

Halifax W7699 (08/06/1942)

JUNE 8, 2017 ADMINISTRATOR

Halifax W7699 was one of ten No. 35 Squadron aircraft detailed to attack Essen on the night of the 8th / 9th June 1942.

Its six-man crew comprised:

- Angus Carr MacKenzie (Pilot)
- John Edward Bottomley (Observer)
- Albert Charles Schofield (WOP / AG)
- Harold Reginald George Elliott (WOP / AG)
- Gordon John Sharman (Air Gunner)
- Edward Edwin Charles Evans (Flight Engineer)

W7699 failed to return and the squadron's Operations Record Book shows "Took off from Linton for Essen; No news of this aircraft was received after it left base".



Halifax W7699 [Source: IWM (HU 108384)]

Wartime activities relating to the loss

On 9th June 1942 the squadron informed Bomber Command, the Air Ministry and the RAF Records Office that the aircraft and crew were missing.

Officer Commanding, No.35 Squadron,
Linton-on-Ouse, Yorks.

P36978

Air Min Accdts)= Air Min. (P.4 Cas)- HQ.BC.
HQ. 4 Grp.- HQ.43 Grp.(Salvage)- Records-
10th., June 1942. Linton- 60 M.U.
35S/C.68/52/P.1.

6

Flying Accident Halifax W.7699.

Further to my 'F.B' Signal A. 727
dated 9th. June 1942, herewith circumstantial
report on the above aircraft.

2. Halifax W.7699 took off on an
operational flight to Essen at 23.29 hours
on night of 8th. June 1942, and nothing
further was heard from the aircraft.

AT Marks

Wing Commander, Commanding,
No. 35 Squadron.

A telegram, along with a follow up letter from the Commanding Officer, was sent to the next of kin of each crew member advising them that he was "missing as the result of air operations on 8th / 9th June 1942".

The crew's kit and personal belongings were removed from their lockers and catalogued; kit was returned to stores and personal belongings sent to the RAF Central Depository at RAF Colnbrook.

The Air Ministry Casualty Branch, which was responsible for investigating, monitoring and reporting on the status of missing aircraft and airmen, subsequently published the following information regarding the crew:

- Air Ministry Communique No. 169 (Flight 29/10/1942) reported AC MacKenzie, JE Bottomley, HRG Elliott, AC Schofield, GJ Sharman and EEC Evans “missing”
- Air Ministry Communique No. 227 (Flight 06/05/1943) reported AC MacKenzie “previously reported missing” now “presumed killed in action”
- Air Ministry Communique No. 245 (Flight 24/06/1943) reported JE Bottomley, HRG Elliott, AC Schofield, GJ Sharman and EEC Evans “previously reported missing” now “presumed killed in action”

Note: Presumption of death enabled a death certificate to be issued; personal belongings could then be returned to the next of kin, along with any monies due.

The squadron’s Operations Record Book shows that the following information was received relating to the crew:

- 01/09/1942: Notification from the International Red Cross that the body of Sgt Elliott had been washed ashore on 14th July and that the bodies of Sgt. Evans and Sharman had been recovered on 6th and 12th August.

Post War search for the missing crew members

After the war, an investigation officer from the Royal Air Force Missing Research and Enquiry Service (MRES) was tasked with locating the remains of the missing crew member(s).

Original German documents, burial records and eye witness accounts were utilised to establish the location of the crash site, the cause of the loss and the initial fate of the crew; information was recorded in a MRES Investigation Report.

The MRES Report shows:

- The body of GJ Sharman was recovered from the beach at De Mok on 12th August 1942; he was buried the following day in Row 4 of the Communal Cemetery at Den Burg
- The body of HRG Elliott was washed ashore at Scheveningen on 14th July 1942; he was buried on 16th July 1942 in Grave 27, Row 2 of the Military Cemetery in Westduin
- The body of EEC Evans was washed ashore at Brouwershafen on 6th August 1942; he was buried in Grave 0 26 in the Military Cemetery at Haamstede
- The bodies of AC MacKenzie, JE Bottomley and AC Schofield had not been recovered at the time of the report was issued (November 1945); as such they were presumed to be “missing at sea”

As part of the process, any remains that were located were exhumed, identified (wherever possible) and concentrated (reinterred) at one of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission’s (CWGC) Cemeteries in the country that they fell, in accordance with Government policy at the time.

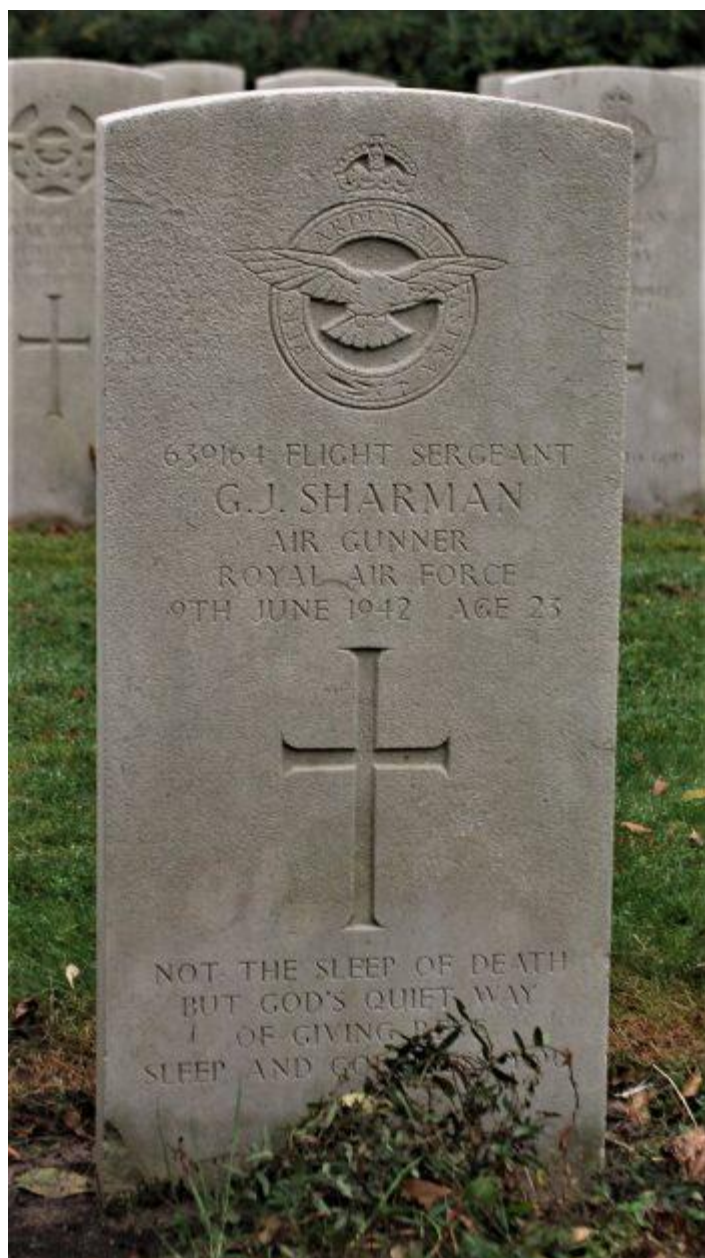
Graves were marked with a simple wooden cross, which was replaced by the familiar CWGC headstone during the 1950’s.

Missing airmen who could not be found, or formally identified, had their names commemorated on the Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede, which was unveiled in 1953.

CWGC records shows that the remains of HRG Elliott, GJ Sharman and EEC Evans were concentrated (reinterred) as follows:

- ELLIOTT, HAROLD REGINALD GEORGE, Sergeant, '925929', THE HAGUE (WESTDUIN) GENERAL CEMETERY Allied Plot, Row 2. Grave 27.
- SHARMAN, GORDON JOHN, Flight Sergeant, '639164', TEXEL (DEN BURG) CEMETERY Plot K. Row 5. Grave 103.
- EVANS, EDWARD EDWIN CHARLES, Sergeant, '653677,' BERGEN-OP-ZOOM WAR CEMETERY 4. D. 5.







653677 SERGEANT
E.E.C. EVANS
ROYAL AIR FORCE
8TH JUNE 1942 AGE 29



SHELTERED
BY THE ROCK OF AGES
IN GOD'S KEEPING
TILL WE MEET TO PART NO MORE

CWGC records also show that the remains of AC MacKenzie, JE Bottomley and AC Schofield were not located and, as such, their names are recorded on the Runnymede Memorial as follows:

- MACKENZIE, ANGUS CARR, Pilot Officer, 'NZ.404491,' Panel 116.
- BOTTOMLEY, JOHN EDWARD, Sergeant, '1181181', Panel 78.
- SCHOFIELD, ALBERT CHARLES, Sergeant, 'A.406153,' Panel 113.



[Courtesy of Clive Lewis]

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

P4 Casualty Branch File

The following Casualty File is available at the National Archives:

AIR 81/14998 Flight Sergeant G J Sharman, Sergeant E E C Evans, Sergeant H R G D Elliott: killed; Pilot Officer A C McKenzie, Sergeant J E Bottomley, Sergeant A C

Schofield: missing believed killed; Halifax W7699, 35 Squadron, aircraft failed to return from an operational flight over Essen, Germany, 9 June 1942.

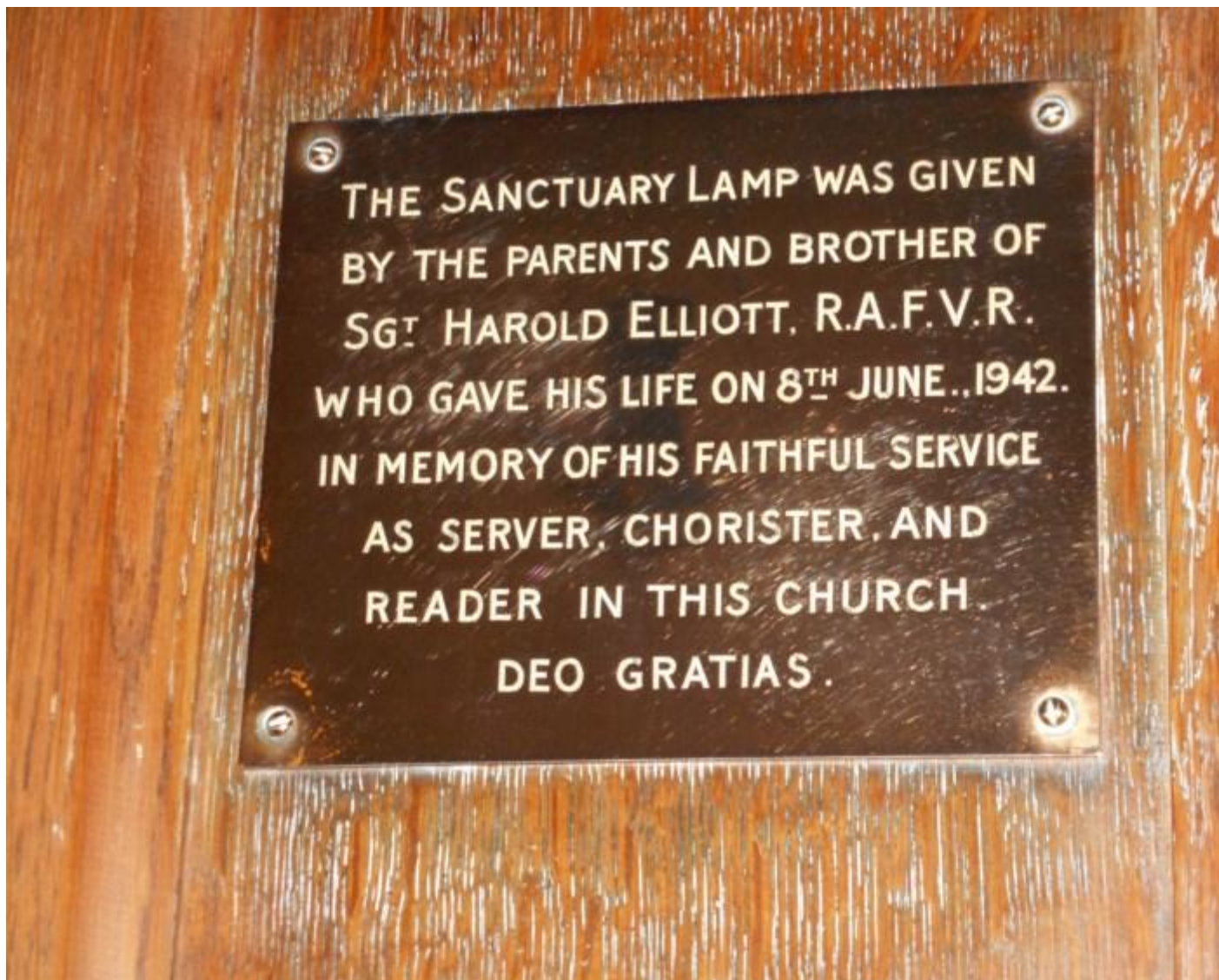
Note: A digital copy is now held in the No. 35 Squadron Research Archive at Marham
Aviation Heritage Centre

Theo Boiten (Nachtjagd Combat Archive)

Nightfighter: Ofw. Paul Gildner, 5./NJG2, Sea SW Hoek van Holland (Biber), 02.18

Memorial to HRG Elliott (St. John the Evangelist Church, Bury, West Sussex)





[Courtesy of the IBCC Memorial Project]

Categories: [08-06](#), [1942 Losses and Incidents](#), [1942-06](#), [Halifax Losses and Incidents 1942](#)

Post navigation