

Egerton

Second World War 1939 – 1945

PEARSON, ALEC WILLIAM. Flying Officer, 166433.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 99 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 1 September 1945. Aged 21.

Son of Walter John and Rosetta May Pearson of Egerton, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Jakarta War Cemetery, Indonesia. Grave Ref: Collective grave 6. J 4-6. K.3.

Attended Ashford Grammar School between 1935 and 1942, where Alec is commemorated in the Second World War Book of Remembrance.

At the time of Alec's demise, after the end of hostilities in the Far East, his squadron were based in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, as part of South East Asia Command equipped with Liberator Bombers, at which the squadron was being primarily engaged in relief operations, such as transporting much needed food, medicines and equipment across the region. Alec was amongst the seven crew of Liberator KL491 who all lost their lives whilst dropping urgently needed food and medical supplies to former Allied prisoners of war, near Palembang, Sumatra. When flying in low to make the air-drop, the aircraft crashed into the ground. All the crew are now at rest in the same cemetery. Their Liberator had been transferred to the Royal Air Force in February 1945, having formerly been in service with the United States Army Air Force, at which time it had the serial number 49097.

WILSON, GORDON ARTHUR GEORGE. Private, 6297325.

1st Battalion, East Surrey Regiment.

Died Italy 19 June 1944. Aged 22.

Born South West London. Resided Kent.

Son of George and Harriet Wilson of Egerton, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Orvieto War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: I. A. 19.

Originally enlisted in The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

PAYNE, JACK REDMAN. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 1896652.

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 298 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died Monday 27 March 1945. Aged 20.

Son of William Redman Payne and Bertha Payne of Egerton, Ashford, Kent.

Buried Egerton (St James) Churchyard.

Attended Ashford Grammar School between 1936 and 1942, where he is commemorated in the Second World War Book of Remembrance.

Jack was the Flight Engineer of Halifax bomber NA-664 which took off from R.A.F. Tarrant Rushton, Dorset on the evening of Sunday 26 March 1945 to conduct a night-time navigation exercise. On making his landing approach, the pilot 21 year old Flying Officer, Paul Williams, of Villa Valeria, Argentina. radioed flying control that he was going round again, but just after mid-night

the aircraft stalled, crashed and burst into flames at South Farm, Spetisbury, Blandford Forum, Dorset, whilst coming in on the down-wind leg of the airfield circuit. As with many other casualty cases accessed, there is a slight discrepancy regarding the actual time of the crash occurring.

Ministry of Defence date records the time of crash as being 0003 hours, but Casualty List entry for the bulk of the crew shows the time as being 0030 hours. Possibly the difference in the records was due to the fact that the rear gunner 24 year old Sergeant (Air Gunner) Albert Stinson, of Liverpool, Lancashire had survived the initial impact but sadly died of his injuries about three quarters of an hour later. Like numerous other ground impact crashes, Albert's tail turret had broken free of the main body of the bomber on impacting. The Halifax crew had only arrived a few days earlier at R.A.F. Tarrant Rushton, having been posted there from RAF Tillstock, Whitchurch, Shropshire. On D-Day 298 Squadron, R.A.F. had towed 6 Horsa Gliders to attack the bridges across the Orne river, and later played a significant part during both "Operation Market Garden" at Arnhem and also the "Rhine Crossing," but the crew of Jack's Halifax would probably not have been of their number having only joined the squadron a few days prior to the fatal crash.

HOLMWOOD, DERRICK NORMAN. Private, 5504554.

2nd Battalion, Hampshire Regiment.

Died 3 December 1942. Aged 25.

Born and resided Kent.

Son of Norman Mercer Homewood and Nellie Elizabeth Homewood of Egerton, Ashford, Kent.

Attended Ashford Grammar School 1929-1932, where Derrick is commemorated in the Second World War Book of Remembrance, and on the Medjez-el-Bab Memorial, Tunisia. Face 22.



