

Hinxhill

Second World War 1939 – 1945

BRUNDRETT, JAMES EDWARD. Lieutenant, 180924.
647 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Artillery.
Attached to 9th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment).
Died 30 September 1944. Aged 23.
Born Bournemouth, Hampshire. Resided Hampshire.
The only son of Frederick and Enid Brundrett (née James) of Emsworth, Hampshire.
(Later Sir Frederick Brundrett K.C.B., K.B.E. and Lady Enid Brundrett).
Attended Ashford Grammar School 1931-1940.
Buried Gradara War Cemetery, Italy. Grave I. E. 76.
James aunt, Miss Dorothy Brundrett, who was a sister of his father became the School Secretary in 1956, and remained so until 1980. Unit details are as accessed from James CWGC commemoration which H.A.A Regiment he was serving with, which combined with time restrictions afforded to each entry on this website has precluded more detailed information being obtained for the purpose of this brief commemoration. All in stark contrast to James's father served in the Great War as a Lieutenant RNVR (Wireless Branch) (Intelligence), and joined the Admiralty as a civilian in 1919, as well as service with MI5. He was also a brilliant military scientist of international repute, and at various times held several important post including being the first Director of Royal Naval Scientific Service, Chairman of the Defence Research Policy Committee, Director of Scientific Intelligence, Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) to the Ministry of Defence. Sir Frederick's spare time passion for over thirty years was the study of Unidentified Flying Objects, which due to his international renown and status as a Scientist gave the subject an element of credence by people and organisations who were sceptical.

BRUNDRETT, ROBERT. Lance Corporal, VX85959.
2/5th Australian Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Force.
Killed in action at Gartha, Libya on 3 January 1941. Aged 33.
Born Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire, Wales 27 October 1907.
Enlisted Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 1 December 1939.
Resided Court Lodge, Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent.
Sixth son of Walter and Ada Brundrett of Rolvenden, Kent, who also resided at Court Lodge, Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Halfaya Sollum War Cemetery, Egypt. Grave Ref: 18. E. 1.
Robert, who attended Ashford Grammar School 1918-1922, is commemorated on the Australian National War Memorial, Canberra, Australian Capital Territories, Australia. Panel 31, and on the Melbourne, Victoria, Australia civic war memorial, he is also commemorated on the

headstone of his parents grave in Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent, (St Mary) Churchyard, as is his cousin James Edward Brundrett, who is the casualty commemorated above. Two other cousins of Robert and James, died in the Great War, they being Walter who was killed at Vimy Ridge serving in the 10th Battalion, Canadian Infantry (Alberta Regiment), and George of the Cheshire Regiment, attached to the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, who died of wounds at Rouen. Although Robert's parents did not die until 1945 and 1951 respectively, his sister Florence Brundrett of Court Lodge, Hinxhill is shown as being one of his Next of Kin along with his father on the Australian data which has been accessed.

HOLMES, ERNEST EDWAR CHARLES. Sergeant (Flight Engineer), 903163. Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 149 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Died 24 October 1942.

Buried Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent (St. Mary) Churchyard.

Ernest was the Flight Engineer of Stirling bomber W7628 OJ-B which was flown by Flight Sergeant (Pilot), 22 year old Adolph Siwak, of Angusville, Manitoba, Canada. The aircraft took off from R.A.F. Lakenheath, Suffolk at 1836 hours on 23 October 1942 on a bombing mission to Genoa, Italy. 112 Lancasters of 5 Group and the Pathfinders were dispatched in a mixed bomber force to recommence the campaign against Italy, which was timed to coincide with the opening of the British Eighth Army offensive at El Alamein, Egypt. It was a perfectly clear moonlight night and the Pathfinder marking was described as being both prompt and accurate. The bombing by this comparatively small force of aircraft, carrying only 180 tons of bombs, could hardly have been carried out under more ideal conditions. Details from Genoa are not precise but very heavy damage was caused in the city centre and in the eastern districts. Provisional estimates of casualties were 39 dead and 200 injured but the actual figures may have been higher. Local reports mention the severe effect on the morale of the people of Genoa. It is noticeable when reading about this particular raid, that the aircraft lost on it were due to numerous reasons, none of which appear to be directly attributable to enemy action. Irrespective of make of bombers lost i.e. Halifax, Lancaster, Stirling, or Wellington, some crashed on landing, others lost due to mechanical failure, and others either low or completely out of fuel, being either cause of, or a contributory factor in the losses, with Ernest's aircraft falling into the last category of cause of crash. On the return leg of the mission the Stirling ran out of fuel and crashed at 0300 hours into Rye Street, Cliffe-at-Hoo, on the Hoo Peninsular five miles north of Rochester, Kent, killing the seven crew of the bomber. Two Canadians and another crew member are interred in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, and the other four are recorded as being laid to rest in their respective home town or village cemeteries, as such combined with the fact he is commemorated in the parish church, it would seem probable that Ernest was a Hinxhill resident.

OETZMANN, HARDY CLIFT. Sergeant, 1465221.
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.
Died at sea 16 February 1943. Aged 38.
Born New Zealand. Resided Kent.
Son of George Clift Oetzmann and Winifred Oetzmann.
Husband of Edith Isabel Oetzmann of Ashford, Kent.
Hardy attended Ashford Grammar School 1920-1922, where he is commemorated in the school Second World War Book of Remembrance, also commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial, Surrey. Panel 19. Column 3.
Pre war member of the Royal Artillery.

POSSEE, WILLIAM FRANK. D.F.C. Flying Officer (Flight Engineer), 53824.
227 Squadron Royal Air Force.
Died Wednesday 14 March 1945. Aged 21.
Son of Frank and Annie Elizabeth Possee of The Green, Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Durnbach War Cemetery, Bad Tolz, Germany.
Grave Ref: Joint grave 2. C. 27-28.
Also commemorated on the Ashford, Kent civic war memorial.
From 1935 to 1939 William was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern (Boys) School. William was the Flight Engineer on Lancaster bomber RA546 9J-J which was delivered to William's squadron on 5 March 1945, and was lost on its first operation with a total of only five recorded hours, it being one of a pair of 227 Squadron Royal Air Force, Lancasters that were lost on the same raid. At the time of the bombers loss it was being flown by 24 year old Flight Lieutenant (Pilot), Maurice L. Hunt, R.N.Z.A.F. of Mount Bruce, Masterton, New Zealand. The aircraft took off at 1703 hours from R.A.F. Balderton, Nottinghamshire on 14 March 1945 on a mission to Lutzendorf, Germany, to bomb the Wintershall synthetic oil plant. As an all 5 Group bomber force, the raid was comprised of 244 Lancasters and 11 Mosquitoes, of which William's aircraft was one of 18 Lancasters lost on the raid. The aircraft is thought to have crashed in the Bad Windsheim area near Illesheim, Bavaria, Germany. William and 26 year old Warrant Officer Class I (Pilot), William A. Johnson R.C.A.F. from Lashburn, Saskatchewan, Canada, were both killed in the crash and are interred together. Maurice Hunt was injured, and succumbed to same on 18 March, and Robert Nesbit from Red Row, Northumberland who was also injured died on 8 April, Maurice and Robert are at rest in graves 25 and 26, next to the two Williams. The other four crew members survived and became prisoners of war. Due to his extensive injuries Flight Sergeant S..H..H. Jobson were confined in a Hospital in Holland until the cessation of hostilities and the liberation. William enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1940 and had completed 36 operational flights over enemy territory including Italy and Germany prior to his demise. Whilst serving as a Sergeant he had been granted a commission on 25 November 1943, and had also served with 9 Squadron, R.A.F. from June 1944. Lancaster bomber RA546 was delivered to William's squadron on 5 March 1945 was lost on its first operation, with a total of only 5 recorded hours. The name Lutzendorf which was in the former East Germany, no longer exists on maps of Germany, as the area is now known as Krumpa. The site for Durnbach War Cemetery was chosen, shortly after the cessation of hostilities, by officers of the British Army

and Air Force, in conjunction with officers of the American Occupation Forces in whose zone Durnbach lay. The great majority of those buried here are airmen shot down over Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Austria, Hessen and Thuringia, brought from their scattered graves by the Army Graves Service.

