

Godmersham

Second World War 1939 – 1945

MILES, REGINALD. No clear trace.

LOUGAN, WILLIAM. Not yet traced.

JAMES, FREDERICK ERNEST. Trooper, 6349620.

56th Regiment, Reconnaissance Corps. Royal Armoured Corps.

Died 27 February 1943. Aged 22.

Son of Ernest and Alice Lilian James of Boughton Corner, Bilting, Ashford, Kent.

Also commemorated on Wye, Ashford, Kent, Second World War memorial plaque and on the Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial.

Buried Medjez-El-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia. Grave Ref: 5. H. 3.

Originally enlisted in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1940.

Frederick had taken part in 'Operation Torch,' the amphibious landings in Morocco and Tunisia, North Africa in November 1942, and lost his life as the result of enemy bombing at Tunisia, North Africa. For a year 1933-1934, Frederick had been a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School. His brother Arthur George James who fortunately survived the Second World War, served in the Royal Navy on Minesweepers and had also been a pupil at 'The North' from 1937 to 1940.



LOST MAN

LLOYD, HENRY SIMON RAOUL. Pilot Officer (Pilot) 147904.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 466 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force.

Died Sunday 30 May 1943. Aged 21.

Son of Charles and Simone Emilie Lloyd of Chilham, Kent.

Buried Brussels Town Cemetery. Grave Ref: X. 17. 27.

Commemorated on Chilham, Kent, civic war memorial.

Local research by Len Budd indicates that Henry resided at Godmersham, which is an village adjacent to Chilham. On Chilham war memorial Henry's initials are shown as H.R.S. but Henry's CWGC commemoration, R.A.F. data accessed, and his entry in the General Record Office, Second World War (R.A.F.) Overseas Deaths (volume 9, page 262, 1943) all show his initials as being H.S.R. Henry was the pilot of Wellington bomber HE212 HD-"Yvonne Proudabag" which took off at 2223 hours on 29 May 1943, from R.A.F. Leaconfield, Yorkshire, to take part in a 719 bomber raid on Wuppertal, Germany. The bombers taking part on the raid were 292 Lancasters, 185 Halifaxes, 118 Stirlings, 113 Wellingtons, and 11 Mosquitos, Henry's aircraft being one of the 113 Wellington's taking part. The raid was aimed at the Barmen half of the long and narrow town of Wuppertal, and was recorded as being the outstanding success of the 'Battle of the Ruhr.' Both Pathfinder marking 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 this fire was so severe that the first, small form of what would later become known as a firestorm developed. Because it was a Saturday night, many of Wuppertal fire and air-raid officials were not present, having gone to their country homes for the weekend, and the fire services of the town, during what was their first air-raid, were not able to control the fires. Approximately 1,000 acres, they being possibly eighty per cent of Barmen's built up area was destroyed by fire. Five out of the towns six largest factories, 211 other industrial premises and nearly 4,000 houses were completely destroyed. Henry's Wellington was intercepted and shot down at 0400 hours on 30 May 1944, by a Luftwaffe, Messerschmitt Me 110 night-fighter which was flown by Oberleutnant Rudolf Altendorf of I./NJG4, who at the time probably was with Uffz Arndt, his regular gunner. In addition to Henry's aircraft, a total of 33 aircraft were lost on the raid, they being 10 Halifaxes, 8 Stirlings, 8 Wellingtons, and 7 Lancasters. Henry's bomber crashed at Vollezele, Brabant, Belgium, which is about nineteen miles west-south-west of Brussels where all five crew are buried in adjacent graves. In 1994 a memorial was erected in Vollezele by local inhabitants to commemorate the crew, who were all Sergeants with the average age of 21. It was a pleasure to learn from Len Budd, that the parishioners of Chilham to their credit, have organised trips to the graves of the village fallen, including paying their respects at the memorial to the crew of the "Yvonne Proudabag." Chilham, Kent, being clearly a caring community, that both remembers its former parishioners lost to the world wars, and undertakes positive steps to ensure their sacrifices are not forgot, long may that continue to be the case. In 2003 a

book was published entitled De Lastste Vlucht Van "Yvonne Proudabag," which I am assured when translated into English is:- The Last Fight of the "Yvonne Proudabag," it tells the story of the aircrafts last flight, and was written by Cyrik De Decker and Jean-Lois Roba, the text is in Dutch, but with the introduction in English. Rudolf Altendorf flew in the 'Battle of Britain' with IV./LG(Z)1, during which his unit suffering heavy losses. Before the cessation of hostilities he scored a total of 29 victories serving with NJG 3, 4, and 5, and survived the Second World War despite some near misses.

**INTERRED GODMERSHAM
(ST LAURENCE) CHURCHYARD**

BERRY, JOHN EDWARD. Driver, T/10666752.
129 Infantry Brigade, Company, Royal Army Service Corps.
Died 23 September 1942. Aged 19.
Born and resided South West London.
Son of George Albert and Elizabeth Arm Berry of Fulham, London.

