

Smeeth

Second World War 1939 – 1945

WILLIAMS, LIONEL GRAHAM. Pilot Officer, 42550.

233 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 3 November 1940. Aged 19.

Son of Thomas Harry and Natalie Williams of Brook, Ashford, Kent.

Commemorated on Smeeth, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as Graham Williams, also commemorated with both initials on the Runnymede Memorial. Panel 10.

A brother of the following casualty.

Lionel was the pilot of the Coastal Command 18 Group, Hudson I bomber N7374 ZS-N, which took off from its base at R.A.F. Leuchars, Fife, Scotland at 0840 hours on 3 November 1940, to take part in an offensive patrol by three aircraft. By 1057 hours, flying at 3,000 feet the formation which Lionel's Hudson was in reached the Norwegian coast in position XZUB 0010, and turned south. It was then that two 1000 ton coastal vessels heading on a northerly course were spotted by the Coastal Command aircraft. At that time one of the ships was approximately 3 miles south of Egersund, Rogaland, and the other just to the north of the important natural harbour. On 9 April 1940, Egersund was amongst the first towns and cities in Norway to be occupied by the Germans during the Second World War, and was important to them because of its good harbour, and the telegraph line between Norway and England which was situated there. The Germans built up large camps in the area, and several important events happened in the vicinity, and as such received the attention of Coastal Command on a frequent basis. At 1110 hours the three aircraft reached Lister and prepared to bomb the Luftwaffe aerodrome. The formation was running up from 3,000 feet when the aircraft were attacked by six Messerschmitt Bf110s, and climbed to cover at 5,000 feet. Lionel's aircraft on the port side of the small formation was concentrated on by the German aircraft, and during the attacks lost formation with flames coming from his Hudson's starboard bow. Despite being outnumbered by the Messerschmitt's, the other two aircraft evaded being shot down by them, and safely returned to their base where at the raid debriefing the pilots of the aircraft said that they thought that Lionel and his three crew had a reasonable chance of baling out or making a force landing. Regretably all the crew were lost and are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, two of whom like Lionel were aged 19.

WILLIAMS, HARRY MALCOLM. Flight Lieutenant, 66508.
Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. 102 Squadron, Royal Air Force.
Died 14 April 1942. Aged 26.
Son of Thomas Harry and Natalie Williams of Brook, Ashford, Kent.
Buried Smeeth (St. Mary) Churchyard, Kent
Commemorated on Smeeth, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as Malcolm Williams, and, on the Wye College Second World War memorial plaque as H.M. Williams.

His brother Lionel Graham Williams also fell (please see above), and is commemorated on Smeeth war memorial as Graham Williams.

Harry was the pilot of a Handley Page Halifax bomber, R9488 DY- which was on an Air Test when it crashed near Baldersby, six miles north east of Ripon, Yorkshire, at 1246 hours on 14 April 1942. According to several eye witness to the crash, the aircraft had made a series of left and right turns before stalling and spinning into the ground killing all eight onboard the Halifax. As a Halifax usually had a crew of seven, probably Leading Aircraftman, John Livesey from Blackburn was normally ground crew. The cause of the accident was thought to be due to rudder overbalance.

HOBBS, JOSEPH.

Commemorated on the Smeeth, Ashford, Kent civic war memorial as Joseph Hobbs. CWGC Debt of Honour commemorated four Second World War casualties named Joseph Hobbs, but the following is probably the most likely man, as historically the Christian name Bedo is a recurrent local "Hobbs" name.

HOBBS, JOSEPH BEDO. Flight Lieutenant (Pilot), 41926.

274 Squadron, Royal Air Force.

Died 7 December 1941. Aged 26.

Son of William Bedo Hobbs and Christine Maud Hobbs of Folkestone, Kent.

Buried Halfaya Sollum War Cemetery, Egypt. Grave Ref: 23. C. 8.

Prior to his death Joseph had in addition to serving in 274 Squadron, Royal Air Force, also served in 3 and 232 Squadrons, Royal Air Force. He was credited with 7 victories in aerial combat, 5 of which were with 3 and 232 Squadrons, R.A.F. during the Battle for France. 274 Squadron, Royal Air Force was reformed at Amrîya, Egypt on 19 August 1940, at which time it was equipped with both Hurricanes ('A' Flight) and Gladiators ('B' Flight). It also took over the Free French Flight previously attached to No 80 Squadron, however, this left in September and the following month 'B' Flight was re-equipped with Hurricanes. Between December 1940 and May 1942 the squadron was involved in fighter operations in the Western Desert interspersed with short periods of defensive duty back in Egypt.

MUGGERIDGE, VICTOR. Sailor.

SS Carperby II (Hartlepool).

Died 1 March 1942. Aged 22.

Commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 23.

Victor's ship left the river Tyne on 13 February 1942, in Convoy ON-66 heading for St Vincent and Buenos Aires, off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the convoy was dispersed and SS Carperby sailed on independently. Later she was spotted and sunk by the German submarine U-588, which was commanded by 29 year old Kapitänleutnant, Victor Vogel, The ships crew of 41, and 6 D.E.M.S. gunners all perished. On 31 July 1942, all the crew of the U-588 including Victor Vogel, also lost their lives, when the submarine was sunk by depth charges, from ships of the Royal Canadian Navy.

KNATCHBULL, Norton Cecil Michael. Lieutenant, 207642.

Lord Brabourne, 6th Baron Brabourne.

6th Battalion, Grenadier Guards.

Died Wednesday 15 September 1943. Aged 21.

Born London 11 February 1922. Resided North London.

Son of Michael Herbert Rudolph Knatchbull, 5th Baron Brabourne G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., M.C., and of Lady Brabourne (née Browne) C.I., Dame of St John of Jerusalem, of Westminster, London.

Buried Padua War Cemetery, Italy. Grave Ref: I. A. 1.

Formerly The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).

Also commemorated on Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, civic war memorial.

Educated at Eton College, and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Taken prisoner during the fighting in Italy, Lord Brabourne despite being wounded attempted to escape from a prison train but was recaptured by the Germans and executed. Although it had been known by his family that Lord Brabourne had escaped from a prison camp in Italy, but it was not officially revealed until June 1945 that he had been recaptured and shot on the same day. Former Coldstream Guards Captain, John Ulick Knatchbull, 7th Baron Brabourne, then succeeded his late brothers title.

