

18 Flying Officer John Brockbank d 6 March 1945 at RAF Bradwell Bay Essex



Where is the grave?

In the lower part of the cemetery, quite close to the new extension (2016), and the other side of the path from the Non-Conformist HMCS Saguenay graves.

Photos courtesy of Colin McCausland whose father David McCausland was John Brockbank's navigator in 25 Squadron until 1944 when he was transferred to the Far East. The aircraft is a Mosquito of 25 Squadron, and the photo was taken at RAF Coltishall in Spring 1944. *(Contacted April 2021 via the website)*



This group photo of 25 Squadron, in front of one of their Mosquitos, was taken at RAF Church Fenton in 1943. John Brockbank is on the extreme left second row, David McCausland is 5th from the left on the bottom row.

The account below is distressing, since the victims did not die in the crash, but were drowned by the incoming tide.



Barrow News 17 March 1945 reported (Official RAF portrait photograph – left – courtesy of Geoff Holme):

Barrow Flying Officer Killed

Mr. and Mrs. Brockbank, 130 Anson-street, Barrow, have been informed of the death of their son, Flying Officer John R. Brockbank (24), R.A.F. on air operations. F.O. Brockbank has served in the R.A.F. for four years and was formerly employed in the Civil Service and was an old pupil of the Barrow Grammar School.

Narrative

The aircraft lost height on take-off for bomber support mission and crashed on mudflats in Bradwell Bay 6.3.45

F/O Brockbank with F/Lt Lane were scrambled on an anti-intruder patrol, but they crashed on take-off into the mud of the Blackwater River. The crew were trapped and

despite strenuous efforts from the shore, and efforts by the Royal Navy, they could not be reached and both crew members died. It was a most distressing incident as the cries of the crew could be heard for an hour or more after the accident and there was absolutely nothing that could be done to save them.

Flying Officer John Brockbank was flying a de Havilland Mosquito NF.Mk.30 reg mark MM791

Crew:

F/O (157.399) John Richard BROCKBANK (pilot) RAFVR - killed

F/Lt (116.687) George John LANE (obs) RAFVR – killed

<http://aviation-safety.net/wikibase/wiki.php?id=144021>

which acknowledges source

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/kelsey.family/1945.htm>