

ACW2 Gertrude Emma Ellner 424920 WAAF

Gertrude was born on 6 May 1916 in Hendon, Middlesex, the daughter of William Richard Miner Ellner and Elizabeth Adele Ellner nee Cowland and the step daughter of Joseph Swaine Crabtree. When war was declared Gertrude was employed as a Domestic Cook in a private household.

At the time of her death, Gertrude was serving with 16 OTU at RAF Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire.

On 13 February 1941 Gertrude was visiting her family at Borthwick Road, West Hendon, London. At the time West Hendon was a vital part of the UK's manufacturing industry. These areas were frequently targeted for night bombing to try and disrupt the UK's war effort.

In the early evening, no air raid siren had sounded to warn the residents to take cover when a Heinkel He111 flew over the area and dropped a single SC2500kg bomb, the equivalent of two V2 rockets, over the residential. The effects were devastating for West Hendon. Eighty were killed, 40 houses destroyed, 160 required demolition, 170 too badly damaged to be repaired until after the war and 1500 residents were left homeless.

Gertrude and her sister were killed in the family home.

Gertrude is buried at St Mary Churchyard, Hendon, Middlesex

Gertrude is commemorated on Wall Panel 32