadron with a different crew as 2nd Pilot. Thomas had actually only been at RAF Feltwell with the Squadron for 10 days.

75(NZ) Squadron RAF started in 1938 when the New Zealand government ordered 30 Vickers Wellington bombers. In early 1939 air and ground crews arrived in England to train on the new aircraft. The unit was officially known as the New Zealand Flight, based at Harwell.

When war was declared on the 3rd September 1939, the New Zealand government waived its claim to the bombers and put them at the disposal of the Royal Air Force. The New Zealand government requested that a squadron be formed from the New Zealand Flight.

Training continued, also the build up of aircraft and personnel. Many New Zealanders serving in the Royal Air Force volunteered to serve with the unit.

On the 1st of April 1940 the number plate of 75 Squadron, Royal Air Force was transferred to the New Zealand Wellington Flight, creating 75 (New Zealand) Squadron, operating from Feltwell in Norfolk. The squadron operated within 3 Group, Bomber Command until July 1945 and was then transferred to 5 Group.



Aircrew of 75(NZ) Squadron RAF in 1942 in front of one of their Vicker's Wellingtons. Tom Baker not identified although George Bradey is back row centre.(No 19).

https://75nzsquadron.wordpress.com/2015/08/21/wilmslow-cemetery-fo-thomas-henry-william-baker-rafvr-107286/https://www.traffordwardead.co.uk/index.php?sold_id=s%3A18%3A%22181%2Caltrincham_ww2%22%3B&letter=&place=&war=&soldier=Baker

https://aircrewremembered.com/bradey-george-edward-francis.html

Able Seaman RALPH BRACEGIRDLE

Royal Navy H.M.S. Excellent
Died 19 October 1946 Age 21 years old
Buried WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Son of Ralph and Elizabeth Bracegirdle, of Wilmslow.
WE LOVED HIM IN LIFE LET US NOT FORGET HIM IN DEATH

H.M.S. Excellent, also known as Portsmouth Gunnery School or Whale Island was the British Royal Navy's main gunnery training establishment for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser October 25th 1946:

Motor-Cyclists Killed in Crash

COLLIDED WITH CAR

"The evidence as to what actually happened is very scanty indeed" said the deputy coroner (Mr P Ferns) after hearing witnesses at a Wilmslow inquest on Tuesday afternoon describe a collision in Wilmslow Road Handforth on Friday night between a motor cycle and a motor car.

The motor cyclist, Dennis Chadfield (30) a vanman of 41 Chapel Lane, Wilmslow, was killed instantly and his pillion passenger, Ralph Bracegirdle (21) whose home is at 147 Moor lane, Wilmslow, died in Stockport Infirmary on the following day.

Mr Ferns found that in both cases death was accidental. He did not think any blame whatever was to be attached to Mr Stahl, the driver of the motor car involved in the collision and he was satisfied that the car was being driven in a reasonable manner on its proper side of the road.

The deputy coroner expressed his sympathy with the relatives of the dead men, saying it was very sad for them to lose their sons so soon after they were demobilised from the Forces.

Dennis Chadfield, it was stated, had served in the army for six years, four of which were spent overseas. He was demobilised last April and had resumed his duties as a vanman for Messrs. John Williams and Sons of Grove Street. His companion had served in the navy for three years and three months and had been on demobilisation leave for a fortnight.

Kenneth Crossfield, of 41 Greenway Road, Cheadle said that at about 10.00pm on Friday, Chadfield and Bracegirdle entered the Waggon and Horses Hotel, and the former had a mild beer. Witness was talking to them for about a quarter of an hour in the car park before seeing them start off. They had gone 100 to 150yards when he heard a crash.

A LOUD BANG

Charles Riley, of 33 Cambridge Street C on M, Manchester, stated he was driving his motor car along Wilmslow Road in the direction of Cheadle behind another car. A flash of light came from the car in front and following a loud bang a motor cycle flashed past him going towards Wilmslow. The car in front pulled up and he followed suit. He found the young men lying on the ground.

Ronald Mullender, of Cheadle Road, Cheadle and Walter Dunlop of St David's Road, Cheadle, who were riding bicycles at the time of the accident, heard the crash. Dunlop said the crash occurred to their rear and two cars passed them almost at the same time.

The driver of the motor car, Frank Jackson Stahl of 127 Trafford Road, Salford, told the deputy coroner he did not wish to make a statement.

FELT A BUMP

Constable Seed, of Handforth read a statement which Stahl made to him. In this he said he was driving his car at about 25 miles an hour on his correct side of the road. Going round a bend, he saw a bright headlight approaching him at a fast speed. He applied his foot brake and swerved over to his near side. He felt a bump on his off-side. There were two men on the motorcycle and after the collision the motor cycle appeared to swerve to the left. He got out of his car by the nearside door as the offside door was jammed, and about twenty yards down the road he saw two men lying in the roadway beside the motor cycle.

Dr Dickson said Chadfield died from a fracture of the skull and laceration of the brain, and Bracegirdle from a compound fracture of the pelvis and the right femur. There was no sign of alcohol having been taken to excess.

Mr G Shorrock, on behalf of Mr Stahl, joined with the deputy coroner in his expression of sympathy with the relatives, and Superintendent Taylor, representing the police, associated himself with the remarks. Mr N Birrell was present on behalf of the relatives of Ralph Bracegirdle.

High Mass was held for Mr Ralph Bracegirdle in St Teresa's Catholic Church on Wednesday morning by the Rev. Father Hughes, who also conducted the interment at Wilmslow Cemetery during the afternoon.

Lieutenant
JACQUES DONALD BUISSON

Royal Army Ordnance Corps
Died 19 January 1945
Buried at WILMSLOW CEMETERY



Lieutenant Jacques Donald Alphouse Buisson, RAOC, of Cheshire. Died January 1945 at the age of 32 in a motor accident between Bletchley and Little Brickhill on Watting Street. Stationed at Bletchley, he had been living at 18 Vicarage Road and the commanding officer of the unit, Major Saxon, was among the four other occupants of the vehicle who were injured.

Whilst there is no direct evidence we might speculate that Jacques name may suggest that he was fluent in French – and this might explain his posting to the famous (then top secret) code breaking facility at Bletchley Park.

Whilst the history and achievements of Bletchley Park are now well recorded – it is interesting to note that a Wilmslow man was involved amongst the 9,000 people working there by 1945. However, It is just as likely that given the massive expansion of buildings on the site, Jacques, as a junior officer in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps could have been responsible for overseeing building works.

Sadly he did not come home to Wilmslow alive.

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 26th January 1945

OBITUARY

FATALLY INJURED

Wilmslow Officer in Road Collision.

Lieut Jacques Donald Buisson (32) of 18 Beechway, Wilmslow, was fatally injured when the car in which he was a passenger collided with another vehicle in the South of England on Thursday last week. He died in hospital on the following day.

Lieut. Buisson joined the Intelligence Corps in June 1940 and was later transferred to the RAOC. He served in the Middle East for about eight months and was invalided home in October 1943. He was a native of Leeds, where he became a graduate of the University. He came to Wilmslow six years ago. In civil life he represented Messrs. Honeywill and Stein, manufacturing chemists, a branch of the Distillers Company. He belonged to the Prestbury and Upton Golf Club. He is survived by his wife and fiver year old son.

Lieutenant Jacques Donald Alphouse Buisson, RAOC, of Cheshire. Died January 1945 at the age of 32 in a motor accident between Bletchley and Little Brickhill on Watting Street. Stationed at Bletchley, he had been living at 18 Vicarage Road and the commanding officer of the unit, Major Saxon, was among the four other occupants of the vehicle who were injured.

One Thursday evening, during the month a tragic accident occurred when Lieutenant Jacques Donald Alphouse Buisson, a 32 year old officer of the Royal Army Ordnance

Corps, was fatally injured in an accident on the Watling Street, between Bletchley and Little Brickhill. Stationed at Bletchley, he had been living at 18, Vicarage Road, and the Commanding Officer of the unit, Major Saxon, was amongst the four other occupants who were injured. The incident had happened shortly after 7p.m., when the vehicle collided with a lorry being refuelled at a petrol station on the Watling Street, and despite the injured being swiftly taken to Luton and Dunstable hospital, the Lieutenant died early on Friday. His home had been at 18 Beechway, Wilmslow, Cheshire, where he left a young widow.

https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/archive/jt/tw/docs/42.html

https://www.gchq.gov.uk/information/how-codebreakers-helped-fight-battle-britain

Lance Corporal
ANDREW CONNOLLY



Corps of Military Police
Died 13 February 1943 Age 22 years old
Son of Andrew and Hilda Connolly, of Cheadle.

The Corps of Military Police (CMP) was a unit of the British Army that served in World War II. The CMP was responsible for enforcing military law and discipline, guarding prisoners of war, and providing security. Its size increased more than sevenfold during the Second World War.

So far it is not known what Andrew's service record was or how he died and came to be buried in Wilmslow Cemetery. Manchester Evening News 11th February 1944

ROLL OF HONOUR
In Memoriam
CONNOLLY: - In loving memory of L/Cpl ANDREW CONNOLLY (CMP) Killed Feb 13 1943 aged 22 years.
The happiness you gave we cherish for ever. Your loving MAM, DAD and JOAN.

Flight Sergeant RAYMOND
BOWDEN HILL

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 20 March 1946 Age 21 years old
Buried at WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Son of Harold and Martha Parker Hill, of Stretford,
Lancashire.
The Old Hulmeians War Memorial 1939-1945 of William Hulme Grammar School records the loss of Raymond amongst 65 other ex puplis killed in the Second World War.

Raymond Bowdon Hill - was admitted seriously ill to RAF hospital Wilmslow on 30 October, where he died of military tuberculosis (via Jon Heyworth) 1946

Signalman VERNON POTTS



Royal Corps of Signals
Died 20 November 1945 Age 18 years old
Buried WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Son of Frank V. Potts and Harriet E. Potts, of Wilmslow.

The Alderley and Wilmslow advertiser November 23rd 1945

Young Soldier Killed in Road Accident.

Vernon Potts, (18), of 13 Chapel lane, Wilmslow, a soldier home on leave, died in the RAF Hospital on Tuesday from injuries received in a motor cycle accident. The youth was riding the machine on Monday night from Station Road, Styal, into Stanneylands Road when it is thought the motor cycle caught the kerb, and he and his pillion rider, James Roderick Walmsley. Of 87, Manchester Road were thrown off. Potts was taken to the RAF Hospital with head injuries, and Walmsley was taken home suffering from shock and bruises.

Mr FV Potts who identified the body of his son, said that on July 19th the boy joined the Royal Corps of Signals. He came home on leave on Saturday, and was lent a motor cycle by Mr H G Greg, an officer in the Air Training Corps to which his son belonged before joining the Forces. His son had spent the day with Mr Greg.

Dr David Salmon, of Wilmslow RAF station, said the boy had a scalp wound about five inches in length and extending to the bone. There were several signs of shock. Death took place without the boy regaining consciousness.

Witness attributed death to concussion from cerebral injury which was consistent with Potts having been thrown violently from the motor cycle.

The RAF Hospital that both Vernon and Raymond above were served in was part of the Wilmslow RAF Camp.

Aircraftman 2nd Class
WILLIAM HERBERT BARLOW



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 12 December 1943
Buried WILMSLOW CEMETERY
Son of Herbert and Edith Alice Barlow. of Cheadle.

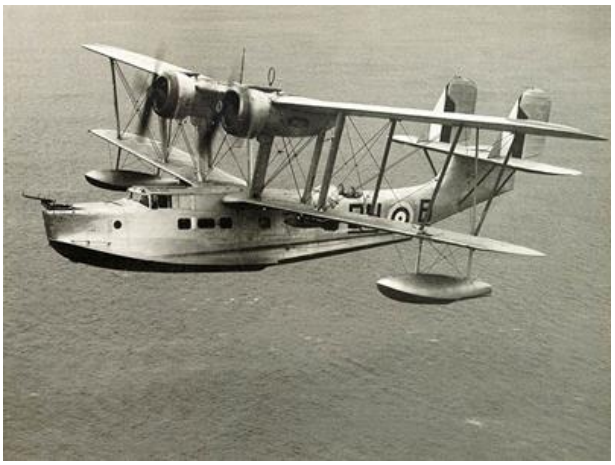
Aircraftman 2nd Class 1689458 William Herbert BARLOW Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve accidentally killed 12th December 1943 age 21. No further information found at the time of writing.

Sergeant
EDWARD THOMAS NAYLOR



Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
Died 12 June 1941
Buried at WILMSLOW CEMETERY

Twenty nine year old Sergeant Edward Thomas NAYLOR was one of two Wireless Operators on board a RAF Stranraer - K7298 on 12th June 1941. The Stranraer was one of several types of seaplane operated by the RAF out of the Operational Training Unit Number 4 based at RAF Wigtown in the Dumfries/Galloway region of southwest Scotland. It was built on the Machars peninsula near the village of Wigtown east of Stranraer and south of Newton Stewart.



The Supermarine Stranraer was a flying boat designed and built by the British Supermarine Aviation Works company at Woolston, Southampton. It was developed during the 1930s on behalf of its principal operator, the Royal Air Force (RAF). It was the RAF's last and fastest biplane flying boat.

During March 1941, the model was withdrawn from frontline service, but continued to be operated in a training capacity until October 1942 including the period in which ET Naylor was involved.
4 OTU as a training unit was formed in 1941 as part of Coastal Command at RAF Stranraer to train aircrew on coastal command flying boats.

Piloted by Sgt William Duncan Oswald the Stranraer took off on June 12th onits training mission. As mentioned elsewhere – all aircrew were volunteers – and once qualified were automatically given the rank of sergeant. Given that many of those on board this day were of lesser rank they were probably in training. The fact that there was a second qualified Wireless Operator on board – Alfred Edmond Stephens – then maybe some of the remaining Aircraftmen were training to be Wireless Operators. They were:

AC1 Antony Albert GRANT,age 19, AC2 Stanley MAVER, age 30, AC2 William Charles MAHIER, age 18	LAC William NEILL, age 22 AC2 Albert Edward BACON, age 31, AC1 Arthur Ernest POCKNELL, age 27

Sadly all nine on board were killed when Stranraer K7298 bounced and then sank on landing. The cause of death for all on board is given as “drowning following flying accident”.

It is assumed that all the bodies were recovered – and this explains how Sgt Naylors remains were buried at Wilmslow Cemetery – although it is not known what his personal connection with the area is.

WILMSLOW UNITED REFORMED CHURCH (CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH)





Two names on the Congregational Church memorial plaque do not appear on the main Wilmslow village memorial now on Chancel Lane.

Kenneth Halstead is included on the St John's Lindow memorial plaque as well as here.

SIGNALMAN DONALD STUART CLELLAND

Royal Corps of Signals 15 L. of C. Sigs.
Died 07 August 1945 Age 21 years old
Buried BARI WAR CEMETERY Italy
Son of James and Mary Clelland, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.
ALWAYS REMEMBERED



In 1940, Donald's regiment was based in Cairo. Following Italy's entry in the war, the regiment's support ranged from providing signals and communications for units in Cyprus, Greece, Macedonia, the Balkans, and Eastern Africa. The regiment provided support to units in these areas after Italy entered the war

The Royal Corps of Signals, also known as the Royal Signals, was a combat support arm of the British Army. Their roles included, operating signals equipment, maintaining communications infrastructure, supporting commanders and their headquarters, conducting electronic warfare against enemy communications

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser 31st August 1945

Soldiers Death in Italy

Signaller Donald Stuart Clelland, younger son of Mr and Mrs J Clelland of Water Lane, Wilmslow, died in Italy on August 7th at the age of 21.

Educated at Wilmslow Modern School, Signaller Clelland was an apprentice joiner with Mr E Henshall of Water Lane before joining the Forces three years ago, during which time he served with the Royal Corps of Signals. Two of these years were sent overseas.

During World War II, multiple military hospitals were stationed in Bari, Italy, including the 45th General Hospital, the 98th British General Hospital, and the 3rd New Zealand General Hospital.

Given that Donald's date of death is 3 months after VE Day in May 1945 – and that the sphere of operations of his regiment is hard to place in Italy – this research assumes that Donald either died of wounds received when operating on the other side of the Adriatic Sea – or he was victim to an accident after hostilities – or both.

Stoker 2Nd Class JAMES GRANGE

Royal Navy H.M.S. Jaguar
Died 26 March 1942 Age 20 years old
Commemorated at PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL
Son of Lennard and Catherine Grange, of Wilmslow, Cheshire.



Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for Friday 17th April 1942:

> **WAR'S TOLL IN WILMSLOW**
>
> **No Hope for Two Naval Men**
>
> Confirmation has been received by relatives in Wilmslow that there is no hope of two Wilmslow naval men being alive. The communication from the Admiralty says the men are missing and presumed killed, adding that there is no hope of them being alive.
>
> Seaman James Grange had his home in Water Lane and before the war was a bricklayer. He had been in the Navy for two years. He was 20 years of age, and was also a native of the village.

James Grange is not recorded on any of the Wilmslow memorials – and the only reference found is in the report above in the Advertiser – alongside the report of the loss of Percy Naylor on the SS Clan Campbell. Why he is not commemorated here is not clear.

James' ship, HMS Jaguar was a J-class destroyer of the Royal Navy. Commissioned in September 1939. She was present at the Dunkirk evacuation the following year, during which she was damaged by dive bombers.



She later served in the Mediterranean and was involved in several actions there. On 26 March 1942 Jaguar and the Greek destroyer Vasilissa Olga were escorting the tanker RFA Slavol when Slavol was torpedoed by the German submarine U-652 and set on fire.

HMS Jaguar came alongside Salvol to rescue the oiler's crew, but the destroyer was then struck by two more torpedoes from U-652. Jaguar broke into three parts and quickly sank off Sidi Barrani, Egypt, with the loss of 3 officers and 190 of her crew. 8 officers and 45 crewmen were rescued by the South African naval whaler Klo.

https://www.naval-history.net/xGM-Chrono-10DD-37J-HMS_Jaguar.htm

Lance Serjeant JOHN MURRAY



King's Own Scottish Borderers 5th Bn.
Died 24 January 1945 Age 30 years old (Believed to be an error in the records)- John was 21 years old.
Buried at SITTARD WAR CEMETERY
Son of William and Mary Murray, of Burnfoot, Roxburghshire.
NOT JUST TODAY BUT EVERY DAY IN SILENCE WE REMEMBER THEE

21st Jan 1945. The enemy counter attacked Waldfeucht on the Dutch – German border, 3 Companies of 5th King's Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB) successfully defended the village and were relieved by 4th KOSB by dark.

On the 14th of January 1945 the British 2nd Army launched operation Blackcock to clear the enemy from the Roer Triangle on the Dutch – German border. It was a hard slog, in inclement weather, to take a series of small towns. Progress was slow and steady with the Germans resisting as best they could, but unable to hold-on in the face of superior British numbers.

On the 21st of January the Germans launched their only serious counter attack of the campaign. Elements of the German 176 Infanterie Division, supported by the 301 Funklenk Abt and 341 StuG Brigade tried to re-take the small town pf Waldfeucht from the 5th Kings own Scottish Borderes (KOSB). A feeble attack was launched early in the morning followed by a much more serious attack later.

The weather was poor, with snow flurries. Max visibility was 20 feet. The snow on the ground was not deep enough to impede movement except on the roads. German civilians in Waldfeucht were believed to have helped the attackers spot and report on the British troops.



A still from a short piece of film of the 4/5/Bn KOSB at Waldfeucht on 24th January 1945 that can be watched at:

https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060014733

Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser February 2nd 1945

Killed in Action on Western Front

Sergt J Murray

Mr and Mrs William Murray of Heawood Hall Cottage, Nether Alderley, received news on Monday that their younger son, Jack, a sergeant in an infantry regiment, had been killed in action in Western Europe in January, two days before his 22nd birthday. Sergt Murray who was educated at Wilmslow Modern School was employed by Mr WT Clegg of Wilmslow before he joined the army three years ago. He was well known and very popular.

His elder brother Archie, a sergeant in the Royal Marines, arrived home on leave on January 9th after three year's service in the Far East. He had never met Jack in uniform and was looking forward to a family re-union.

Mr and Mrs Murray's eldest daughter Betty is married to L/Corporal S Holbrook at present serving in Burma, and their second daughter, Molly, has been in the ATS for two years. Peggy, their youngest daughter has worked on Lancaster bombers for four years.

Flight Sergeant JACK MURRAY

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 156 Sqdn.
Died 02 January 1944
Buried at BERLIN 1939-1945 WAR CEMETERY
Commemorated at Morley Green, Wilmslow.

It is not certain that this record is correct for the J. Murray recorded on the Morley Green memorial. Any further information or confirmation would be welcome. However, all other J Murray's on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website record individuals from Commonwealth countries. This Jack Murray is also mentioned as having family connections in Stockport.

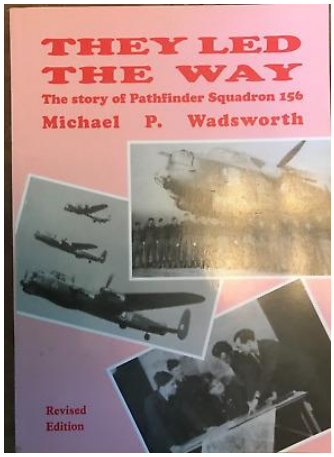
Lancaster III JB476 of Pathfinder 156 Squadron took off at 00.38 on 2nd January 1944 from Warboys in Cambridgeshire alongside 421 other Lancasters from various Squadrons The target was Berlin.

"Pathfinders" were target-marking squadrons in RAF Bomber Command during World War II. They located and marked targets with flares, at which a main bomber force could aim, increasing the accuracy of their bombing.

From 1942, the Pathfinders Force (PFF) led almost every raid over occupied Europe and flew many more on their own. Equipped with the latest technology and marking techniques, the PFF turned a Bomber Command that was on the verge of being dissolved into a force that could ultimately help to bring about the end of the Second World War. These experienced airmen made a huge difference to the effectiveness of Bomber Command. The PFF flew 51,053 sorties of the 360,056 sorties flown by all Bomber Command Groups during the war.

During the early stages of the group's existence the Pathfinders were all airmen who had a considerable number of operations already under their belt. By volunteering for the PFF airmen committed to another 60 operations (later reduced to 45 to encourage more to join). Pathfinder Squadrons were considered by many as an elite force.

The story of Jack's 156 Squadron is told in this book.
ISBN-13. 978-0948929588



On the night of 2nd January 1944 German fighters were directed to the main bomber stream early in their approach and the German controller was not deceived by a Mosquito led diversion attack on Hamburg. However, the night-fighters were not particularly effective over the target and the flak was also restricted in height due to their presence. Berlin was cloud covered and the British bomber sky-marking was not especially accurate. The British bombing was scattered but mainly in the southern suburbs. A contemporary report states that only 21 houses and one industrial building were destroyed and 79 people killed.

On this night, 156 Squadron lost four Lancasters – a high casualty rate even for a Pathfinder squadron and in total 28 of the 421 Lancasters on the raid were lost – nearly 7 %.

Jack Murray's Lancaster was shot down by a Messerschmitt Bf 110 G-4 of Nachtjagdgeschwader 5, (night fighter squadron) flown by either Hauptmann Werner Hoffmann, Kommandeur of the I. Gruppe, or by Hauptmann Walter Borchers, Kommandeur of the III. Gruppe.

Jack's crew was made up of F/O T Docherty, WO LF Gill, P/O CL Gynther, F Sgt W Lumsden, F **Sgt J Murray,** F/O W Raper, F/O WA Robertson. None of them survived.

This was not the first time that Jack Murray had faced danger whilst flying. When he was serving with 25 Operational Training Unit – he flew in a Wellington on the night of 10th / 11th September 1942 on an operational flight to bomb Dusseldorf.

The crew took off from Finningley at 20.10hrs and released their bomb load over the target area from 9000 feet at 22.42hrs. On the return flight they were attacked by enemy aircraft and also fired upon by ground defences which caused minor damage to the port engine. The aircraft landed safely at 01.56hrs at Finningley.

All of those on that flight were later posted to 156 Squadron. Some were killed on 4th April 1943 flying Lancaster W4850 on an operation to Kiel. Another posted to 156 Squadron was made a PoW on 20th December 1942 when Wellington Z1660 failed to return from Duisburg.

Jack Murray was also posted to 156 Squadron and was killed on 1st / 2nd January 1944 when Lancaster JB476 failed to return from his operation to Berlin. He is buried in Berlin War Cemetery.



Queen Elizabeth visiting 156 Squadron at RAF Warboys Feb 1944.

HMS Hood



24th May 1941

On Which Two Wilmslow Men Were Lost

HMS Hood was a battlecruiser of the Royal Navy built during WW1. Despite the appearance of newer and more modern ships, Hood remained the largest warship in the world for 20 years after her commissioning, and her prestige was reflected in her nickname, "The Mighty Hood".

When WW2 was declared, Hood was operating in the area around Iceland, and she spent months hunting for German commerce raiders and blockade runners between Iceland and the Norwegian Sea. In May 1941, nine months into the War, Hood and the battleship Prince of Wales were ordered to intercept the German battleship Bismarck and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen, which were en route to the Atlantic, with orders to attack Allied convoys.

In the midst of what became known as the Battle of the Denmark Strait, HMS Hood exploded, and sank immediately with the loss of all but 3 of her crew of 1,418.

Two subsequent Royal Navy enquiries concluded that Hood's aft magazine had exploded after one of Bismarck's 15-inch shells penetrated the ship's armour from a range of 16,500 yards (9 miles) – or- that an accidental explosion occurred inside one of the ship's gun turrets that reached down into the magazine. The discovery of the ship's wreck in 2001 confirmed the main base for the explosion was the magazines, although the exact reason they detonated is likely to remain unknown and there are other theories about the ship's torpedoes having detonated.

The news of the Hood's sinking started to reach the wider population almost immediately on the 24th May 1941 – the day of the loss -, when the BBC broadcast an Admiralty communique giving a terse description of the battle. The official Admiralty communiqué on the loss, broadcast on the day of the sinking, reported that:

"during the ... action, HMS Hood ... received an unlucky hit in a magazine and blew up."

The public response to the loss of HMS Hood was one of deep shock and despair, as it was considered a symbol of British naval power and its sinking was seen as a major blow to national morale, with many people remembering where they were when they heard the news; some accounts even describe grown men breaking down in tears at the sheer scale of the tragedy. H.M.S. Hood and its loss became the topic of conversation that permeated everything.

Amongst the 1.408 crew lost on the day were two young boys directly linked to Wilmslow. David Snow and Philip Dawson. They are not known to be recorded on any of the Wilmslow monuments but should be remembered here.

Boy 1St Class DAVID JACK SNOW

Royal Navy H.M.S. Hood
Died 24 May 1941 Age 17 years old
Commemorated at PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL – Born Wilmslow.
Son of Henry Thomas Snow and Lilian Snow, of Knutsford, Cheshire.





A Boy 1st Class in the Royal Navy was a young sailor who was training to become a seaman. They were usually between the ages of 16 and 18. Boys 1st Class were trained on larger ships such as cruisers and above. Boys 1st Class were promoted from Boy 2nd Class after showing sufficient proficiency in seamanship

David Jack Snow is recorded as having been born in Wilmslow.

Signal Boy PHILIP JOHN DAWSON

Royal Navy H.M.S. Hood
Died 24 May 1941
Commemorated at PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL



A Signal Boy in the Royal Navy during World War II transmitted messages between ships and shore using visual, radio, and Morse code signals. They also set up beach communications stations and allocated signal call signs

'Jack', as he was known, was born on 4th January 1924 in Rochdale, Lancashire. He later lived in Wilmslow, Cheshire. He was assigned to Hood's Number 7 Mess. He was 17 years old at the time of his loss.

The Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser for May 17 1946 records the following small commemoration:

IN MEMORIAM

DAWSON – In loving memory of Philip John Dawson, lost in HMS Hood, Empire Day, May 24th 1941.

Annex 1: The one hundred and fifteen names in the order they are listed on each of the War Memorials.

Memorial	Entry	Surname	Christan Name	Rank	Page No	Date Lost
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S	1	BACON	Phyllis	C/Wrn.	10	1941
	2	BADDELEY	Maurice Edward	Pte.	12	1943
	3	BANKS	Robert Arthur	Sgt. Pilot	14	1941
	4	BARNES	Harry Lewis	F. Eng.	15	1944
	5	BATES	Michael	Sgt.	19	1943
	6	BEDELL	Cecil Ford	F. Lt.	21	1944
	7	BOOTH	Stanley	Sgt. A.G.	23	1941
	8	BRADLEY	Arthur Andrew	F. Sgt.	25	1945
	9	BROADHURST	Donald	Sgt.	27	1942
	10	BURGESS	Norman	Pte.	29	1944
	11	CALLWOOD	Charles	Cpl.	31	1944
	12	CHEETHAM	Walter Callwood	F. Sgt.	33	1943
	13	COCKRAM	Leslie Gordon	Sgt. Pilot	35	1941
	14	DIXON	Oliver	Sub. Lt. (A)	36	1942
	15	FOX	John Arnold	Dvr.	38	1942
	16	GODDARD	John	F. Eng.	n/a	
	17	HALL	Frederick Herbert	L. Cpl.	39	1943
	18	HOLT	Philip Sumner	Lt.	41	1944
	19	HULME	Ronald Edward	Sgt.	44	1944
	20	JOHNSON	Kenneth	Sgt.	45	1940
	21	KENT	Cyril	Pte.	46	1943
	22	LEECH	Peter Norbury	L. Cpl.	47	1944
	23	LINCOLN	George	Sap.	48	1941
	24	MARSHALL	Austin Southwell	Sgt.	50	1941
	25	METCALF	Colin	Sqr. Ldr	52	1943
	26	METCALFE	Edward Arthur	F. Sgt.	54	1944
	27	MOORE	Arthur	F.O.	56	1944
	28	MOTTERSHEAD	Raymond	Gun.	59	1945
	29	NAYLOR	Percy	Sig.	60	1942
	30	PARKINSON	Roylance Lynton	Capt.	62	1942
	31	PATERSON	Eric	Pte.	63	1944
	32	PLANT	Harold	F.O.	65	1943
	33	POVEY	Frederick William George	Tpr.	67	1944
	34	POWELL	George Edward	H.G.	69	1944
	35	RODIER	Mark Fleming	Sub. Lt.	70	1942
	36	SLATER	John Aspinall	Tpr.	74	1945
	37	SMITHIES	Donald Arthur	Sgt.	75	1941

	38	STREAT	Anthony Raymond	2nd Lt.	76	1944
	39	STREET	Eric	Cpl.	79	1944
	40	SUMNER	Kenneth	A.B.	80	1944
	41	TAYLOR	William Arthur	Pte.	82	1943
	42	TRAVIS	Kenneth Charles Nutt	Sub. Lt. (A)	83	1945
	43	VERNON	Roy	Sgt. A.G.	85	1942
	44	WAGNER	Thomas Richard	Midn.	86	1940
	45	WILDE	Colin	Sgt. Pilot	89	1943
	46	WOOD	Harold Kay	Sap.	91	1944
	47	WOODALL	Kenneth Francis	Pte.	93	1943
	48	WOODHOUSE	Albert George	Pte.	95	1945
	49	WYLDE	Colin Higson	Aircraftman	97	1941
STYAL	50	HALLIDAY	Philip James	Pilot Officer	100	1941
	51	HALLIDAY	John Lawrie	Pilot Officer	102	1944
HANDFORTH	52	BRADSHAW	Arthur	Sgt	106	1942
	53	BRIDGE	Harold	Lt Col.	107	1943
	54	ENGLAND	Eric James	Writer	109	1940
	55	GRESTY	Kenneth Gaston	Sgt	110	1941
	56	LICHTENSTEIGER	Max A F	Merch Seaman	111	1944
	57	METCALF	Rowland Stafford	Sgt	113	1943
	58	MITCHELL	Samuel Philip	Cprl	115	1940
	59	STOPFORD	William Douglas	Flt Sgt	116	1944
	60	WARD	Clifford James	Ord Seaman	118	1941
St JOHNS LINDOW	61	ALLEN	Pelham Bolton	Flt Sgt	120	1945
	62	BARDSLEY	Eric	Warr Officer	122	1945
	63	BARR	Maurice	Fusilier	124	1944
	6	BEDELL	Cecil Ford	F. Lt.	21	1944
	64	BELL	Caleb Ronald	Private	126	1940
	65	JONES	Philip	Flying Officer	129	1942
	66	BERRY	Jack	Ord. Coder	131	1941
	12	CHEETHAM	Walter Callwood	See Above	33	1943
	68	CONSTABLE	Frank		132	1941
	69	DAWSON	Jack	Able Seaman	134	1941
	70	FROST	Eric	Pte.	136	1944
	71	HALSTEAD	Kenneth	Pilot Officer	138	1942
	72	HENSHALL	Geoffrey	Ldg Seamn	140	1944
	19	HULME	Ronald Edward	Sgt.	43	1944

	73	SLATER	Harold	Guardsman	142	1941
	74	WALLER	Percy	Warr Officer	144	1942
	22	LEECH	Peter Norbury	L. Cpl.	47	1944
	75	HADFIELD	James	Sgt	147	1941
ST PHILIP'S ALDERLEY EDGE	76	ALLSOP	Richard Wyke	Sgt	150	1941
	77	ATHERTON	Harry Lewis	Mrchnt Sman	152	1939
	78	BEBBINGTON	Cyril	Private	154	1944
	79	BEBBINGTON	Roy	Seaman	156	1947
	80	BURGESS	Albert	Private	157	1943
	81	CLAYTON	George Henry	Grdsman	159	1943
	82	DICK	John Handasyne	KSLI	161	1942
	83	GAIGER	Albert Thomas	RA 65 Fld Regt	163	1943
	84	GAIGER	Alexander Philip	RA Maritime	164	1943
	85	GAIGER	Alfred Richard John	RAFVR	166	1943
	86	HALE	Kenneth	HMS Goshawk	168	1941
	87	HEALEY	Reginald Paul	RAFVR	170	1942
	88	HOWARD	Arthur Henry	RAFVR	173	1943
	89	KEYMER	Robert Sydney Langston	RAFVR	174	1941
	90	LEE	John	RM Cmndos	176	1944
	91	MAXFIELD	Frederick	RAFVR	178	1942
	92	OWEN	John	RAFVR	179	1942
	93	RIGBY	John Derek	RAFVR	182	1942
	94	SIDDANS	John	HMS Tamar	185	1942
	95	SUTTON	Stephen Paul	RA	187	1943
	96	WALLBANKS	Stephen Prescott	DLI 8th	189	1944
	97	WILKINSON	Harold John	RAFVR	191	1944
	98	LEADBETTER	Geoffrey Edward	RAFVR	193	1944
	99	MARSHALL	Frank	Civilian	195	1941
DEAN ROW CHAPEL	100	BRANDON	May	Civilian	197	1940
	101	BARBER	John Douglas	RAFVR	200	1944
WATER LANE CHAPEL	102	FLETCHER	James Woodroofe Guy	RA	203	1944
	103	OWEN	Stanley	RAFVR	205	1943
	50	HALLIDAY	Philip James	Pilot Officer	100	1941

	51	HALLIDAY	John Lawrie	Pilot Officer	102	1944
	37	SMITHIES	Donald Arthur	Sgt.	75	1941
WILMSLOW CEMETERY	104	BAKER	Thomas Henry William	RAFVR	207	1942
	105	BRACEGIRDLE	Ralph	Navy	209	1946
	106	BUISSON	Jacques Donald Alphouse	RAOC	211	1945
	107	CONNOLLY	Andrew	Corp Mil Pol	212	1943
	108	HILL	Raymond Bowden	RAFVR	212	1946
	109	POTTS	Vernon	R Corps Sign	213	1945
	110	BARLOW	William Herbert	RAFVR	213	1943
	111	NAYLOR	Edward Thomas	RAFVR	214	1941
	53	BRIDGE	Harold	Lt Col.	105	1943
	9	BROADHURST	Donald	Sgt.	25	1942
	20	JOHNSON	Kenneth	Sgt.	44	1940
	7	BOOTH	Stanley	Sgt. A.G.	23	1941
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH	112	CLELLAND	Donald Stuart	Corps of Signals	216	1945
	71	HALSTEAD	Kenneth	Pilot Officer	136	1942
	26	METCALFE	Edward Arthur	F. Sgt.	54	1944
	29	NAYLOR	Percy	Sig.	60	1942
	42	TRAVIS	Kenneth Charles Nutt	Sub. Lt. (A)	83	1945
	44	WAGNER	Thomas Richard	Midn.	86	1940
OTHER	113	GRANGE	James	HMS Jaguar	217	1942
Morley Green	114	Murray	Jack	RAFVR	218	1944
HMS HOOD	115	SNOW	David Jack	HMS Hood	220	1941
	116	DAWSON	Philip John	HMS Hood	220	1941

Annex 2 Alphabetical list:

Entry	Surname	Christan Name	Rank	Page No	Memorial
61	ALLEN	Pelham Bolton	Flt Sgt	118	**St J'S LINDOW**
76	ALLSOP	Richard Wyke	Sgt	148	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
77	ATHERTON	Harry Lewis	Mrchnt Sman	150	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
1	BACON	Phyllis	C/Wrn.	10	**ST BARTS**
2	BADDELEY	Maurice Edward	Pte.	12	**ST BARTS**
104	BAKER	Thomas Henry William	RAFVR	205	**CEMETERY**
3	BANKS	Robert Arthur	Sgt. Pilot	14	**ST BARTS**
101	BARBER	John Douglas	RAFVR	198	**DEAN ROW**
62	BARDSLEY	Eric	Warr Officer	120	**St J'S LINDOW**
110	BARLOW	William Herbert	RAFVR	211	**CEMETERY**
4	BARNES	Harry Lewis	F. Eng.	15	**ST BARTS**
63	BARR	Maurice	Fusilier	122	**St J'S LINDOW**
5	BATES	Michael	Sgt.	19	**ST BARTS**
78	BEBBINGTON	Cyril	Private	152	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
79	BEBBINGTON	Roy	Seaman	154	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
6	BEDELL	Cecil Ford	F. Lt.	21	**ST BARTS**
6	BEDELL	Cecil Ford	F. Lt.	21	**St J'S LINDOW**
64	BELL	Caleb Ronald	Private	124	**St J'S LINDOW**
66	BERRY	Jack	Ord. Coder	129	**St J'S LINDOW**
7	BOOTH	Stanley	Sgt. A.G.	23	**ST BARTS**
7	BOOTH	Stanley	Sgt. A.G.	23	**CEMETERY**
105	BRACEGIRDLE	Ralph	Navy	207	**CEMETERY**
8	BRADLEY	Arthur Andrew	F. Sgt.	25	**ST BARTS**
52	BRADSHAW	Arthur	Sgt	104	**HANDFORTH**
100	BRANDON	May	Civilian	195	**DEAN ROW**

53	BRIDGE	Harold	Lt Col.	105	**HANDFORTH**
53	BRIDGE	Harold	Lt Col.	103	**CEMETERY**
9	BROADHURST	Donald	Sgt.	27	**ST BARTS**
9	BROADHURST	Donald	Sgt.	25	**CEMETERY**
106	BUISSON	Jacques Donald Alphouse	RAOC	209	**CEMETERY**
10	BURGESS	Norman	Pte.	29	**ST BARTS**
80	BURGESS	Albert	Private	155	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
11	CALLWOOD	Charles	Cpl.	31	**ST BARTS**
12	CHEETHAM	Walter Callwood	F. Sgt.	33	**ST BARTS**
12	CHEETHAM	Walter Callwood	See Above	33	**St J'S LINDOW**
81	CLAYTON	George Henry	Grdsman	157	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
112	CLELLAND	Donald Stuart	Corps of Signals	214	**UTD REF CHURCH**
13	COCKRAM	Leslie Gordon	Sgt. Pilot	35	**ST BARTS**
107	CONNOLLY	Andrew	Corp Mil Pol	210	**CEMETERY**
68	CONSTABLE	Frank		130	**St J'S LINDOW**
69	DAWSON	Jack	Able Seaman	132	**St J'S LINDOW**
115	DAWSON	Philip John	HMS Hood	217	**HMS HOOD**
82	DICK	John Handasyne	KSLI	159	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
14	DIXON	Oliver	Sub. Lt. (A)	36	**ST BARTS**
54	ENGLAND	Eric James	Writer	107	**HANDFORTH**
102	FLETCHER	James Woodroofe Guy	RA	201	**WATER LANE**
15	FOX	John Arnold	Dvr.	37	**ST BARTS**
70	FROST	Eric	Pte.	134	**St J'S LINDOW**
83	GAIGER	Albert Thomas	RA 65 Fld Regt	161	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
84	GAIGER	Alexander Philip	RA Maritime	162	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
85	GAIGER	Alfred Richard John	RAFVR	164	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
16	GODDARD	John	F. Eng.	n/a	**ST BARTS**

113	GRANGE	James	HMS Jaguar	215	**OTHER**
55	GRESTY	Kenneth Gaston	Sgt	108	**HANDFORTH**
75	HADFIELD	James	Sgt	145	**St J'S LINDOW**
86	HALE	Kenneth	HMS Goshawk	166	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
17	HALL	FrederickHerbert	L. Cpl.	38	**ST BARTS**
50	HALLIDAY	Philip James	Pilot Officer	98	**STYAL**
51	HALLIDAY	John Lawrie	Pilot Officer	100	**STYAL**
50	HALLIDAY	Philip James	Pilot Officer	98	**WATER LANE**
51	HALLIDAY	John Lawrie	Pilot Officer	100	**WATER LANE**
71	HALSTEAD	Kenneth	Pilot Officer	136	**St J'S LINDOW**
71	HALSTEAD	Kenneth	Pilot Officer	134	**UTD REF CHURCH**
87	HEALEY	Reginald Paul	RAFVR	168	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
72	HENSHALL	Geoffrey	Ldg Seamn	138	**St J'S LINDOW**
108	HILL	Raymond Bowden	RAFVR	210	**CEMETERY**
18	HOLT	Philip Sumner	Lt.	40	**ST BARTS**
88	HOWARD	Arthur Henry	RAFVR	171	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
19	HULME	Ronald Edward	Sgt.	43	**ST BARTS**
19	HULME	Ronald Edward	Sgt.	43	**St J'S LINDOW**
20	JOHNSON	Kenneth	Sgt.	44	**ST BARTS**
20	JOHNSON	Kenneth	Sgt.	44	**CEMETERY**
65	JONES	Philip	Flying Officer	127	**St J'S LINDOW**
21	KENT	Cyril	Pte.	45	**ST BARTS**
89	KEYMER	Robert Sydney Langston	RAFVR	172	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
98	LEADBETTER	Geoffrey Edward	RAFVR	191	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
90	LEE	John	RM Cmndos	174	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
22	LEECH	Peter Norbury	L. Cpl.	47	**ST BARTS**
22	LEECH	Peter Norbury	L. Cpl.	47	**St J'S LINDOW**

56	LICHTENSTEIGER	Max A F	Merch Seaman	109	**HANDFORTH**
23	LINCOLN	George	Sap.	48	**ST BARTS**
24	MARSHALL	Austin Southwell	Sgt.	49	**ST BARTS**
99	MARSHALL	Frank	Civilian	193	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
91	MAXFIELD	Frederick	RAFVR	176	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
25	METCALF	Colin	Sqr. Ldr	50	**ST BARTS**
57	METCALF	Rowland Stafford	Sgt	111	**HANDFORTH**
26	METCALFE	Edward Arthur	F. Sgt.	52	**ST BARTS**
26	METCALFE	Edward Arthur	F. Sgt.	52	**UTD REF CHURCH**
58	MITCHELL	Samuel Philip	Cprl	113	**HANDFORTH**
27	MOORE	Arthur	F.O.	54	**ST BARTS**
28	MOTTERSHEAD	Raymond	Gun.	57	**ST BARTS**
114	MURRAY	Jack	Flt Sgt	217	**MORLEY GN**
29	NAYLOR	Percy	Sig.	58	**ST BARTS**
111	NAYLOR	Edward Thomas	RAFVR	212	**CEMETERY**
29	NAYLOR	Percy	Sig.	58	**UTD REF CHURCH**
92	OWEN	John	RAFVR	177	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
103	OWEN	Stanley	RAFVR	203	**WATER LANE**
30	PARKINSON	Roylance Lynton	Capt.	60	**ST BARTS**
31	PATERSON	Eric	Pte.	61	**ST BARTS**
32	PLANT	Harold	F.O.	63	**ST BARTS**
109	POTTS	Vernon	R Corps Sign	211	**CEMETERY**
33	POVEY	Frederick William George	Tpr.	65	**ST BARTS**
34	POWELL	George Edward	H.G.	67	**ST BARTS**
93	RIGBY	John Derek	RAFVR	180	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
35	RODIER	Mark Fleming	Sub. Lt.	68	**ST BARTS**

94	SIDDANS	John	HMS Tamar	183	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
36	SLATER	John Aspinall	Tpr.	72	**ST BARTS**
73	SLATER	Harold	Guardsman	140	**St J'S LINDOW**
37	SMITHIES	Donald Arthur	Sgt.	73	**ST BARTS**
37	SMITHIES	Donald Arthur	Sgt.	73	**WATER LANE**
114	SNOW	David Jack	HMS Hood	217	**HMS HOOD**
59	STOPFORD	William Douglas	Flt Sgt	114	**HANDFORTH**
38	STREAT	Anthony Raymond	2nd Lt.	74	**ST BARTS**
39	STREET	Eric	Cpl.	77	**ST BARTS**
40	SUMNER	Kenneth	A.B.	78	**ST BARTS**
95	SUTTON	Stephen Paul	RA	185	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
41	TAYLOR	William Arthur	Pte.	80	**ST BARTS**
42	TRAVIS	Kenneth Charles Nutt	Sub. Lt. (A)	81	**ST BARTS**
42	TRAVIS	Kenneth Charles Nutt	Sub. Lt. (A)	81	**UTD REF CHURCH**
43	VERNON	Roy	Sgt. A.G.	83	**ST BARTS**
44	WAGNER	Thomas Richard	Midn.	84	**ST BARTS**
44	WAGNER	Thomas Richard	Midn.	84	**UTD REF CHURCH**
96	WALLBANKS	Stephen Prescott	DLI 8th	187	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
74	WALLER	Percy	Warr Officer	142	**St J'S LINDOW**
60	WARD	Clifford James	Ord Seaman	116	**HANDFORTH**
45	WILDE	Colin	Sgt. Pilot	87	**ST BARTS**
97	WILKINSON	Harold John	RAFVR	189	**ALDERLEY EDGE**
46	WOOD	Harold Kay	Sap.	89	**ST BARTS**
47	WOODALL	Kenneth Francis	Pte.	91	**ST BARTS**
48	WOODHOUSE	Albert George	Pte.	93	**ST BARTS**
49	WYLDE	Colin Higson	Aircraftman	95	**ST BARTS**