

Sgt George Bernard Crawford 1178840 RAFVR

George was born on 21 May 1921 in Redruth, Cornwall, the son of George B Crawford and Susie Crawford nee Rule. Educated at Trewirgie School, Redruth, Cornwall, he was a talented rugby player and played for the RAF.

Trained as a WOp/AG, just one month before he was killed, he baled out of a crippled aircraft and became a Member of the Caterpillar Club. Sadly, he did not live long enough to wear the badge.

On the afternoon of 18 July 1942, George and the crew departed RAF Wattisham in Blenheim IV Z7304 (WV) of 18 Sqn on an air test.

At 15:45, in low cloud and poor visibility, the aircraft collided with one of the 365 foot high Chain Home radar transmitter masts at Stoke Holy Cross near Norwich. The aircraft fell into a nearby field and all aboard were killed.

The 'Curtain Array', slung between two of the masts and used to transmit the massive power of the radar, was brought to the ground by the impact. The station was only off the air for a few minutes while the Mechanics reconnected the transmitter to a 'Stacked Array', superceded by the Curtain but retained as a standby. The steel mast, third in a line of four, was badly damaged and was dismantled some time well after the accident. A new mast was constructed on new foundations considerably displaced from the original and the mid-level gantry platform, not required for the Curtain Array, was omitted from the rebuilt tower.

Also killed were : PO Philip Henry Lowther (Pilot); Sgt Kenneth Custance Ellis (Observer); Mr Kenneth Thomas Tagg (Civilian Assistant Meteorologist)

George is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey

George is commemorated on Wall Panel 150