

2 Pilot Officer Kenneth Richard Killey Smettem d. 30 August 1940



TREASURED MEMORIES
OF
JOHN WILLIAM,
BELOVED HUSBAND OF
MARGARET KILLEY
DIED 23RD NOV. 1942,
AGED 76 YEARS
ALSO THE ABOVE
MARGARET KILLEY
DIED 3RD OCT. 1946,
AGED 76 YEARS.
ALSO THEIR GRANDSON,
KENNETH RD. KILLEY SMETTEM,
PILOT OFFICER R.A.F.,
KILLED IN BATTLE OF BRITAIN.
INTERRED IN HOLLAND
30 8 1940. AT REST. AGE 23



Where are the graves?

Walking up the main path from the Devonshire Road entrance, his parents' grave is up a small path to the right, just past a copse.
His grandparents' grave is further up the main path, again on the right, close to the 'Mayors' Parlour'

In August 2013, the gravestone was not easy to read in its hidden place behind a low bush. By summer 2015 it had fallen face forward. The reference to P.O. Smettem is at the bottom of the grave of John William and Margaret Killey. He was their grandson, and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) website says that he is buried at Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, and that he was the son of Richard Augustus and Annie Isobel Smettem, of Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, England.

<http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/2063900/GROESBEEK%20CANADIAN%20WAR%20CEMETERY>

He is also remembered on the gravestone of his parents elsewhere in the cemetery.

The Other Few: The contribution made by Bomber & Coastal Aircrew to the winning of the Battle of Britain
GL Donnelly (*Blackwell* 2004) reports that Hampden L4079 of 50 Squadron, based at RAF Lindholme, was on a bombing mission to Munchengladbach when it was shot down by Oberleutnant Werner Streib¹. All four crew members were killed, and buried at Groesbeek.

The *Barrow News* 14 September 1940 reported beneath the photograph above: Pilot Officer Kenneth R. K. Smettem (24) of 233, Ainslie-street, Barrow, who has been reported missing during flying operations. His father is a captain in the Merchant Navy. Earlier, on 20 April 1940, the same photograph was used to illustrate an account of an attack where 'British flyers bombed German warships and military objectives.

His aircraft was in the air for nearly eight hours. All the 'planes engaged in this daring exploit returned safely.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Werner_Streib

Pilot Officer Smettem was educated at Barrow Grammar School, and obtained a commission in the R.A.F. in April, 1939. He was home on leave just two weeks ago.

All the men who took part in this raid were on the news films this week.'

His father, Richard Augustus Smettem, appears on the ship's manifest for the 'Immigrant Ship' RMS Nova Scotia, which sailed from Liverpool on 19 November 1940, arriving at Boston 5 December 1940.² This is soon after his son was killed. Was he going to join a ship in Mobile, Alabama?

35 Smettem, Richard Augustus; 51 yrs 2 mos; Sex: M; Marr/Sing: M
Tax Status: NoTax; Occ: Master Mariner; R/W: Y/Y; Lang: English
Nationality: British; Race: English
Place of Birth: England, West Hartlepool
Visa: NIV# 499; Place & Date Issued: Liverpool 12.11.40 Br PP L08581 to
7/28/42

Data concerning verification of landings: (3-3)Br
Last Perm. Residence: England, Barrow
Nearest rel: (Wife) Mrs. A. Smettem, 233 Ainslie St. Barrow, Eng.
Going to: Al., Mobile; Ticket: Yes; Passage by: Mssrs. Crosbt Co. Ltd
\$50 or more: Yes; In US before: Merchant Servservice, Various periods
Dest.: (Agents) Mssrs. Fillette Green Merchants Bank Building, Mob.
Intend to return after employment in US: Yes
Length of stay: Less than 6 months; Become Citizen: No
Prison/Polig/Anarch/Overthrow/Job Offer/Deported/Deformed: N/N/N/N/N/N/N
Health: Good
Height: 5 ft. 9 in.; Complexion/Hair/Eyes/Ident: Fresh/Dk Gr/Blue/Nil

² http://immigrantships.net/v8/1900v8/novascotia19401205_02.html