

14 Corporal Stanley Metcalfe d 5 June 1937 in a flying accident



1 March 2013

Where is the grave?

At the bottom of the cemetery, below a large bush that is in front of a long row of WW1 graves.



<http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=Hawker+Hind&tbm=isch&biw=1280&bih=609&sei=YYp6Ud2YGOnR0QX73YHoDA#imgrc=...>

Flight Magazine June 17th 1937 contained the following announcement:

The Air Ministry regrets to announce the following flying accidents (Smaller font added):

Sergt. Pilot Frank Wilkinson and L.A/C Alexander Mitchell lost their lives in an accident which occurred at Dungeon Hill, near Grasmere, on June 4 to an aircraft of No 22 (T.B.) Squadron. This was the aircraft, K.4607, which left Bristol for Donibristle at 10.45 a.m. on June 4 and had been reported missing. This was a Vickers Vildebeeste K4607 <http://www.flickr.com/photos/maycontaintracesofnuts/4181448715/in/set-72157607515160380>

Sergt. Joseph Mitchell and L.A/C Gerald Murray lost their lives in an accident which occurred near Ullswater on June 5 to an aircraft of No. 98 (Bomber) Squadron, Hucknall.

Hart K6614 at Threshthwaite Cove, Hartsop. <http://www.yorkshire-aircraft.co.uk/aircraft/k6614.html>

On 5th June 1937 eleven aircraft of this squadron were being flown from West Freugh to various airfields in the UK and three of the aircraft crashed en route. Hart K6614 was heading for Hucknall airfield in Nottinghamshire when it is believed to have suffered engine trouble over the Lake District and crashed near Patterdale. The aircraft was found by Mr S.R Jackson and Mr J Jackson of Nelson, Lancashire who were walking the fells north of Windermere. It had hit the ground near to the head of Threshthwaite Cove and both in the aircraft were killed, their bodies were later recovered to Hartsop village. Little else is known about the accident.

Pilot - Sgt Joseph Mitchell. Burial location unknown.

Mechanic/Passenger - LAC Gerald Murray. Burial location unknown.

P/O Patrick Herbert Edward Burke and Corporal Stanley Metcalfe lost their lives in an accident which occurred at Port William, Wigtownshire, on June 5, to an aircraft of No. 98 (Bomber)

Squadron. Alan Leishmann of the Dumfries & Galloway Aviation Museum said "Hind K5444 of 98 Sqn. crashed whilst flying to Hucknall. It force-landed and hit a ditch."²

Sergt. John E. Roe, of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve lost his life in an aircraft accident which occurred at Haines Hill on June 5. Sergt. Roe was the pilot and sole occupant of the aircraft.

Seven deaths in 2 days: flying was a dangerous activity in 1937.

Equipped with (Hawker) Hinds, 98 squadron was re-formed at Abingdon as a day-bomber squadron on 17th February 1936. In August of that year it moved to Hucknall and there, in 1938, re-armed with Battles.¹

The main headline crossing the whole front page for the North Western Daily Mail of Monday 7 June 1937 was

BARROVIAN KILLED IN AIR CRASH

There followed a three inch column sub-headed **TRAGEDY AFTER RUNNING INTO THICK MIST and DISTRESSING END TO PROMISING CAREER.** It went on:

Corporal Stanley Metcalfe, who was killed on Saturday in the R.A.F. crash at Port William, Wigtownshire, was a native of Barrow, his mother, Mrs. E. A. Metcalfe, residing at 72, Kendal-street.

Pilot Officer Burke and Corporal Metcalfe were killed when their machine, one of 10 returning from West Freugh, Stranraer, to Hucknall, Notts, crashed and took fire. There was a thick mist at the time of the accident.

The late Corporal Metcalfe, who was 24, joined the Air Force in September, 1928, after passing the examination as a pupil of the Junior Technical School. He attended the Victoria School as a boy.

After serving three years at Halton, he was transferred to Sealand, later going to London to qualify as a leading aircraftsman. After an observer's course he attained the rank of corporal and joined the bombing squadron.

Reference to his death was made by Rev. B. R. Blackburn at the evening service at St. Matthew's Church, Barrow, last night, the deceased being a former choir member.

RAF West Freugh was an armaments training school, and in 1957 became the site of a much publicised UFO 'sighting'. Corp. Metcalfe's funeral was reported in the NWDM of Wednesday 9 June 1937.

¹ <http://www.raf.mod.uk/bombercommand/h98.html>

² Courtesy of Gordon Lyons of *Air Crash Sites Scotland* 27 04 2013