

Sergeant Collan Michael Anthony Bawden Brett 1168185 RAFVR

Collan Brett was born in 1922, the second son of Collan and Margaret Brett of Great Coates, Lincolnshire. He was a Scout with Grimsby (Healing) Group and later joined the RAFVR.

Collan was the pilot of No. 142 Squadron's Wellington Z1243. On November 1941 he took off from RAF Grimsby (Waltham) on a training exercise and crashed near the airfield; he and all but one of his crew were killed. Collan was just 19 years old.

The aircraft had crashed shortly after take-off, half a mile south west of Grimsby. It had stalled whilst climbing away from the airfield. Killed along with Collan were: Sgt. Cyril Jakins (navigator), Norman Borrowes (observer/bomb aimer) and Sgt. Harry Morton Exley (wireless operator/air gunner).

There was one survivor, the Australian rear gunner Sgt. Kevin Light, who suffered serious injuries. (He returned to active duty, was shot down and finished the war in Buchenwald concentration camp).

Collan is buried in St Nicolas Churchyard, Great Coates, North East Lincolnshire. His war grave includes the words 'Greater love than this no man hath. That a man lay down his life for his friends'.

He is commemorated on IBCC Panel 12

SOURCES

<http://www.bcar.org.uk/new1941-incident-logs>

<http://iremember.org.uk/lest-we-forget/ww2/collan-brett/>

http://www.aviationarchaeology.org.uk/marg/142sqn_losses.htm

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